

Annual Report 2009



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DEGLOBALIZATION



FINANCE

Focus staff from all country offices participated in seminars, conferences and workshops on the global financial crisis, relating global trends with national and regional conditions. Through research, writing, presentations and other outreach activities, Focus staff also tried to show how global economic and financial trends affect particular sectors and constituencies such as agriculture, farmers, migrant workers, urban and rural poor families, and women.

REGIONAL

AND INTERNATIONAL

Focus staff served as the main resource person in an international workshop organised by the Global Alliance on Trafficking in Women (GAATW) on 25-26 March to explore the links between economic trends and trafficking. Focus staff made presentations on how the financial and economic crises, and specific types of economic policies precipitate conditions that increase economic distress among vulnerable communities/people, and how these result in involuntary migration and trafficking of women, children and workers.

In April, Focus brought out a special issue of Focus on Trade that covered various aspects of the global financial crisis, how it is being addressed by world leaders and its impacts at national levels.

In May, Focus staff participated in and financially contributed towards a series of events under the banner Asian Peoples' Movement Against the ADB, that were organised in Bali, Indonesia by a coalition of Indonesian social movements and civil

society groups. These events were organised in protest against the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Annual Governors' Meetings that were held in Bali from 2-5 May. At these events, Focus staff made presentations on strategies to challenge and build peoples' alternatives to global capitalism, capitalist development and capitalist agriculture, and participated in the rally against the ADB in Denpasar, Bali. Focus also supported members from the Assembly of the Poor and Northern Peasant Federation from Thailand to participate in these events.

During the same period in May and also in Bali, Focus joined the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (AP-MDD) and the NGO Forum on the ADB in organising an Asia-Pacific region wide strategy workshop on climate change issues. More than 50 people from different countries participated in this workshop. Focus supported the participation of people from Thailand, Indonesia and India to the workshop. Participants learned about and discussed the different dimensions of climate change, the official proposals on the table to tackle climate change—especially those related to finance, and then discussed future strategies and actions for their specific sub-regions, countries and constituencies. Focus staff made presentations on climate and finance, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and market based "solutions" to climate change at the workshop. Focus staff also participated in formulating the APMDD statement of unities on climate change.

In July, Focus participated in a regional conference organised by the Federation of Indonesian Peasants (SPI) and the Sin-

tesa Foundation (a foundation working on sustainable development in Medan, Indonesia) titled, Creating Local Initiatives for Peoples' Sovereignty. Focus staff made presentations on the importance of progressive, comprehensive agrarian reform in building peoples' sovereignty and resisting the corporate take over of natural resources through development programmes funded by bilateral donors and multilateral financial institutions.

In September, immediately prior to the Inter-sessional meeting of the UNFCCC in Bangkok, Focus joined the APMDD and NGO Forum on the ADB to co-organise a workshop in Bangkok on climate change oriented towards women from social movements and grassroots organisations. Although the workshop was open to both women and men, the co-organisers made concerted efforts to prioritise the participation of women from social movements and grassroots groups since past experience showed that majority of participants in climate change related events from the above constituencies in Asia tend to be men. Focus made presentations on the relationship between the food-agriculture sectors and climate change, market based "solutions" to climate change, and how all these can impact women. Focus also helped to draft and finalise a statement of unity from the workshop about climate change and women.

Also at the end of September, Focus participated in a strategy meeting organised by the APMDD on resisting water and power sector privatisation. Focus staff made presentations on how water resources are being used and governed, the role of IFIs in governing water resources

and alternative approaches to financing and governance.

In October, Focus staff conducted a session on neoliberalism at a training workshop for urban community organisers co-organised by the Thai urban poor network and LOCOA (Leaders and Organisers of Community Organisation in Asia). Participants were community organisers from low-income urban neighbourhoods from several Asian countries.

In February, July, October and November, Focus staff worked with researchers from Nepal, Timor Leste and Cambodia to prepare analyses of how economic development and 'nation building' models adopted after peace agreements affect different constituencies and social organisation. These analyses are part of a 2 year collaborative research project that Focus has been involved in with The Centros Estudios Internacionales (CEI) in Nicaragua. In December, Focus, CEI and the All Nepal Peasants Association (ANPA) co-organised a meeting of researchers from Nepal, Cambodia, Timor Leste and Nicaragua to share the results of this collaborative research project and discuss future actions/collaborations. The meeting was held in Kathmandu and was the concluding event of the research project. The results of the meeting and of the project will be published in early-mid 2010. The researchers meeting was followed by a public meeting of representatives from various CSOs, mass organisations and political parties in Nepal to discuss the challenges of economic development in a post-conflict/post-war political scenario.

THAILAND

The work on financial issues in Thailand during the year concentrated on monitoring and analysing the impacts of the financial crisis on vulnerable sectors, government mitigation measures and the policies that were adopted. Under a polarised and hostile political environment, an impartial analysis of key government policies in Thailand has become a scarcity. Hence, Focus made attempts to produce a well balanced article focusing on the impacts of the financial crisis and the government responses. Particularly, a critique on the overall direction which governments have taken over the years with the link to the current crisis was also provided in the article.

Discussion opportunities among civil society groups on understanding the nature and the implication of the financial crisis were facilitated by Focus Thailand. Focus staff also made presentations at workshops and seminars organised by civil society groups and trade unions organised workshops and seminars. Focus staff participated in two seminars organised by civil society groups as resource persons (urban poor network and alternative farmer network). The main contributions from Focus were to assist social movements and national NGOs to better understand the links between their struggles and areas of concern and the financial architecture and crises.

Focus staff was invited as resource person in a seminar on Economic Policies for Future Burma which is part of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation Alternative Development for Burma Project and held in Chiang Mai in conjunction with Burma Partnership, a coalition of different Burmese groups. The presentation was on the basics of economics with gender perspectives featuring how a free market

economy discriminates against women and what needs to be addressed in order to achieve a more equitable and sustainable economic development. Terre des Hommes, Germany, also invited Focus to present the analysis of the global financial crisis and its implications on development for discussion on possible alternatives among its Southeast Asian staff and partners at their annual meeting in Mae Sot.

Focus staff members had increasing opportunities to utilise local and national media outlets namely television and radio programmes, including a weekly 15 minutes airtime on a popular radio news programme (ranking 3rd on the national rating agency). From the beginning of 2009, a Focus staff person has been engaging in a national radio programme (FM 101) as news commentator. The key issues covered under the programme include: finance and trade, climate change, and Thailand's national economic policies.

INDIA

In early 2009, Focus initiated an exploratory study on role of IFIs such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) in funding climate change related projects in India. The study was completed and finalised in November and released as an online publication. It will be published as an occasional paper in early 2010.

Focus staff participated and contributed to the discussions at the March 2009 conference on 'The crisis of neo-liberalism in India – challenges and alternatives' organised by International Development Economics Associates (IDEAs) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) at the TISS campus in Mumbai. The conference analysed the effects of the current economic regime with a special focus on the living and working conditions of the

Indian people.

As a member of the Organising Committee of the Peoples Forum Against ADB, Focus participated in a two day meeting in Delhi to discuss the state of popular organising against IFIs, current state of neo-liberal policies and the general political situation in India with a view to strengthen the popular campaign. Follow-up actions from the meeting include a joint perspective paper and organising a 3 day retreat in August-September 2009 to discuss these issues in detail.

PHILIPPINES

"People's Economies" Research. Initial field visits and scoping interviews have been conducted in various sites including Cavite and Negros. Discussions with leaders and communities of Altertrade and PATAMABA have been carried out. The main researcher for the study was able to scan some areas and conduct initial visits to sugar and banana farmers communities in Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental, with the help of Altertrade. Links with peoples organisations involved with collective management, such as the Sta Rita Farmers Association and the Minoro-Isabel Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association have been established, while exploratory group discussions and interviews have been conducted in July 2009.

Internal discussions on the informal economy and social enterprises have also been undertaken. A think piece for the Focus Alternatives Dossier has been produced as well as a draft paper on Social Enterprises and the Altertrade Experience. Some pieces on the crisis, women and the EPZA have been released in the FOP as well as the Focus on Trade. This work also dovetails with Focus' work on the State of the Filipino Women amid multiple crises, which is carried out with the women's for-

mation Welga ng Kababaihan.

Discussions are still need to be conducted in order to transform the people's economies program into a collective Focus Philippines project where most staff are involved and able to bring in issues, themes, debates and discourse within their own areas of work. An internal workshop is in the works to discuss these points; especially 'interface' points with other programs.

Scoping discussions and field visits conducted:

- EPZA CAVITE (February 2009, March 2009, April 2009, May 2009)
- Altertrade Bacolod (23 July 2009)
- MIARBA, Hacienda Isabel-Minoro, La Castellana (24-25 July 2009)
- STARFA, Sta Rita, Bago City (July 2009)
- Dungganon Bank Scoping Interview, Bacolod City (27 July 2009)
- Meeting with Altertrade Dumaguete Staff, DUMAGUETE CITY (29 July 2009)
- Altertrade Balangon Packing Center, Dumaguete (30 July 2009)
- Altertrade Japan Partners, Bacolod City (6 August 2009)
- Manjuyod Balangon Community Visit (8 August 2009)
- Tanjay Balangon Community Visit (August 2009)
- Bais Balangon Community Visit (August 2009)
- Internal Discussion on Emerging Alternatives and Social Enterprises (August 2009)
- Internal Discussion on Informal Economy
- PATAMABA GENERAL ASSEMBLY (Informal Sector)

CHINA

Focus staff helped to co-organise training workshops for Chinese NGO's Campaign on 'Green Credit' in Choingqing and Guangzhou from 29 November to 5 December. These two workshops were hosted by Green Watershed, Chongqing Environmental Volunteer Union, and Institute for Civil Society of Sun Yat-sen University. The aims of the workshops was to share knowledge on 'Green Credit', enhance advocacy capacity and network building of Chinese NGOs, and reinforce the action power of NGOs to advocate green finance in theory and practice for the future good. Focus staff also made presentations on the environmental, social and economic impacts of IFI operations in various sectors.

TRADE

One of the main elements of deglobalisation is the disempowerment, if not abolition of centralised institutions of corporate driven globalisation such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and putting in its place more pluralistic, people-centred trading systems.

In trying to achieve the goal of stopping corporate driven globalisation and promoting deglobalisation, the Focus trade campaign has focused not only on the WTO but also on bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). It also endeavours to make the links between trade and the financial crisis and trade and the climate crisis. In fact, at the World Social Forum in Belem, Focus co-organised the cross-networking space on the Global Crisis, which aimed to bring together different movements and networks to discuss the links between the various campaigns such as trade and climate to the global campaign on the financial crisis.

The Focus trade team worked closely with its allies, in networks and coalitions nationally, regionally and internationally.

Derailing the WTO Doha Round

In a clear bid to bring the WTO back to life, following the financial and economic crisis, the leaders of the G20 stated that what was needed was the successful conclusion of the Doha Round. Shortly after, Pascal Lamy, WTO Director General announced that the WTO would have its 7th Ministerial Conference on 30 November to 2 December, 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. Developing countries showed little resistance to this push and within a month of taking over Kamal Nath's portfolio, Commerce Minister Anand Sharma signalled his willingness to work with the US (in a meeting with US Trade Representative Ron Kirk in June 2009) and other developed countries to break the 'WTO impasse' and conclude the Doha Round.

Following this, the trade team worked on reinvigorating the campaigns against the WTO.

The Government of India, under new Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, took a strong interest in concluding the stalled WTO Doha Trade Round. The Trade Ministers Meeting which India hosted in Delhi (3-4 September), attended by trade ministers from different WTO groupings such as the G20, G33, Cairns Group, Small and Vulnerable Economies (SVEs), ACP, LDCs, NAMA 11 and CARICOM, was meant to speed up talks in the run-up to the 7th WTO Ministerial in Geneva.

Many mass organisations felt that given that the country was reeling from the financial and agrarian crisis, Minister Sharma's haste in concluding the Doha talks

was unacceptable. Along with left parties, agriculture groups, trade unions and social movements, Focus contributed to efforts to oppose the Indian government's move to host the WTO Mini Ministerial and any commitment to conclude Doha round, unless due debates take place in the Parliament and state legislatures. Focus and other progressive organisations co-organised a Strategy Meeting on WTO on 2nd and gave a call for a mass mobilisation on 3rd September at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi when the WTO ministers were meeting to give an unnecessary push to the stalled Doha negotiations.

Focus, as a member, helped in reviving the alliance of movements, political parties and NGOs against the WTO called Indian Peoples Campaign Against WTO (IPCAWTO). We helped in organising two meetings of the Campaign in New Delhi which decided to organise a mass rally against the WTO Mini Ministerial Meeting. The Campaign also issued a statement against the Mini Ministerial which was signed by many Indian organisations, movements, farmers groups, trade unions, employees unions and civil society groups. Delhi witnessed a massive mobilisation when the WTO meeting opened when over 50,000 people including farmers, workers and students took to the streets of Delhi. Groups that mobilised included the Bharatiya Kissan Union, Karnataka State Farmers Association, Tamil Nadu State Farmers Association, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist), the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI), Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI). Activists from Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Philippines also joined the march.

In the Philippines, Focus concentrated its efforts as part of the Stop the New Round

Coalition (SNR). SNR organised several discussions and meetings to consolidate its position on the Doha talks. In January, SNR members participated in a discussion with US Labour Lawyer Brian Campbell on the use of the General System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) to push for the implementation of labour laws.

By June, the Stop the New Round Coalition re-convened to discuss and strategise around the upcoming Ministerial Meeting. Part of the activities lined up by the coalition is a meeting with progressive parliamentarians in order to explore possibilities of using Congress as a platform to jumpstart the political debates on Doha and the upcoming ministerial. A briefing session was held with the Office of Representative Walden Bello on 22 June 2009 which resulted in a list of actions to be initiated by the office in Congress.

Sectoral level discussions on the WTO-Doha Round were also conducted in order to provide updates and consolidate sectoral views on the upcoming Ministerial. A forum on trade with sugar farmers organised by PhilDHRAA was held in 23 June 2009 in Balayan, Batangas, forum with the Council of Leaders of the Alliance of Progressive Labour was held in August, followed by a much broader SNR Labour Forum on Doha in November 2009. Outside Manila, an SNR-Mindanao Forum on Doha was held in late November as well.

SNR Members also participated in a dialogue with Undersecretary Segfredo Serano (lead Philippine Negotiator for agriculture) on 16 November, 2009, facilitated by the Rice Watch and Action Network (RWAN). A Statement on Doha Negotiations and the WTO Ministerial was presented to the Special Committee on Globalisation of the House of Representatives

on 18 November 2009. The SNR work culminated in a Labour-led mobilisation on 30 November 2009 as part of commemoration of National Heroes Day, a red letter day for labour actions in the Philippines.

In Thailand, although Focus concentrated its activities on the campaign related to FTA negotiations and implementation, particularly the EU-ASEAN FTA and the ASEAN Free trade area, it maintained the work on monitoring negotiations under the WTO especially the role of the Thai government. At the same time, Focus Thailand Programme continued the campaign on reforming the official trade negotiation process. The key elements of this campaign in 2009 was the gathering of 10,000 signatures to support FTA Watch's Treaty Making Act, and the court battle in an attempt to establish the citizen rights in participating in the legislation process. The aim of this campaign has been to promote transparency and meaningful public participation in treaty making procedures which includes FTA negotiation and negotiation under the WTO.

In March 2009, FTA Watch submitted its draft Treaty Making Act with more than 10,000 endorsement signatures to the House Speaker. Nonetheless, the House Speakers rejected the draft on the ground that the Constitution does not allow citizens to submit legislations related to treaty making procedures. Since then, Focus, which has taken the lead on this issue within FTA Watch, has engaged in the legal process of petitioning the House Speaker's decision, and bringing the case to the Administrative court. At this point the case is in the Administrative court process already. Parallel to the court process, FTA Watch successfully worked with a group of Members of Parliament on submitting this draft Act through the channel

of using 20 MP names. This channel, at least, guarantees that FTA Watch's Treaty Making Act would be considered by the Parliament once the government submits its own draft.

In China, Focus assists the development and consolidation of the China WTO Working Group through involving their coordinators in Focus regional events (APF, Climate and Trade workshops during the Bangkok Intercessional). Focus China coordinator include an afternoon presentation and discussion with the Working Group in every visit to Beijing since 2008.

At the regional and international levels, Focus staff served as a resource person in a workshop on the WTO and human rights for international human rights activists from ESCR-Net (International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). The workshop was organised in Bangkok by Forum Asia as part of a collaborative international pilot project to understand the impact of free trade and investment regimes on economic, social and cultural rights. Focus staff made a presentation on how the WTO regime affects the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights and then facilitated a discussion about strategies that human rights activists can and need to take with regard to the WTO.

Focus staff also served as a resource person in a speaker tour around the United Kingdom on the issue of trade, helping the World Development Movement reinvigorate its members into campaigning on trade in the UK. The tour also included speaking engagements with the youth group People and Planet again focusing on the need for a renewed trade campaign and at the general assembly of War on Want. Focus staff also joined the Put People First delegation to present

their demands to the Finance Minister at Downing Street then joined the massive march in London and spoke at the demonstration at Hyde Park during the G20 meeting.

Internationally, Focus continues to play a key role in the international network working on trade, Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS). Focus is in the coordinating team of the network and helped organise the bi-annual strategy meeting held in Cape Town, South Africa in May 2009. At this strategy meeting, OWINFS' campaign plan for the Ministerial was mapped out and Focus was part of the mobilisations and network's activities. Also, as a part of the coordinating team, Focus is involved in the day to day running of the network from heading up working groups to organising conference calls, fundraising, and implementing the Cape Town action plan. Focus also continues to facilitate the participation of Asian organisations and movements in the network.

At the regional level, Focus co-organised a strategy meeting among East and Southeast Asian Trade campaigners with the objective of consolidating a position and coordinating actions around the upcoming WTO Ministerial. The strategy meeting, which was held on 1 October 2009, on the sidelines of the Climate talks in Bangkok, resulted in the formulation of a call for Asian Movements to re-energise the resistance to the WTO-Doha Round and mobilise against the 7th Ministerial Meeting. This also resulted in the coordination of efforts and actions in Geneva of Asian movements.

Following the strategy meeting in Bangkok, Focus organised and supported an Asian delegation to Geneva including fisherfolk leaders from the Philippines, farmer leaders from India and Indonesia

and members of the Indonesian coalition Gerak Lawan. The Focus trade team also went to Geneva to implement its strategy and action plan for the Ministerial and also co-organised and participated in several activities, actions and mobilisations.

Focus organised a briefing by Aileen Kwa of the South Centre for the Asian movements to get a better understanding of the state of play of negotiations in the WTO and, more importantly, to find out the positions the Asian governments, particularly India, Indonesia and the Philippines, have been taking in the negotiations.

Focus co-organised and participated in almost all of the OWINFS activities. There was a Focus speaker in two of OWINFS daily press conferences. Focus co-organised and participated in the OWINFS daily inside actions at the Ministerial. The team participated in the daily inside-outside strategy meetings. Focus also attended a number of meetings with government delegations and negotiators, including the G33 and the Philippines. And Focus co-drafted the final statement which members of the network signed on to after the Ministerial entitled Governments: Listen to your people. Abandon Doha, Confront the Crises!.

Focus also played a key role in the outside activities. In the run up to the Ministerial, Focus worked together with the local Swiss groups and other international organisations in fundraising, organising and putting together the programme, activities and outside actions. Many of which started from the permanent tent outside the Ministerial. Focus participated in the daily tours co-organised by CEO, La Via Campesina, OWINFS and others around Geneva targeting the corporations involved in the Financial, Food and

Climate crises. Focus also participated in the Fishers Action Day, Agriculture Day and the Via Campesina vigil. Members of the Focus team were also resource persons at the daily briefings organised by Via Campesina on the outside.

Analysis and articles from the Focus team on the Ministerial were published in Focus on Trade.

From Trade to Climate Caravan

Focus co-organised, together with OW-INFS, Climate Justice Now! and several European organisations and movements, the From Trade to Climate Caravan which travelled from the 7th WTO Ministerial in Geneva to the UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen.

It was hailed a huge success, covered widely in both independent and mainstream media and sent out a clear message that Free Trade has both contributed to Climate Change and prevents real solutions to it. Its aim was to expose the links between the WTO rules and the climate talks. The call to join the caravan detailed that the climate talks were all about trade and investment: trading of emission certificates and offsets causing land grabs due to the spread of agrofuel-monoculture, "clean technology" investments like hydroelectric mega-dams leading to massive displacement, and so on. And at the same time, the WTO "free" trade agenda not only encourages these disastrous "solutions", it also blocks many urgently needed real solutions: the return of small-scale farming, food sovereignty and the suspension of the intellectual property rights of renewable and climate change mitigation technology for developing countries.

At least 60 activists and movement representatives from the South and 20 activ-

ists and movement representatives from the North joined the caravan. They were representatives of indigenous peoples, women's organisations, fisherfolk, farmers, environmental groups and others. One bus travelled East and the other travelled West, both departing Geneva on 3 December. The Western Route went to Dijon, Paris, and Brussels, while the Eastern route to Freiburg, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Berlin. The two buses then met in Hamburg and proceeded to Copenhagen together on 9 December.

On both routes, there was a fully packed programme organised by the local organisations and movements at each stop, including public meetings, debates at the European Parliament, German parliament and French Senate, discussions with Members of Parliament, actions at banks and the European Commission, Monsanto and the corporate business lobbyists, press conferences and meetings with the media. There were also mobilisations with migrants without papers, farmers and environmentalists at a coal fire power plant.

A Focus campaigner went on the Caravan on the West route and spoke at several of the demonstrations, public assemblies, press conferences and at the Trade and Climate meeting with Members of Parliament in Brussels. The Focus staff teamed up with a campaigner with Transnational Institute to write a series of profile articles featuring the different movement representatives that were part of the Caravan. Entitled Free Trade and Climate Change Resistance: Voices from the South, the profiles were published in the Climate Chronicle, a newspaper produced for the UNFCCC COP 15 and distributed widely at both the Klimaforum and COP 15 venue in Copenhagen. They were also released under Focus on Trade and on the TNI website.

The Focus trade and climate video The Gr8 Climate Sale was also widely distributed and shown during the Caravan and proved to be a useful resource.

There was a big welcoming at the Klimaforum in Copenhagen of the Caravan and the Climate Justice Now! coalition used its daily evening assembly to introduce the participants and share the results and experiences of the Caravan. In Copenhagen, the Caravan participants continued to coordinate and joined the workshops and mobilisations including the System Change Not Climate Change bloc.

Fighting the Free Trade Agreements

The Focus trade team has also been keeping a close eye on FTAs in the region. Focus continues its active role in various FTA focused networks such as EU-ASEAN, FTA Watch and others.

In January 2009 at the WSF in Brazil, Focus made 2 presentations on FTAs in a day long workshop on Trade Policy of the European Union in Latin America: Strategies of Bi-Regional Resistance and Alternatives co-organised by several groups from Latin America and Europe including OWINFS, S2B network, Via Campesina and TNI. The workshop was aimed at promoting public debate forums about EU FTAs and cross-fertilise information and analysis from different spaces – local, regional and global level – on the different stages of the negotiations as well as to strengthen the campaigns and resistance against FTAs based on free trade paradigm. It was aimed at developing joint strategies to paralyse the actual negotiations that seek the signing of FTAs between the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean and other regions. Focus presentations were in the session on Strategies against 'Global Europe' & EU - FTAs in Asia focusing mainly

on the ASEAN-EU FTA and India-EU FTA.

In India, Focus is part of an informal coalition of groups monitoring India's FTAs. Under the banner of Forum on FTAs the coalition has monitored key FTAs that India is negotiating and has aimed to provide timely information on India's negotiating stance, and met with trade negotiators and political parties to reverse the bilateral free trade trend that is gaining currency in policy circles. As the 6th round of EU-India FTA talks got underway in New Delhi, Focus joined a coalition of public interest groups to protest in front of the EU Commission. Focus put together a press release that was widely covered by the Hindi and English media. Focus also helped put together a short youtube video on the protest. (http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=eu+india+fta+protest&search_type).

Focus co-organised a National Consultation on India's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) from 31 August – 1 September 2009 in New Delhi, which brought together representatives of trade unions, social movements, peoples collectives, academic institutions and non-government organisations including concerned individuals from across the country to discuss the implications of the Government of India's bilateral and regional FTAs being negotiated with both developed and developing countries.

The Government of India is undemocratically implementing and negotiating several new economic partnerships through free trade and investment agreements especially at a time when the country is in the midst of a deep food and farm crisis and financial uncertainty. These negotiations are taking place in secrecy without adequate consultations with State Governments and affected constituencies.

Many of these FTAs are not just trade deals. They go far beyond trade and encompass a wide range of areas such as services liberalisation, investment rules, infrastructure operations, government procurement, intellectual property rights, competition policy and food standards. The Union Government's signing of such deals not only violates the federal structure of the Indian Constitution but sans any Parliamentary approval also undermines representative democracy. It reduces policy space with serious impacts on farmers, labour, fisherfolk, hawkers, women, dalits, and indigenous peoples/ adivasis and compromises community rights over natural resources. Further these negotiations violate the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and India's international human rights obligations enshrined in various international declarations and treaties.

Therefore, there was an urgent need to move out of the flawed logic of free trade. Focus on the Global South, as part of the Forum against FTAs, an alliance of affected communities, progressive and democratic organisations, demanded that the government of India "put an immediate halt to any FTAs under negotiation" and "undertake social and ecological assessments of existing trade deals and accordingly initiate appropriate remedial actions".

The Forum also recognises that it is not sufficient to merely to oppose FTAs but to also evolve alternatives. South-South solidarity remains a mostly unexplored possibility in an increasingly unipolar world. Progressive and democratic organisations in the South need to come together to push their governments to evolve strategies together not just to resist the forces of North-dominated free trade but also to shape the politics of the globe and there-

by bring gains to disempowered groups and working people.

With regard to the ASEAN-India FTA in particular, Focus worked with the Kerala Independent Fishworkers Federation (KSMTF) and helped them with their campaign. We issued a press release in July warning that the implementation of the FTA would lead to loss of livelihoods in the fisheries and agriculture sector in Kerala. Despite the call for caution from the Government of Kerala and the fishworkers, Commerce Minister Anand Sharma hastily signed the agreement at the sidelines of an ASEAN summit meeting in Thailand and Focus was one of the first groups to respond in collaboration with the KSMTF terming the agreement as undermining the federal nature of the Indian constitution. Later in the year when the Kerala Fisheries Coordination Committee brought their campaign to Delhi with a march to the Parliament, Focus along with other groups helped organise press conference and provided them with analysis on the content of the FTA.

In the Philippines, with the ratification of Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), the Magkaisa Junk JPEPA coalition shifted the focus of its work to documentation and monitoring of the agreement's implementation. The Bantay JPEPA (JPEPA Watch) campaign was launched on 20 May 2009 in the Senate. Focus and SNR, which are both part of the campaign, submitted inputs to the Bantay JPEPA campaign paper. A series of sectoral level meetings and workshops have been lined up aimed at firming up unities on the framework of the campaign as well as develop clear guidelines for the work of Bantay JPEPA at the sectoral and thematic levels.

In Thailand, as a result of a close monitor-

ing of the negotiation of the EU-ASEAN FTA, FTA Watch were able to get hold of a draft negotiation text on Intellectual property Rights (IPR) proposed by the European Union (EU). With this crucial information, FTA Watch (with Focus on the Global South coordination) produced two papers in Thai and English analysing the text including the impact assessment: FTA EU-ASEAN IP Chapter: Impact on Accessibility to Medicines by Dr. Jiraporn Limpananont, and The Bio-IPR Impacts of the EU-ASEAN FTA by Witoon Lianchumroon. Focus also produced a background paper on investment liberalisation in the negotiations of the EU-ASEAN FTA. These papers were presented, disseminated and discussed at the ASEAN Peoples' Forum in February 2009, in Bangkok.

At the Southeast Asian regional level, Focus continues to be a part of the EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign network.

In the first quarter of the year, the focus of the EU-ASEAN Campaign in the Philippines was the impending conclusion of the negotiations for the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the European Union. The PCA is a requirement for the conclusion of a free trade agreement with the EU. In February, the network issued a statement urging both Philippine and EU negotiators to disclose contents of Cooperation Agreement and putting forward its critique of the corporate agenda behind the FTA negotiations.

The network also actively participated in regional forums like the ASEAN Peoples' Forum by organising workshops to discuss the EU-ASEAN FTA and to mobilise additional support for the campaign. A workshop on the EU-ASEAN FTA took place at the ASEAN Peoples Forum (APF) held in Bangkok on February 21, 2009, co-organised with KEPA (A Finnish net-

work) and the Committee for Asian Women (CAW); it provided campaigners from across the Southeast Asian region a space to collectively discuss and strategise around possible areas of action on bilateral FTAs, and also opened up the possibility of future collaborative work with the two co-organisers- KEPA and CAW.

In order to consolidate the EU-ASEAN campaign efforts, a regional strategy meeting was held in Manila in March which led to the consolidation of a regional campaign plan and the establishment of clearer mechanisms for coordination.

In the area of research and publication, the network also launched in March 2009 the report *A Partnership among Equals? Examining the EU-ASEAN FTA* – a compilation of country level researches in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia as well as thematic papers on IPR and agriculture and access to medicines. The report is part of the effort of the network to provide campaigners with background information to inform the debate around the EU-ASEAN FTA negotiations.

ASEAN and the European Union (EU) agreed to halt ongoing regional level talks on the FTA in May but the bilateral negotiations with select ASEAN countries were targeted. This development prompted a revision of the campaign plan developed at the strategy meeting in Manila. The revised plan came as a result of the regional meeting held in Bangkok in early October. At the national level, the Philippine network, as part of its effort to broaden its understanding of the different issues surrounding FTAs, organised several forums including a discussion on trade, labour and the US General System of Preferences with Labour Lawyer Brian Campbell of the International Labour Rights Forum in January; Trade and Charter Change forum with Atty Marvic Leonen, Dean of UP College of Law and forum

on EU-ASEAN FTA in UP Manila in February; and Forum on intellectual property rights and impact on agriculture, biodiversity and access to medicines in March.

The Philippine network also issued a number of press releases challenging the Philippine government's position on the proposed FTA with the EU (RP negotiator criticised for supporting EU Proposal for bilateral trade negotiations. Manila Bulletin, 7 February 2009; New Zealand Prods ASEAN to ink trade pact. Business Mirror, 11 February 2009)

At the regional level, using the economic crisis as a campaign handle, the network spearheaded a discussion on trade and crisis (Free Trade and the Global Economic Crisis Examining the linkages and implications on jobs and livelihoods and defining policy proposals and alternatives) in October at the sidelines of the Bangkok Climate talks in October 2009.

ALTERNATIVE REGIONALISMS

Strong Links with the Trade Programme. Focus continued to explore the linkages between trade and regional integration initiatives, and maximizing civil society organized events and campaigns around ASEAN as another platform for sharpening the critique of FTAs and deepening our understanding and appreciation of the agenda for alternative regionalism.

At the national level, Focus and the EU-ASEAN Network joined a number of organizations working on ASEAN issues in organizing a two-day conference on ASEAN and Regional Engagement in September. The EU-ASEAN Network spearheaded the Caucus on Trade and ASEAN as part of this

two-day event.

ASEAN People's Forum/ASEAN Civil Society Conference IV. A main preoccupation in the first two months had been the co-organising of the ASEAN People's Forum/ASEAN Civil Society Conference IV on February 20-22, 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. Focus staff were members of the Steering, Programme and Drafting Committees. Focus co-organised ten workshops covering issues on alternative regionalisms, agrarian reform and food sovereignty, peace-building, China, energy and climate change, and trade. In addition, some Focus staff spoke in and moderated plenary sessions, facilitated the civil society dialogue with the ASEAN Secretary General and ASEAN Chair, and spoke in press conferences and media events. The event was well received with over 1,000 people from all ASEAN countries, except Brunei, in attendance,

ASEAN People's Forum II/ASEAN Civil Society Conference V. Encouraged by the success of the APF/ACSC IV, Focus worked closely with the Thai APF Working Group and other regional organisations based in Thailand to organise the Second APF/Fifth ACSC in October 2009 with the objective of expanding the opportunities for further dialogue with ASEAN officials and governments representatives on a variety of transborder issues, highlighting the free trade and investment agreements and environment and climate justice concerns. Unfortunately, the response from the governments' side was less forthcoming and more controlling than before with the result that civil society representatives elected from the APF II/ACSC V walked out of the interface meeting with the ASEAN leaders.

Focus Alternative Regionalisms programme staff played key roles in APF2/

ACSC V – being members of the steering, programme and drafting committees, as well as co-anchors in the economic and environment dialogue. Aside from the 3-day main event on October 18-20, Focus also organised two side events: Global Crises, Regional Alternatives: Perspectives from Asia, Latin America and Europe (Peoples' Agenda for Alternative Regionalisms at the APF Public Forum, 20 October 2009) and Peoples' Agenda for Alternative Regionalisms Caucus (21 October 2009). At the national level, Focus Philippines also co-organised several national and international workshops and caucuses as part of its Alternative Regionalisms work. Focus staff served as facilitators, speakers, documentors, co-organisers and were also directly in charge of conceptual design, travel and other logistical arrangements for the following events.

- Culture and Identity Caucus (11 September 2009)
- Migration Thematic Caucus (24 September 2009)
- Peace and Democracy Thematic Caucus (24 September 2009)
- Trade Caucus (24 September 2009)
- Exploring Regional Engagements and Responses: Multi-Sectoral Workshop (25 September 2009)

The main workshop had 55 participants (delegates from the thematic caucuses), with a 58%-42% balance in favour of women. The activity sought to provide more information on regional engagements and platforms, specifically the ASEAN. Participants gained basic information and updates on the ASEAN, and were able to discuss the ASEAN in relation to their specific issues and advocacies. The occasion was also used to explain the APF/ACSC and to ask the different thematic workshops to send representatives to the regional event in Bangkok in Octo-

ber. Focus facilitated the participation of these representatives in the 2nd ASEAN People's Forum/ASEAN Civil Society Conference V held in Cha-am, Thailand.

Peoples' SAARC. A Peoples' SAARC meeting, a parallel event which is held every time the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) leaders meet, was held in Kathmandu on 16-17 March 2009. It was well represented. A seminar on the Peoples' Union of South Asia was planned in the last quarter of 2009 in Sri Lanka, which is to lead to a conceptual analysis of alternative regionalism and what we imagine as a new South Asia. Working groups have been formed around various issues of concern in the region and people have taken responsibilities to work on them. Focus is responsible for trade, climate change and foreign policy and terror. The seminar, however, has not yet materialised and will probably be held at a later date.

Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF). Following the last AEPF, which was held in Beijing in October 2008, Focus is playing a key role in the preparations for the next forum in Brussels. The International Organising Committee met in Brussels to evaluate the AEPF 7 and to do outreach work to campaign groups and organisations in Belgium in April. Organisationally Focus is taking the lead in setting up a working group on Climate Justice and is also taking part in the planning of the AEPF South Asia event, which will be held on the 13 January in Delhi.

Solidarity for Asian Peoples' Advocacies (SAPA). Focus is a member of the Regional Steering Committee of the SAPA, and is a key member of the Working Group on ASEAN. Focus is also part of two new Working Groups – Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, and South Asia, and proposed the creation of the Task Force

on Climate Change within the WG on ASEAN. In this year's General Forum, Focus co-organised the main plenary on alternative regionalisms, with activists from Europe, Latin America and South Asia participating.

Focus also plays an important role in strategising, planning and resourcing key regional initiatives of SAPA, including the first-ever civil society briefing with the newly-formed ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives in Jakarta on 24 August, and the Vietnam National process, immediately after the APF 2/ACSC V, in Hanoi on 26 October.

Focus also attended the ASEAN Secretariat Symposium on Methods of Stakeholder Involvement in Regional Organizations in Jakarta on 23-25 November, and led the discussion within the SAPA Working on ASEAN on how to approach multi-stakeholder processes and people's participation in ASEAN. The process and discussion is in the very early stages yet, and it is expected that more work will focus around these issues in 2010.

People's Agenda for Alternative Regionalisms (PAAR). To consolidate various experiences in tracking different regional formations, as well as to develop a progressive agenda towards region-building, the People's Agenda for Alternative Regionalisms was formed in January at the sidelines of the World Social Forum in Belem, Brazil. The PAAR is a platform for groups engaged in the issues of regionalisms and regional alternatives to establish a progressive pole in the debate, as well as provide a collegial environment among activists in the discussion of the issues. The PAAR agreed on a modest work plan, which include a website (www.alternative-regionalisms.org), organising workshops on regional responses to the

(climate, food, financial) crises, an e-list for information exchange and updates, and continuous discussion.

PAAR's major activity so far was the "Regional integration: an opportunity to face the crises" conference in Asuncion, Paraguay on July 21-22, 2009. Focus staff helped plan the conference agenda, resourced the plenary sessions, as well as participated in side events, including the meeting with Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo.

PAAR was the main organiser of the two side events in the APF 2/ACSC V (see above).

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ON ALTERNATIVES

Development Roundtable Series (DRTS). The activities of the Development Roundtable Series in the Philippines for 2009 centred around continuing the integration process started in 2008. The integration process represents the cumulative cross-thematic work of the different Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) on the six DRTS thematic areas: Trade and Industrial Policy, Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Foreign Policy, Water Resources and Services, Visayas and Mindanao.

The first draft of the integrative paper, one of the key outputs of the integration process, has been presented at the core group meeting in May and is subject to finalisation in October. However, most of the drafts were still unfinished when the year ended. This is because aside from the comments and inputs of the thematic working groups, the agreement was also to present the papers to wider audiences

to validate the paper and to gather other inputs as well. Much of the activities this year of the thematic working groups were therefore largely consultative work and validation exercises that serve as input to the integrative paper.

- The trade and industrial policy thematic held a privatisation conference in July with the aim of subjecting the initial results of the privatisation research to further discussion and debate. It drew in participants working on key sectors that have been subjected to privatisation: water, oil, electricity, housing; among other relevant organisations and research outfits. Research and interviews for the other trade research papers are on-going.

- The foreign policy thematic held various consultations with groups and individuals directly working on foreign policy and related issues (including interviews with the Department of Foreign Affairs, foreign policy analysts and outfits). The initial result of the research was presented in May. The editing of the paper on the history of Philippine foreign policy has been finished last November and the inputs of the editor will be presented to the TWG and the author.

- The Mindanao thematic's food and agriculture paper is the most advanced among the research papers and have been subjected to further consultations in the second half of the year.

- Initial consultations were conducted with various interest groups such as the cooperatives, activists, academics, civil society organisations, and local government officials. The water integrative paper will further be subjected to consulta-

tions in the Visayas and Mindanao.

- The agrarian reform and rural development thematic conducted consultations with advocates, peoples' organisations and NGOs working on agrarian reform and agriculture on the integrative paper. The paper is still being finalised.

- The Visayas thematic working group conducted an initial workshop-write-shop among the writers which incorporated the various thematic issues as well as the process documentation of the regional consultations held last year. Initial drafts have been submitted but the papers will need consolidation.

Outside of the integration process, the different TWGs also conducted activities on issues relevant to their specific thematic.

- The yearly Pre-SONA (State of the Nation Address) conference, a venue for assessing the real state of the nation, was held on 16 July to present the real score on Charter Change, Constituent Assembly and the global crisis. It was well-attended, gathering over 100 participants from various sectors and formations severely affected by the worsening political and economic crisis in the country.
- A roundtable discussion among the relevant DRTS members with each of the DDARP expert speakers, Prof. Peter Kwong and Mr. Larry Lohmann.
- The DRTS thematic working group on water also conducted a couple of roundtable discussions with a governance reform expert and activist from Tamil Nadu, India, V. Suresh of the Centre for Law, Policy, and Human Rights Studies.

DRTS Integrative Papers (draft) are available at the resources page on the DRTS website (www.focusweb.org/drts).

People to People Exchange. The third People to People Exchange Project focused on China and Thailand. To make the project more beneficial and interesting to both the visiting Thai delegation and their receiving hosts in China, we adjusted the design and started to adopt a more focused theme: agriculture, rural development and alternatives. The Thai delegation was composed of representatives from two NGOs (BioThai Foundation and RRAFA) and two farmer organisations (Assembly of the Poor and Alternative Agriculture Group in the Northeast). The China visit covered the period 5-17 April.

We visited NGOs in Beijing and farmer cooperative groups in Guangxi province wherein the participants exchanged views on the Chinese development model and land rights in general and topics like land reform, impacts of regional trade to farmers, role and advantage of building cooperatives, alternative technology and farming methods, organisational capacity building and farmer to farmer linkages. The delegation also spoke in two informal group discussions organised by their host groups. The first was an informal discussion on poverty organised by Moving Mountains and the second was a discussion on WTO and impacts to farmers.

Deconstructing Discourse and Activist Retooling Programme (DDARP). Introduced in 2008 in the Philippines, the Deconstructing Discourse and Activist Retooling Programme (DDARP) aims to revisit debates on contemporary development issues, ideologies and paradigms and introduce new frontiers in analyses and perspectives to contribute to knowledge production, critical discourse and political

action. It features programmatic short-term courses (lecture series) and one-time public lectures/roundtable discussions by nationally and internationally acclaimed scholars that are leading experts in their respective fields.

For 2009, the DDARP anchored its first lecture series with focus on one of the most remarkable and oft misunderstood phenomenon of the 21st century: the rise of China. The lecture series sought to shed light to some of the most pertinent questions (and common misconceptions) surrounding China's emergence as a global superpower and its impact the world over.

Dr. Peter Kwong, Professor of Asian American Studies and Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter College, and Professor of Sociology at the Graduate Centre of the City University of New York has been invited as guest lecturer given his work and expertise on China. He is best known for his work on modern Chinese politics and economics and has written extensively on these issues.

Co-organised with the Third World Studies Centre, the Philippine Political Science Association, UP-Asian Centre and UP Political Science Department, the lecture series drew in students, members of academe from various universities in the metro, civil society organisations and groups working directly on China-related issues. Each lecture attracted on average 80 participants.

The debates and the discussions at the lecture series underscored the timeliness of the topic. For many, including the Philippine Left, the lecture was instrumental at revealing the new face of China, its dynamics, trajectory and politics which is quite different from the China of three or four decades ago. It drew out the nu-

ances of China's development, the contradictions within its domestic economy and the costs that came with it.

The second DDARP, held in late November-early December, focused on the different issues surrounding climate change which became very timely, not only because of the typhoons that devastated the Philippines in October but also because of the important negotiation session under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) scheduled in December.

Mr. Larry Lohmann, a well-known climate activist and founding member of the Durban Group for Climate Justice was invited as the speaker for the lecture series. Ms. Lohmann works for the Corner House, a UK-based research and advocacy organisation. His books include *Pulping the South: Industrial Tree Plantations in the Global Paper Economy* (with Ricardo Carrere) (Zed, 1996) and the edited volume *Carbon Trading: A Critical Conversation on Climate Change, Privatisation and Power* (Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 2006).

The Larry Lohmann Speaker Tour was held from 18 November to 3 December, 2009 in various parts of the Philippines. The first leg from 17-20 November consisted mainly of university tours in Metro Manila and round-table discussions and fora with civil society groups on different issues like Climate and Trade, REDD and Alternatives for Climate Change. The second leg of the tour were also lectures to universities round-table discussions and fora with civil society groups but were held in key cities (Cebu and Leyte) in the Visayas and Mindanao (Cagayan de Oro and Davao). The third leg also held in Manila focused more on legislative discussions and media briefings. For the

two-week tour, sixteen (16) events were co-organised by Focus with different universities and organisations reaching a total of 1,850 students and faculty, 100 civil society advocates and 25 congressional officers and staff. Media exposure was also achieved through interviews with radio stations. Two areas in the provinces prone to the effects of climate change (Cagayan de Oro and Ormoc, Leyte) and two areas in Metro Manila (Marikina City and Biñan, Laguna) affected by the Typhoon Ondoy flooding were also visited as part of the Speaker Tour.

The DDARP has also successfully expanded its reach to other universities in and outside of Metro Manila as well as other civil society organisations and interest groups.

The lecture schedule and materials are available at the DDARP web page. For online streaming of the lecture series, visit <http://drtstv.focusweb.org>

World Social Forum process. The WSF process in South Asia was sought to be revived with meetings in Kathmandu but political changes in Nepal – the falling of the Maoist government and the friction among the left parties - resulted in the indefinite postponement of the South Asian social forum event. Attempts are on to take up the threads of the process again by shifting the venue of the meeting and the event to Bangladesh. The Indian process is not very active, but Focus India is still part of the core group of the Indian process at whatever level it is at. Focus India took initiative in organising a broader meeting of the Indian social forum in Delhi in 2009, where responsibilities were divided up to revive the process.

A Focus staff is in the Liaison Group of the International Council of the WSF at least

until 2010. Beside the local processes there has also been involvement in the global process from time to time.

Conference on Social Equality. This process started in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh in the North where a dalit party (Bahujan Samaj Party) is in power and is led by a dalit woman Chief Minister. The plan is a) to hold a conference on Social Equality centring on Ambedkar thought and the importance of this to the left and social movements, to build these linkages in a real sense in theory and on the ground; and b) to set up a research and publication centre in Lucknow around these issues. Both the activities were stalled due to the upsets faced by the BSP in the general elections, but the process is still ongoing, and is likely to take off in 2010.

Discourse on socialism in the 21st century and alternatives. Focus is working with

other partners: globally the World Forum of Alternatives started by Samir Amin and Francois Houtart, and in India various left intellectuals representing different formations, to hold conferences and workshops in India and maybe other parts of South Asia on the concept of "Socialism for the 21st century" and publish the discourse and disseminate widely for further discussions. In 2009 a basic concept note was prepared, and there were a number of meetings within a core group of 5 persons, to develop the concept further. A larger meeting of 12 persons is slated for the second quarter of 2010 to continue the discussion on the concept and the plan of activity, and also the participants in this dialogue. Agreement on the different aspects of the project is slow and gradual.

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS:

- Afsar Jafri: "G20 mutes its demands at the cost of its farmers" Focus on Trade. December 2009
- Aya Fabros. "Dispatch from the EPZA: A Tale of Two Women." Focus on Trade, Number 145, April 2009.
- Aya Fabros: "Believing in Bullcrud and Imaginary Improvements", Focus on the Philippines, July 2009.
- Aya Fabros: "Economies of the Poor as Seedbed for Viable Alternative Economies", a think-piece in Focus Alternatives Dossier (forthcoming).
- Benny Kuruvilla: "India turn-around at the Doha talks". Focus on Trade, December 2009.
- Dorothy Guerrero, "Saving China's Economy and the Climate: Can the Twain Meet?" Focus on Trade, July 2009.
- Ignacio Jose Minambres. "Background Paper: Investment Liberalisation in the EU-ASEAN FTA", Occasional Paper No. 5, Focus on the Global South, February 2009.
- Jacques-chai Chomthongdi. "Thailand's Response to the Crisis Falls Short of Real Change." Focus on Trade, Number 145, April 2009.
- Jenina Joy Chavez. "Regional Social Policy in Asia: Prospects and Challenges from the ASEAN and SAARC Experiences", in World-Regional Social Policy and Global Governance: New research and policy agendas in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, Bob Deacon et al. (eds.) (Routledge, 2009)
- Joanne Ditson, "Social Enterprises: Reflections on Emerging Alternatives". Focus Alternatives Dossier (forthcoming).
- Joseph Purugganan. "Trade Roller-Coaster: The Ups and Downs in 2008 and the Road Ahead." Focus on the Philippines, January 2009.
- Joseph Purugganan. "Closer Ties, Larger Markets: A closer look at ASEAN FTAs. Focus on
- ASEAN-Australia, New Zealand FTA" Revised paper with new sections on ASEAN investment regime released in April 2009 published in the Philippine Natural Resources Journal of the Legal Rights and Natural Resources - Friends of the Earth Philippines, August 2009.
- Joseph Purugganan: "Asian fishers protest WTO's encroachment on their livelihoods" Focus on Trade. December 2009.
- Mary Louise Malig & Cecilia Olivet: "Free Trade and Climate Change Resistance: Voices from the South". A Series of Profile Articles on Participants on the Trade and Climate Caravan. Climate Chronicle, TNI and Focus on Trade. December 2009.
- Shalmali Guttal and Dorothy Guerrero: "The Global Trade Regime: A Challenge to Human
- Rights" in forthcoming, Milestone Human Rights Challenges in Asia, Forum Asia, Bangkok 2009.
- Shalmali Guttal: "Ailing but Alive: The WTO Ten Years after Seattle". Focus on Trade, December 2009.
- Tu Wenwen. "We are Humans Before we are Consumers." Focus on Trade, Number 145, April 2009.
- Walden Bello. "U-20: Will the Global Economy Resurface?" Focus on Trade, Number 145, April 2009.
- Walden Bello. "Will China Save the World from Depression?" May 2009. <http://focusweb.org/will-china-save-the-world-from-depression.html?Itemid=125>
- Walden Bello. "A man for this season? Keynes." Business Mirror on line and Focus on Trade Number 146, July 2009.

PRESENTATIONS:

- EU-India FTA. Presentation by Afsar Jafri at the session on Strategies against 'Global Europe' & EU - FTAs in Asia at the workshop on The Trade Policy of the European Union in Latin America (2): Strategies of Bi-Regional Resistance and Alternatives; World Social Forum, Belem, Brazil, January 2009.
- The World Trade Organisation and Human Rights. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at an international training workshop organised by Forum Asia and ESCR-NET in Bangkok, January 28, 2009.
- Closer ties, larger markets: Examining ASEAN regional integration and FTAs, presented by Joseph Purugganan at the workshop on the EU-ASEAN FTA at the ASEAN Peoples' Forum in Bangkok. February 2009
- State of Negotiations and Resistance, presented by Joseph Purugganan at the Third Plenary Session of the ASEAN Peoples' Forum, February 2009, in Bangkok.
- Dissecting the context of NIPPS: IPR in Free Trade Agreement, presented by Joseph Purugganan at the forum on NIPPS organised by the Third World Network. June 2009.
- Overview of Philippine Trade and Tariff Policy, presented by Joseph Purugganan at the Forum/Workshop of small sugar farmers on bilateral FTAs organized by PhilDHRAA, 23 June, 2009, in Balayan, Batangas.
- Global Trade and Development: Is the WTO DDR and FTAs the answer? Presentation by Joseph Purugganan for APL Council of Leaders. August 2009.
- Bantay Jpepa Presentation: New Phase of a continuing campaign against an unfair and unjust deal. Prepared by Joseph Purugganan for the JPEPA forum in Bataan, 19 September, 2009.
- Revisiting the Doha Negotiations. Update presented by Joseph Purugganan at the SNR Labour Forum and SNR -Davao Doha Forum in November 2009.
- SNR Statement on Doha Negotiations and the WTO Ministerial. Presented to the Special Committee on Globalization House of Representatives, 18 November 2009.
- Governments: Listen to your people. Abandon Doha, confront the crises! Statement by members of the Our World is Not for Sale Coalition. December 2009.
- The Impacts of the Financial Crisis on Women. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal, Workshop on economic and financial trends organised by the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW), Bangkok, Thailand, 25 March, 2009.
- What Next? Alternatives to capitalist development. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at the Asian Peoples' Movement Against the ADB, Bali, 3 May, 2009.
- False Solutions to Climate Change. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at training and strategy workshop "Working for Climate Justice, Towards Copenhagen and Beyond", Bali, 6 May, 2009.
- The World Bank and Climate Change. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at training and strategy workshop "Working for Climate Justice, Towards Copenhagen and Beyond", Bali, 7 May, 2009.
- Strategies to Resist the Privatisation of Property Relations. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at the Conference, "Creating Local Initiatives for Peoples' Sovereignty", Medan, Indonesia, 29-31 July, 2009.
- Alternatives in Water Governance. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at JS-APMDD strategy workshop on water and power privatisation. Bangkok, 2 October, 2009.
- Post-War Reconstruction and the Challenges of Neoliberalism. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at public meeting on the Nepal Peace Process. Kathmandu, 17 December, 2009.

- Global Financial Crisis and Challenges for Labour. Presentation by Dorothy Guerrero at the Annual Meeting of the Asian Transnational Corporation Program of the Hong Kong-based Asia Monitor Resource Centre, Bangkok, 4 November, 2009.
- Global Financial Crisis and Implications for Women and Children. Presentation by Chanida Bamford at the annual meeting of Southeast Asian staff and partners of Terre des Hommes, Germany, in Mae Sot, 27 November, 2009.
- Economics and Gender. Presentation by Chanida Bamford at the seminar on Economic Policies for Future Burma organised by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation in conjunction with Burma Partnership, Chiang Mai, 28 June, 2009.
- Asian Response to the Crisis: Does Regional Cooperation Offer an Opportunity?, presentation by Jenina Joy Chavez during the Asuncion Conference, updated for the September ASEAN workshop, and finalised for the Global Crises, Regional Alternatives forum, Cha-am, Thailand, 20 October 2009. (published in the PAAR website)
- Understanding Southeast Asia, presentation by Jenina Joy Chavez for the Hao Ran Foundation Working Partners' Training Program, Taipei, 30 July, 2009.
- ASEAN Charter, Civil Society Processes: Opportunities and Challenges for People's Participation in ASEAN, presentation by Jenina Joy Chavez for the International Conference on People's Participation and Community Development, Visayas State University, Leyte, 6-8 August, 2009.
- Civil Society Engagement with ASEAN: An Overview, presentation by Jenina Joy Chavez for the Briefing with the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives, Jakarta, 24 August, 2009.
- Locating Civil Society Spaces in ASEAN: Challenge for Vietnam, presentation by Jenina Joy Chavez for the Vietnam Country Process, Hanoi, 26 October 2009.

A woman with dark skin and hair tied back, wearing a light blue jacket and a matching cap, is sitting in a field of tall, green and yellow grass. She is holding a piece of grass in her mouth and looking off to the side. The background is a bright, overcast sky.

RECLAIMING THE COMMONS

Photo by Aison Garcia

In 2009, Focus' activities in the Reclaiming the Commons programme spanned local, national regional and international levels. We were able to achieve a good balance of research, writing, mobilisations, training and public education, and networking with social movements and organisations at multiple levels.

CHALLENGING CAPITALIST AGRICULTURE

Activities in this sub-programme overlap considerably with those in Food sovereignty, and Decommodification and Agrarian Reform. Throughout 2009, Focus was involved in processes and initiatives in response to the global economic and food crises, which in turn are closely associated with agrarian crises and the need for food sovereignty.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

In January 2009, a staff from Focus in India joined representatives from about 30 countries to commemorate 25 years of efforts of the Landless Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil. It was commemorated by visiting some of the mega economic projects in the Amazon region (in the state of Para) under worst capitalist exploitation by mining companies, hydroelectric power plants, eucalyptus monoculture and extensive cattle grazing ranches, which are the major cause for the extensive destruction of the Amazon. It was also celebrated by visiting the sites of two MST agrarian reform settlements, including the one where 19 peasants were massacred in Eldorado dos Carajás, which are presented today as the popular experiments for the development of the region according to the needs of people. The MST celebrated the 25 years of their

movement by reaffirming their commitment to struggle for agrarian reforms and the victories of its people whereby thousands of families have got access to land; millions of hectares have been recovered from latifúndios (big landed estates); hundreds of schools have been constructed and millions of exploited people from the countryside have regained their dignity, built a new consciousness and today walk with pride. It was also celebrated by reaffirming the commitment to struggle for education and eradication of illiteracy, and for international solidarity and the rights of peoples to self-rule and self-determination. The MST reaffirmed its plan to continue the fight in alliance with all movements and organisations of workers and of the people against agri-business, capitalism, the domination of the bourgeois state, and imperialism. It was an important opportunity for Focus to learn from the successes of peoples' struggle for land reform, eradication of poverty and liberation.

In February, Focus, La Via Campesina, Forum Asia, and the Land Research Action Network organised workshops on Defending the Right of Peasants and Small Scale Food Producers: Towards an International Convention on the Rights of the Peasant, and Defending People's Food sovereignty and Agrarian Reform, at the ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF), held in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshops were spaces for rural groups—farmers, rural women, fisherfolks and indigenous peoples, and activists from Southeast Asia to discuss the gaps in the current human rights regime and mechanisms in advancing the rights of peasant, challenge the neoliberal model of agriculture, particularly ASEAN's response to the global food crisis, and alternatives. The workshops brought together more than 70 participants and speakers from Thailand, Indo-

nesia, Cambodia, the Philippines, Burma, Vietnam, and other countries.

During the APF, Focus launched its publication on the food crisis in Southeast Asia, "Business as Usual: Responses within ASEAN to the Food Crisis" which was also translated into Thai. The publications were very well received in both English and Thai. Also during the APF, in collaboration with La Via Campesina and Assembly of the Poor, Focus co-organised events on the food crisis, agrarian reform and food sovereignty.

During the last week of March, Focus participated in the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) that was held in Bangkok. Focus participated in this Conference as a member of the Rural Development Working Group (RDWG). The RDWG was established as a regional caucus of civil society organisations committed to engaging with the United Nations and ASEAN processes in the areas of rural development, food and agrarian issues. At the Conference, Focus made formal interventions on the food and economic crises, land and water use and regulation of agribusiness corporations. Focus also played a central role in finalising the civil society statement to the official Conference. Focus' interventions were particularly noted with appreciation by the official delegations from Iran, Thailand, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

On 3-4 April, Focus staff participated in an international conference titled, Visible Warnings, The World Food Crisis in Perspective. The Conference was held at Cornell University in New York State, USA, and brought academics, policy advisors and activists together to offer analyses of the food crises from different perspectives. Focus staff made two presentations at

the Conference: one on the links between privatisation of the commons and food crises, and another on the international movement on peoples' food sovereignty.

In September, immediately prior to the Inter-sessional meeting of the UNFCCC in Bangkok, Focus joined the APMDD and NGO Forum on the ADB to co-organise a workshop in Bangkok on climate change oriented towards women from social movements and grassroots organisations. Although the workshop was open to both women and men, the co-organisers made concerted efforts to prioritise the participation of women from social movements and grassroots groups since past experience showed that majority of participants in climate change related events from the above constituencies in Asia tend to be men. Focus made presentations on the relationship between the food-agriculture sectors and climate change, market based "solutions" to climate change, and how all these can impact women. Focus also helped to draft and finalise a statement of unity from the workshop about climate change and women.

Since March an intern started to do desk research on China's agro-investments in the Mekong Subregion. This is a part of our long term study and data gathering on China's Going-Out Strategy, which we started in the last program period 2005-2008 with the publication of a book on China in Africa. For 2009 – 2011 our focus is on the growing investment of China in Asia. The initial output is a list of Chinese investments and agricultural TNCs in the Mekong. These will be elaborated further with CSOs from China and the Mekong region in 2010 into a full-fledged collaborative research and monitoring project.

THAILAND

In Thailand, Focus is part of a loose network on agriculture and food security which is monitoring related government policies and conducts advocacy work by securing the support of progressive academics and officials. Focus' contribution to the network in 2009 was an analytical paper in the Thai language on how official agricultural development strategies in Thailand continued to mirror those of the World Bank, i.e. locked into the capitalist mode of production, despite the fact that the International Assessment on Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) had authoritatively come to a conclusion that current industrial farming practices needed a radical change as they will result in further degradation of the environment, further widening of the gap between the haves and have-nots, and greatly threaten food security in the future. This paper was also presented at a seminar organised by Thammasat University and was subsequently made a required reading for its rural development courses.

PHILIPPINES

Focus was involved with the Balay Kalinaw Peoples Agenda to Respond to the Economic Crisis in the Philippines, a comprehensive set of proposals that was been endorsed by more than one hundred civil society organisations in the Philippines. In addition, through its Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) Focus Philippines embarked on a process of integrating the results of its various consultations with smallhold farmers, fisherfolks, women, NGOs, government officials, and other groups working on agriculture. An initial draft of the process documentation and research paper was presented with the core group of the DRTS in May, entitled, "Empowering Smallholder's Convergence in Mindanao: Towards improving agricul-

tural productivity, practices and policies" and was subjected to further consultations in the latter half of the year.

Focus also devoted a great deal of time to monitoring the impact of the food crisis and the multiple crises of climate change, and financial, particularly on women under the State of the Filipino Women research, a collaborative political project with the women's formation Welga ng Kababaihan Laban sa Kahirapan at Globalisasyon. The aim of this project is to surface women's voices and experiences amidst the multiple crises. Women from different sectors will be documenting and collectively analysing the impact, responses, coping mechanisms and proposed solutions related to the crises. In November and December, Focus staff conducted meetings and initial focus group discussions with women from the rural areas, and informal sector.

INDIA

Monitoring food crisis & food speculation: Focus published a paper on the food crisis which was included in the Parliamentary Documentation (Vol. XXXIV) and circulated to all the Members of Parliament (MPs). Focus India monitored the food crisis in India which was mainly due to the increasing retail price for essential commodities, and how these increased prices impacted the poor. Along with several farmers unions, Focus met with the Commerce Minister, Anand Sharma to discuss the problems arising from import liberalisation to deal with the inflation and increasing price of food. The farmers unions and Focus took the position that the real solution to the food crisis lies in regulating the corporate domination over food and giving attractive and reasonable market prices to farmers for their produce.

Focus also worked with farmers unions

to oppose the import of raw sugar from Brazil when the Indian sugar cane farmers are not getting remunerative prices. Also, sugar mills are not procuring sugar domestically since they are importing raw sugar from Brazil. The vociferous protests by farmers forced the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to ban the import of raw sugar in the State. Focus was involved in public education with farm groups to help them to understand the role of futures, derivatives and commodity speculation in creating a sugar crisis in the country.

Monitoring Agriculture TNCs: Focus has been monitoring the role of agribusiness corporations in taking over the seed business and controlling food and agriculture in India. In October, Focus staff served as the resource person at the Maharashtra State Hamara Beej Abhiyan (Save our Seeds Campaign in Maharashtra) in Pune, where Focus presented its analysis on how large corporations like Monsanto are taking over seed business in India.

The Indo-US Knowledge Initiative: Focus India is trying to access information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) by filing a Right to Information application on the Indo US Knowledge Initiative through allies in the US, mainly the National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC) and Raj Patel. We have sent a set of question to NFFC to seek responses from the USDA and these questions are mainly to know the list of all collaboration between India and the US, the specific role of US corporations like Wal-Mart, Monsanto and ADM, total investments by the US in India under this agreement, list of the collaborations on gene transfers from India, etc.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

In March 2009, a Focus staff person was invited to join a team to draft a framework of principles to eradicate hunger titled, Policies and Actions to Eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition. The framework was initiated by the International Planning Committee (IPC), the civil society forum that emerged out of the World Food Summit in 1996. The IPC decided to initiate the framework following the Madrid Food Summit in December 2008, in which the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon launched a High Level Commission on hunger and malnutrition. The drafting team worked in consultation with a reference group of representatives nominated by various social movements coalitions committed to upholding the right to food, land, water, employment and health. After several rounds of consultation and changes, a working document of the framework was finalised and released during the World Food Summit in Rome in November 2009. Focus staff drafted many sections of the document as well as edited and shaped the final working document. Focus staff also contributed to preparations by social movements for the World Food Summit and its associated activities.

Also in March 2009, Focus joined over 20 civil society organisations to launch the Save the Mekong campaign. The main aims of the campaign are to create awareness of the impacts of dam construction and hydro-power development in the Mekong and associated watersheds on local communities and ecologies. Eleven large dam projects on the Mekong mainstream are in the pipeline in Thailand, the Lao PDR and Cambodia; smaller dams are also being planned for other rivers that

drain into the Mekong and contribute to the Mekong's total water volume. If these dams are built, the survival of Mekong eco-systems, flora and fauna—especially fish—will be seriously disrupted, which in turn will result in livelihood and food crises for the millions of people who live along the Mekong watersheds. Focus contributed financial support to the campaign, and was also active in building public support for the campaign regionally and internationally. In 2010, Focus will attempt to broaden campaign activities to further emphasise food security and food sovereignty issues. Information about the campaign can be found at: <http://www.savethemekong.org/index.php?langss=en>

On April 7, Focus staff participated in a strategy meeting in New York City among US based food and human rights groups and US and international members of La Via Campesina. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to build common platforms among different constituencies for food sovereignty and the rights of food producers and food providers. Following from this meeting, Focus staff assisted human rights groups to integrate food sovereignty into their campaigns and materials.

India

Focus coordinated a research project titled Study of Marginal Farmers in the Context of Changing Economic and Technological Environment for the Joshi-Adhikari Institute of Social Studies based in Delhi. The Joshi-Adhikari Institute, the research wing of the Communist Party of India, is conducting an extensive survey-cum-study on the problems of marginal farmers in eight major states (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh) representing the different regions of the

country. In each of the selected states, 4-5 major crops were identified and in total 18 crops were short-listed for survey. In total, the study will cover 116 villages 29 districts in India. The research is oriented towards finding out the problems of marginal farmers in different parts of the country in the context of recent technological and economic changes. The objective of the study is to find out the ways of making marginal farmers' lives and livelihoods secure and proposing appropriate measures to policy makers. It is also aimed towards understanding the production patterns and livelihood security of marginal farmers and exploring the possibility of promoting collective production activities among small and marginal farmers. Focus India took the responsibility to coordinate this survey in the four districts (Amrawati, Beed, Nashik and Raigad) of Maharashtra covering 16 villages in total. Focus India also organised two workshops, one in Mumbai and the other in Pune, with resource persons from Joshi Adhikari Institute and the Communist Party of India to undertake the survey in the state of Maharashtra. The data from Maharashtra and seven others states were collected through an extensive survey and the currently the collected data are being analysed to get the final report ready by March 2010.

In February, as part of the GM Free India Campaign, Focus facilitated the screening of Poison on the Platter a documentary film on Genetically Engineered Organisms (GMOs) in Mumbai made by renowned filmmaker and social activist Mahesh Bhatt to sensitise the public at large about the hazards of transgenic foods. Bhatt's film makes a mockery of Government of India's claim of not allowing import of any GM foods in the country as it conclusively demonstrates that supermarkets in India are flooded with harmful food stuffs,

and biotech MNCs are cashing in on the ignorance of unsuspecting consumers in India. This film is, therefore, an attempt to generate awareness among consumers and kick start an informed debate on the issue.

Focus India was invited by the La Via Campesina (LVC) South Asia for its regional meeting held in Delhi in June. This meeting was attended by men and women peasant leaders and members of LVC from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India. The meetings were called to discuss the current global food, climate and economic crisis and the strategies and actions LVC South Asia needs to undertake in response. Focus staff were invited to present our reading of the triple crises and their impacts on South Asia. We were also asked to make a presentation on GMOs and how farmers unions can respond to this threat. LVC decided to organise a conference on food sovereignty in South Asia and bring together groups with different expertise in the region to articulate what food sovereignty means for each country and how it should be implemented. It also decided to organise events, activities and materials on TNCs, survival of the poor, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, climate crises, agrarian Reform, gender Parity, youth and migration.

In May, Focus India was invited by Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) to make a presentation on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Sovereignty and its impact in India. The seminar was meant for middle management staff and project partners of some Church based organisations from Maharashtra and Gujarat in an effort to develop an organisational understanding on issues related to climate change and to develop a more focused approach in addressing these issues. In June, Focus India staff were again invited

by CASA to make similar presentations at a workshop for Church Leaders of Mumbai.

DECOMMODIFICATION & AGRARIAN REFORM

In 2009, Focus' work on decommodification and agrarian reform centred on promoting comprehensive and integral agrarian reform as a priority issue on national and international policy agenda.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

Focus was actively involved in several initiatives that targeted multilateral development agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation, Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, and the United Nations.

In October, Focus along with La Via Campesina and Friends of the Earth International, organised a workshop on Agrarian Reform, Food Sovereignty and Climate Change in Bangkok Thailand. The workshop was organised during the civil society events of the UNFCCC inter-sessional meetings in Bangkok to advocate for a non-market driven approach to tackling climate change, based on agro-ecological production and sustainable land and resource use. The workshop was attended by about 50 representatives from farmers' organisations, unions, civil society organisations and international environmental groups.

Also in October, Focus participated at the consultation on the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance on Land and Natural Resources Tenure organized by FAO's Land Administration and Manage-

ment unit. The consultation gathered 51 people from 16 countries of the region (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) and some 20 academics, experts and others from outside the region. As part of the IPC (civil society) delegation, Focus facilitated, documented, acted as rapporteurs, and helped in drafting the collective statement of the IPC. An internal report was prepared and distributed to its partners and submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.

CAMBODIA

Focus organised two workshops in January and February respectively to facilitate exchange and sharing of experiences and information among local activist networks from villages resisting land grabs by private companies and state promoted projects. The main aims of the workshops were to review the success of past strategies to resist/ward off land grab attempts, understand new, emerging threats to community lands, and formulate plans to extend local activist networks to other districts and provinces. Members of the action research team trained by Focus over the past two years led the workshops. Future actions to expand the action research process to new areas were planned, as were ways by which to recruit and train research team members from new communities.

The second generation of "community action researchers" were recruited by the first generation of action research team by November. These researchers are representatives from villages that are entangled in conflicts over their lands, forests and fisheries, usually with private companies and urban land-grabbers but

also at times with other rural communities displaced from other lands. In November, they were trained in simple action-research methods by which they can document the conflicts and work with communities to come up with appropriate ways to address conflicts and defend their resources.

Also in Cambodia, Focus/LRAN is part of an informal community of activists, researchers and human rights advocates that is committed to working with rural and urban communities on strategies to resist land and natural resource expropriation, evictions and persecution of community leaders/representatives who are visible in mobilising communities against land and resource grabs. This community has started to meet regularly (at least monthly) and pooling resources to support grassroots actions led by communities to protect their lands and natural resources.

CHINA

Focus staff conducted a field study to understand the links between land, labour and urbanisation in China. For the last three decades, Chinese economic planners have put emphasis on the development of large-scale high-productive agriculture and transfer of "surplus labour" from rural to urban areas as the path to development. The improvement of the productivity of land is a huge challenge for China. Land reform is on the agenda and heated debates follow any discussion on privatisation, nationalisation and collective ownership of agricultural lands. The field study was conducted in Sichuan province in March-April 09. The interviews and collected data in China are currently being edited and will be published as a Focus Occasional paper.

PHILIPPINES

There are milestones that Focus' Decommodification and Agrarian Reform program was able to achieve during this period. First is the five-year extension and reform of the twenty-year old Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme (CARP) in the Philippines, a social justice and rural poverty alleviation program. CARP's extension and reform was fought tooth and nail amid the delicate balance of forces in Congress, the entrenched resistance from the landlords, the removal of the compulsory acquisition, which is the heart and soul of the program, through Joint Resolution 19 last December. Looking at the totality of the three year campaigning, CARP's extension and reform was a hard-won victory for the mass movement fighting for agrarian reform, social justice and rural development. Focus was part of a broad coalition of farmers, rural women, agrarian reform activists, academics, partly list organisations called the Reform CARP Movement, which advocated for the extension and reform of the program. In terms of research and documentation, the June edition of the Focus on the Philippines E-newsletter, was devoted to agrarian reform, agrarian justice, and rural development.

After the passage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) with reforms (CARPER) or Republic Act 9700 in June, Focus continued to monitor the crafting of the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR), especially on the land acquisition and distribution and support services. As part of the Reform CARP Movement and the formation, Sulong CARPER!, a platform of agrarian reform advocates, peoples' organisations, NGOs, and (Catholic) Church groups monitoring the implementation of CARPER, Focus staff attended various consultations and small group discussions on the IRR. Apart

from this, it also conducted information and education work to peoples' organisations, including rural women's and informal sector groups, on the new law.

ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES

Water Justice and Democratisation. Focus concentrated its efforts on collaborative studies and campaigns to strengthen public and collective structures and systems for water service provision and resource management, to reclaim water as a commons, to struggle for water justice, equitable water rights, and democratic water policies. Focus was deeply involved in several initiatives: alternatives building and mapping through the Municipal Services Project (MSP), the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) in the Philippines, resisting the privatisation of water in India, and collaborations with social movements, especially around the recently-concluded 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey.

Municipal Services Project (MSP). In 2008, Focus joined a global initiative to look at non-commercial provision of essential services in water and sanitation, health and electricity. Focus agreed to coordinate the research and work in Asia, and to be part of the Global Steering Committee. A staff member based in Manila (Joy Chavez) coordinates the sub-theme on the MSP and essential services within Focus.

Country and sectoral teams have been formed in the Philippines, Thailand and India. The work for East and South Asia has been plotted, starting with a research workshop in Bangkok on February

23, the finalisation of the terms of references (TORs) for the research team, and the research proper. The first stage of the research is a mapping of alternatives – existing, proposed or historical – in the three sectors, for the East and South Asia region. Initial findings of the mapping were presented in the MSP workshop in London on June 15-16, 2009, followed by a Steering Committee Meeting.

Focus continued to work on alternatives mapping and building through the Municipal Services Project and the Development Roundtable Series. In October, Focus organised a two-day regional validation workshop in Bangkok, where the initial results of the MSP research papers were presented and discussed. The workshop gathered 16 researchers, activists, academics, and public sector union in the water, health, and power sectors of Indonesia, Hong Kong/China, Thailand, the Philippines, and India. It was also an opportunity for the researchers to interview the participants and include more cases/countries in the mapping exercise.

PHILIPPINES

The DRTS on water resources and services focused on the integration process, which aims to bring together the different themes of the DRTS in one composite, summative undertaking. Initial consultations were conducted with various interest groups such as the cooperatives, activists, academics, civil society organisations, and local government officials. The integrative paper was further subjected to consultations in the Visayas and Mindanao before being finalised. Outside the integrative process, the DRTS thematic working group on water also conducted roundtable discussions with a governance reform expert and activist from Tamil Nadu, India, V. Suresh of the Centre for Law, Policy, and Human Rights Studies.

The roundtables featured presentations and experiences from India and the Philippines on community and civil society struggles for equitable water rights and democratisation of water policies. These served as spaces to bring together water activists, community-based water operators, urban poor leaders, academics, local government officials, and civil society organisations for learning and exchanges, especially on alternatives to the current model of water management. During this period, Focus also met with water district managers and officials of the Philippine Association of Water Districts through the benchmarking exercise conducted by one of its partners. This forms part of Focus' commitment to 'market' the DRTS and map out alternatives to commercialised water services.

Focus also supported two campaigns for the defence of peoples' human right to water, their livelihoods, and their right to a safe and healthy environment. One is the water contamination campaign against the electronics giant Philips in Las Pinas convened by KAISAMPALAD, a national NGO focusing on local economy development, and residents of one of the 5 affected villages. Several roundtables and strategy meetings were conducted, partnership with Netherlands-based NGOs was established, initial ground work was done at least in two villages, and there is now a process of facilitating the surfacing of complainants who would be the central players in the filing of the case against the local government, the Environmental Management Bureau-Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Philips, locally and in Europe/the Netherlands as the headquarters, for the clean-up of TCE contamination. The campaign is still in its initial stages as more local groundwork and information and education campaign to the residents are need-

ed to be done.

The second is the multi-sectoral campaign of indigenous peoples, farmers, Church, NGOs and environmental groups against the planned damming of Laiban River in the province of Quezon. The affected peoples staged a march from Quezon to Metro Manila in an attempt to demonstrate their opposition to the Laiban dam project and gather political and social support for their cause. Like the water contamination case, a multinational company is also involved in the project, the agribusiness and beverage giant, San Miguel Corporation. The status of the project is uncertain as the situation remains in flux. For its part, Focus gave a briefing to indigenous peoples groups on the current water situation in the Philippines, in particular on dams and alternatives.

INDIA

Focus is part of the Municipal Services Project (MSP) which, in its first phase, is engaged in the Asia level exercise to map out existing and historic municipal services as an alternatives to privatisation in mainly three sectors - electricity, health and water. In India, Focus coordinates the research on water and has already submitted several case studies which was integrated into the Asia report and was presented at the MSP Workshop held in London in June 2009.

Focus is active in campaigns to oppose and resist the privatisation of water services in India and especially in Mumbai. Focus, as part of a larger coalition called Mumbai Paani, is keeping a close watch on the Mumbai Municipal Corporation and their plans to bring in water reform in the city. We are also using the Right to Information Act to access the information related to new projects and ongoing projects where the municipal authorities have

outsourced vital aspect of the water supply and distribution to local (Indian) private operators.

In September, Focus India along with Mumbai Paani and MPAC (Mumbai People's Action Committee) held a discussion on the Bombay Municipal Corporations (BMC) white paper on the water supply in the Mumbai city. The discussion was meant to analyse the white paper in view of the increasing water crisis in the city due to delayed monsoon and what steps the BMC should take to deal with the crisis.

Focus India, as part of the Mumbai Paani, was also involved in the Mumbai level initiative to revive the much abused Mithi River, considered to be the city's key storm water drainage system. The idea behind the initiative was to use people's power to clean up the Mithi River, which is severely polluted by the industry and extensive encroachment. The extent of large-scale destruction of the natural flow of the Mithi was witnessed on 26th July 2005 when there was heavy downpour in Mumbai and 944 mm of rainfall in a single day caused large portions of the suburbs to remain inundated for three subsequent days. Focus participated in marches and demonstrations along the Mithi River banks and in the formation of Mithi river parliament under the leadership of Mr. Rajendra Singh (a Magsaysay Awardee and "Water man" of India), with the aim to involve the Mumbai's citizens to protect this river from pollution, encroachment and over-exploitation, and to build a campaign to ensure the sustenance of these vital ecological resources of Mumbai.

Focus India also participated in the World Water Forum (WWF) held in Istanbul (Turkey) in March and joined the Water Justice Movements in opposing WWF agenda for

the commercialisation and privatisation of water. Focus India actively participated in both the parallel alternative forums – No to Commercialisation of Water Platform and the Alternative Water Forum 2009 where we co-organised workshops and made presentations and also joined a mobilisation along with hundreds of Turkish activists which was brutally attacked by the Turkish police and several Turkish water warriors were arrested.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES

This sub-program is being implemented only in India. Focus continues its ties and collaborations with trade unions, especially the Girni Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti (Mill Workers Action Committee), with whom Focus has been long associated. In 2009, Focus was a co-organiser for the following programs /workshops:

1. In March 2009, Focus, YUVA (Youth for Unity & Voluntary Action) and TISS (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) co-organised a two-day Mumbai level conference called Housing Solutions in Mumbai: Exploring Affordable Housing Solutions for Mumbai. This conference was held in Mumbai at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Mumbai based activists and researchers from around 20 organisations were present. The two-day seminar focused mainly on affordable housing solutions and alternatives from non-state initiatives i.e. the people themselves, private developers and various state-led initiatives and policies. The idea to organise this conference stemmed from the urgent need to understand the lessons and challenges offered by these alternatives reflect upon them and apply this learning to the contemporary challenges. Overall, the two-day conference was quite suc-

cessful in getting an active participation to discuss alternatives to affordable housing and evolve future actions to initiate a dialogue in the long term with the government and pressurise them to look at the demands related to housing. The documentation of the housing conference will be published in early 2010.

2. The report, Reengineering Urban Infrastructure: How the World Bank and Asian Development Bank Shape Urban infrastructure Finance and Governance in India written by Lalitha Kamath and Vinay Baidur and published by Bank Information Center (BIC) was released in a press conference on 21 August in Mumbai. Noted economist Ajit Ranade released the report in the program jointly organised by Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan, Focus, YUVA and BIC. Over 25 journalists came and it was covered in a few newspapers. The press release was followed by a 1-day strategy meeting which nearly 30 people attended. At the end of the meeting, it was decided to convene a national consultation on urban issues sometime early next year in Delhi, involving many more groups and individuals engaged with the issue. Some campaign/advocacy materials were also to be developed out of this report. The authors of the report would help developing the content.

3. In November 2009, Focus, HRLN (Human Rights Law Network) and TISS co-organised a two-day workshop on Financial Crisis and Job Losses: A working class response. This workshop was held in Mumbai at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Participants included social activists, trade union activists and labour lawyers from different parts of the country. The two-day conference focused mainly on the labour law scenario in the country and how struggles could evolve to protect the existing workforce – both

organised and unorganised. The main issues covered were; Closures, Sickness and Non Payment of Dues & Downsizing, Outsourcing, and Pay Cuts. A brief presentation on labour laws in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) was also made. The two day conference saw an active participation to discuss various aspects of workers rights, especially under the legal purview, DRT act and of contract workers, and evolve actions to initiate, coordinate and push for stringent protection of workers rights and amendments in labour laws/acts to that effect.

Focus is also working with key members of the MPAC (Mumbai People's Action

Committee) to revive the committee, and carry forward the work towards an alternative vision of Mumbai, leading to idea of a 'sustainable city'. It started with a discussion on the rental housing scheme in Mumbai proposed by MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority) in June. In September, along with Mumbai Paani, it held a discussion on the BMC's white paper released on water supply. Focus plans to hold a series of such meetings on housing, transport, environment etc.

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS:

- Afsar Jafri, "World Water Forum: The rising water divide and a loss of legitimacy". Focus on India, April 2009: Volume VI No. 04.
- Chanida Chanyapate Bamford, From Past to Present: Global Discourse on Agriculture and Rural Development. Paper (in Thai) presented at the Seminar on "Mobilising Communities' Power for the Future World" co-organised by Thammasat University, Khon Kaen University, and the Community Organisations Development Institute, Khon Kaen, Thailand, 2-4 September 2009.
- Mary Ann Manahan and Carmina Flores-Obanil, "An Agrarian Crisis in the Making", Focus on the Philippines, February 2009.
- Mary Ann Manahan, "CARPER and the Continuing Struggle for Land", Focus on the Philippines, June 2009.
- Meena Menon and Sarita Ramamoorthy. Building Sustainable Cities. Focus India 2009.
- Randall Arnst. Business as Usual: Responses within ASEAN to the Food Crisis. A report for Focus on the Global South. Occasional Paper 4. February, 2009
- Shalmali Guttal—writer and editing team member, Policies and Actions to Eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition. <http://www.eradicatehunger.org/>
- Tu Wenwen. Should India Learn from China's Special Economic Zones? Focus India, August 2009.

PRESENTATIONS:

- GMOS and India. Presentation by Afsar Jaffri in the Workshop on Water and GMOs, at the “No to Commercialisation of Water Platform”, World Water Forum in Istanbul, 17–21 March 2009.
- Water and Food Sovereignty in the Indian context. Presentation by Afsar Jafri in the workshop on Food and Water, at the “No to Commercialisation of Water Platform”, World Water Forum in Istanbul, 17–21 March 2009.
- Water Struggles in India and our Successes. Presentation by Afsar Jafri in the workshop on Solutions for Access to Water Problem, at the “No to Commercialisation of Water Platform”, World Water Forum in Istanbul, 17–21 March 2009.
- Climate Change and Food Security. Presentation by Afsar Jafri at the workshop organised by CASA for its staff and partners in Mumbai, 13 May 2009
- Climate Change and Its Impact on Indian Agriculture. Presentation by Afsar Jafri at workshop organised by CASA for Church leaders in Mumbai, 16 June 2009
- The New Seed Bill 2004 and its Impact on Indian farmers and farming; Presentation by Afsar Jafri at the Maharashtra State Hamara Beej Abhiyan (Save our Seeds Campaign in Maharashtra) meeting in Pune, 10 October 2009.
- Prospects for China and Asia Economic Community. Presentation by Dorothy Guerrero at the China and Mekong regional conference organised by the China National Development Research Council (NDRC) and Heinrich Boell Stiftung – China Office, 26-28 November, Beijing.
- Business as Usual: Responses within ASEAN to the Food Crisis. Presentation by Mary Ann Manahan in the Defending Food Sovereignty, Agrarian Reform, and Peasants Rights Workshop at ASEAN Peoples’ Forum, Bangkok, 21 February, 2009.
- Consolidated CARPER Bill: Result ng Bicameral Conference. Presentation by Mary Ann Manahan at PAKISAMA Leaders’ Meeting, Quezon City, and Negros CARP Reform Movement Forum, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, 10-12 June, 2009.
- CARPER 101- Baliktanaw sa CARPER. Presentation by Mary Ann Manahan at the Pag-aaral at Pagsasanay ng Lider Magsasaka patungkol sa CARPER in November in Pampanga, and informal roundtable in December in Bulacan.
- Agribusiness and Competitive Agro-industries in the Context of Globalisation and Free Trade. Intervention on Agenda Item 5 presented by Shalmali Guttal at the Twenty-ninth Regional Conference for the Asia and Pacific, Bangkok, 26-31 March, 2009.
- Policies, Strategies and Technical Options for Coping with Water Scarcity. Intervention on Agenda Item 4 presented by Shalmali Guttal at Twenty-ninth Regional Conference for the Asia and Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand, 26-31 March, 2009.
- Women, Food-Agriculture and Climate Change. Presentation by Shalmali Guttal at Focus-APMDD-NGO Forum workshop on Women and Climate Change. Bangkok, 28 September, 2009.
- Climate Change and Agriculture. Presentation by Chanida Bamford at a workshop on climate change co-organised by La Via Campesina and Assembly of the Poor, Bangkok, 3 October, 2009.

PEACE & DEMOCRACY



Focus on the Global South's Peace and Democracy program achieved two milestones in early 2009: the Building Peace and People's Security in Southeast Asia workshop as part of the ASEAN People's Forum and the Iraq Civil Society Solidarity Initiative conference.

Held in Bangkok in February, the Building Peace and People's Security in Southeast Asia workshop shone a light on the little-discussed but long unresolved conflict situations in the region, linking them with the broader political and economic issues confronting the ASEAN as it forges ahead with its integration. The workshop was co-organised with a number of other key regional and national organisations and brought together over 50 participants and speakers actively involved in working towards peace in Mindanao, southern Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and West Papua. It provided an opportunity for the sharing of experiences and insights from across the region and, in gathering like-minded people with common concerns and initiatives, laid the foundation for more effective common action in the future.

The Iraq Civil Society Solidarity Initiative conference, held in Velletri Italy 25-20 March, caps several years of long, difficult preparations to bring together key actors in the emerging and evolving civil society in Iraq. Many of the participants met face-to-face with each other in one of the rare encounters that they have long been deprived of in occupied Iraq, where basic liberties such as the freedom to organise are still constrained. They also met with participants from international organisations who have been involved in and remain committed to supporting Iraqis through their work in their home countries as well as in Iraq. Their participation in the conference deepened their understanding

of the complex political situation in the country, thereby laying the ground for informed solidarity.

Through this conference, Iraqi and international participants were able to discuss challenges and possible joint initiatives in the continuing struggle against occupation, dictatorship, and sectarianism. It was a groundbreaking first step that has opened doors for future cooperation. Plans and preparations are already underway for follow-up actions, including the possible holding of an Iraq Social Forum in Iraq.

SOUTH ASIA

With the United States and its allies shifting their attention to Afghanistan, ratcheting-up the violence in response to rising opposition to the occupation and to the spreading power of the Taliban; with the 2008 Mumbai attacks roiling India-Pakistan relations anew; with Sri Lanka's brutal crushing of the Tamil Tigers; and with the post-revolutionary government in Nepal staggering forward—South Asia has emerged as a priority region of concern for peace and democracy.

Through the years, Focus has built a good foundation for responding to these critical issues and challenges by building a wide network of relationships with various local, national, and regional organisations through cross-border initiatives and coalition-building. Focus has also deepened its understanding of and engagement with the complex political realities in the region

In 2009, Focus' Peace and Democracy Programme carried out the following activities in the region:

In Mumbai, Citizens Initiative for Peace, a

network of which Focus India is an active member, conducted a seminar to discuss the issue of War, Violence and Terror in February. A youth workshop was held with over a hundred community-based youth to address violence and communalism in April. Another seminar and a subsequent signature campaign on police reforms—an issue of national concern and debate especially after 26 November 2008 attack in Mumbai— was held in early 2009.

Responding to the escalation in tension between India and Pakistan, Focus helped in launching a Joint-Signature Campaign against war mongering and for peace in the sub-continent. It was conducted simultaneously in India and Pakistan starting in February. Delegations of senior Pakistani activists also visited India at least twice after the 2008 Mumbai attack to push for the resumption of the peace process. As a positive response to their visit to India and to push the peace process further, delegations of Indian activists also visited Pakistan.

A planning meeting was held in May in Delhi to look into the present deadlock and work towards developing strategies towards normalisation of relations. A statement of Indian peace activists was released welcoming the Joint Statement of Manmohan Singh and Yousuf Raza Gilani signed in Egypt on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit. Focus was part of a joint celebration of independence of both India (15th) and Pakistan (14th) at the Wagah border on the night of 14 August 2009, with people from both countries participating on either side of the border.

Peace Mumbai, a loose network of organisations and individuals committed to work on issues of peace and justice in South Asia, of which Focus India is a mem-

ber, successfully held a two day workshop in Mumbai of activists and researchers on the Turmoil in Afghanistan-Pakistan: Implications on the region on 14-15 November. Noted Journalist M. Rehman from Delhi spoke on the history and current situation of the region, Prof. Anuradha Chenoy, Jawaharlal Nehru University, discussed the geopolitics of the region, issues of gender and governance and noted Islamic scholar Asghar Ali Engineer spoke on Islamophobia.

Peace Mumbai, along with Mumbai University, organised an essay competition on the Joint Statement between India and Pakistan that was signed in Egypt and together held a public function on 10 December 2009 to congratulate the winners and discuss Indo-Pak relations.

As a result of all these efforts, Focus and the various groups working on the India-Pakistan issue were able to organise a high-profile peace conference between India and Pakistan on 10-12 January 2010 in Delhi. This event, called India-Pakistan Conference: A Road Map towards Peace gathered together former Indian and Pakistani government officials, diplomats and researchers with the goal of opening the road for a continuing dialogue between the two countries.

PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, Focus on the Global South, both alone and as a member of the Stop the War Coalition-Philippines and the Citizens Peace Watch, continued to monitor and respond to the continuing enlargement of the US military presence in the country. Focus joined groups in consolidating the growing campaign against the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) which provides the legal basis for the US military's deployments to the

country.

Focus also joined processes and initiatives to respond to the economic crisis roiling the local and global economy, raising peace and democracy issues and linking them to proposed alternatives to be advanced in response to the crisis. One result has been the inclusion of peace issues in the Balay Kalinaw People's Agenda to Respond to the Economic Crisis, a comprehensive set of proposals that has been endorsed by over a hundred civil society groups and networks.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

Beyond the local and regional concerns, Focus continued to respond to the conflict in the Middle East. Through the India-Palestine Peoples' Solidarity Forum, Focus contributed to conducting a signature campaign on the call to boycott Israeli occupation.

Early in 2009, when the large-scale bombardment of Gaza by Israel erupted, Focus spearheaded efforts to organise protest actions, forums, and other activities to join the global expression of opposition against the aggression.

At the end of December 2009, Focus, leading an Indian delegation of researcher and activists, took part in the Gaza Freedom March. This international event of more than 1300 participants was organised in Cairo with the objective of reaching Gaza and "breaking" the siege imposed by Israel and the international community on Gaza. Despite the impossibility of entering Gaza, the March successfully addressed the international silence on the blockade and issued the Cairo Declaration promoting non-violent

solidarity toward Palestine. Following this call, in 2010, Focus will organise a speaking tour in India with Palestinians and South Africans partners to discuss the issues of Palestine, apartheid and the International Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (IBDS) campaign against Israel state which was spearheaded by a group of Palestinian organisations, endorsed at the 2005 WSF, and currently supported by the Palestinian civil society at large, and hundreds of other organisations worldwide.

Throughout 2009, Focus continued its work inside the International Network for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases (No Bases) coalition.

Though plans for a Global Peace Movements' Consultations had to be set aside due to other priorities by potential hosts and partners in Germany, Focus participated in other events organised by demilitarisation and anti-war groups at the NATO summit in April.

In terms of research, one of the highlights has been the publication of articles written by Focus staff on the Mindanao and Southern Thailand conflict as part of the multi-volume *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest: 1500 to the Present*. As part of this landmark publication, Focus-written articles provide in-depth explanations of the history and political economy of the two decades-long conflict in Southeast Asia, equipping peace groups, students, policy-makers, and the general public, with a better understanding of the roots of the conflicts.

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

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Herbert Docena. "The Philippines and Israel: A History of Complicity, An Imperative for Action," *MindaNews*, January 13, 2009

Herbert Docena. "Philippines: On a Rocky Path to Peace," *Malaysia Sun*, January 22, 2009

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CLIMATE JUSTICE



Throughout 2009, Focus continued to deepen its understanding of and involvement in climate change and climate justice campaigning and worked to build the climate justice movement.

The climate team includes staff in India, Philippines and Thailand as well as one staff based in Europe. The main areas of involvement have been at the national level working with local climate change and climate justice coalitions and networks, at the regional level in the framework of the Bali Asia Development Bank meeting, ASEAN and the UNFCCC intersessional meetings in Bangkok, and at the international level through the UNFCCC process, the Climate Justice Now! (CJN!) network and the Climate Justice Action (CJA) and Klimaforum processes in preparation for the COP15.

INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Capacity building on climate issues

Focus realised that as an organisation we needed to build up our internal capacity on climate issues. To this end, we organised workshops and discussions for sharing information, developing shared perspectives and identifying gaps. In May we organised a two-day workshop to develop some training modules and to build the capacity of all the staff. In addition, we have tried to ensure that all members of the climate team participate in the UNFCCC processes as well as workshops, conferences and local organising and coalition building.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Animate and strengthen Climate Justice Now!

Focus has been key in keeping the network processes moving forward including organising conference calls, preparing reports and minutes, helping to set up the

website (not yet completed), maintaining the email list, facilitating work in the UNFCCC processes, organising meetings of CJN! members where possible, contributing to discussions on the list, promoting CJN! in various fora, encouraging cross-network dialogues between CJN!, Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA), CJA and OWINFS.

Three Focus staff were deeply involved in CJN! activities during the COP15: we were part of the media, facilitation and mobilisation working groups, we facilitated morning and evening CJN! briefings, we participated in CJN! press conferences, helped organise CJN! participation in various events and actions, including the post-COP evaluation meeting. Focus was also a key linking organisation between the CJA and CJN! networks.

World Social Forum

Focus was a key organiser of two climate justice events at the WSF: a full day seminar on climate injustice and a debate on strategies and convergences of the climate justice movement. Focus facilitated the participation of youth activists associated with the Klimaforum, as well as Southern activists from India, Thailand and the Philippines, who all participated in the climate injustice workshop and the strategy debate. Focus helped draft the final Call for Climate Justice which was read out at the assembly of assemblies.

COP15 and Klimaforum

Focus has been active in four preparatory meetings in Copenhagen organised by the Climate Justice Action (CJA) network and the Klimaforum. CJA is a network of groups organising direct actions and mobilisations internationally in the lead up to and during the COP, and the Klima-

froum is a coalition of local Danish NGOs who are hosting a two-week “alternative” event during the COP. Focus has also supported the participation of partners from Philippines and Thailand in these meetings as well as encouraging networks such as Hemispheric Social Alliance, OW-INFS, Jubilee South and others to participate in these meetings.

Focus supported a delegation to the UN COP15 comprising local and national level activists from the Philippines, India, Thailand, and China as well as three Focus staff. Throughout the two weeks, Focus was heavily involved at many levels:

- monitoring negotiations and facilitating exchanges of information between the “inside” and the “outside”;
- facilitating and supporting CJN! and CJA events;
- speaking and providing southern perspectives at the CJA daily events, actions and processes;
- participating in discussions and panels at the Klimaforum;
- media work including interviews, press conferences and press releases;
- reporting back to national coalitions and writing for Focus on Trade;
- promoting the Angry Mermaid award (together with Friends of the Earth, Corporate Europe Observatory, etc);
- participating in the Klimaforum international advisory board;
- helped in the organising of the System Change Not Climate Change bloc in the 12 December mobilisations;
- helped coordinate the 16 December organised walk-out of official delegates and NGO observers from inside Bella Centre.

Climate change and the WTO

Focus has been active in the OWINFS Climate Working Group, helping to understand the links between trade and climate

change and looking for ways to engage organisations following trade issues in the climate debates. As a member of the OWINFS working group, Focus has participated in the development and review of a policy paper entitled Change Trade Not the Climate. The paper was launched in Bangkok during the Peoples Climate Justice Assembly in parallel to the UNFCCC intersessional in late September. The publication was also distributed widely to delegates in the UN.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Bali workshop and strategy meeting

From 4-7 May, along with the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), Focus co-organised a regional workshop and strategy meeting on climate change in Bali, Indonesia. The workshop/meeting was held in Bali to take advantage of regional and national mobilisations against the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which held its Annual Governors’ Meeting in Bali this year. Its main aims were to help participants to understand the basic science of climate change, the range of actions/processes initiated across the world to address/tackle climate change and the state of negotiations on a new international climate protocol, and based on this understanding, to come up with coordinated strategies and actions based on common principles of justice and equity. Almost 60 participants from diverse Asian civil society attended the workshop/meeting, with a sizeable contingent from Indonesia. Focus supported the participation of people from Thailand, Indonesia and India to the workshop. Focus staff were deeply involved in planning the workshop programme, facilitating sessions and also served as resource persons on several sessions such as the proposed solutions to climate change,

the role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and the current state of inter-governmental negotiations.

The workshop/meeting was an important step in Focus' commitment to building a multi-constituency, multi-sectoral and popularly oriented climate justice movement in the Asia Pacific region. Focus already works with many of the movements and CSOs that participated in this workshop, and will continue to work with them nationally and regionally in the coming year to strengthen the national and regional processes.

Asian Peoples Solidarity for Climate Justice

Focus was deeply involved in the regional mobilisation related to the UNFCCC Intersessional Meeting held in Bangkok from 26 September – 9 October. Focus co-organised and facilitated a two-day regional preparatory meeting attended by more than 50 representatives from various regional and national organisations in July to prepare for the mobilisations in Bangkok. Focus staff was in the Steering Committee as well as in the Programmes, Mobilisations and Media Working Groups.

In September, immediately prior to the Intersessional meeting of the UNFCCC in Bangkok, Focus joined the APMDD, Jubilee South, NGO Forum on the ADB, Friends of the Earth International, etc. in co-organising an international strategy meeting on climate and finance on 27-28 September. The strategy meeting was attended by more than 90 participants. Focus facilitated sessions and helped in drafting the statement of the meeting. A public forum followed by a press conference on ecological debt and climate debt was also held on 29 September.

A workshop on climate change oriented

towards women from social movements and grassroots organisations was also co-organised with APMDD and Forum. Although the workshop was open to both women and men, the co-organisers made concerted efforts to prioritise the participation of women from social movements and grassroots groups since past experience showed that majority of participants in climate change related events from the above constituencies in Asia tend to be men. Focus made presentations on the relationship between the food-agriculture sectors and climate change, market based "solutions" to climate change, and how all these can impact women. Focus also helped to draft and finalise a statement of unity from the workshop about climate change and women.

In October 3, Focus along with La Via Campesina and Friends of the Earth International, organised a workshop on Agrarian Reform, Food Sovereignty and Climate Change. The workshop was organised to advocate for a non-market driven approach to tackling climate change, based on agro-ecological production and sustainable land and resource use. About 50 representatives attended the workshop from farmers' organisations, unions, civil society organisations and international environmental groups.

Other events co-organised by Focus include: Change Trade not the Climate, Free Trade in the Time of Crisis, and a joint press conference of the Asian Peoples Solidarity for Climate Justice. Focus hired a temporary staff to help in the logistic work of providing venues, meeting rooms and other support for around 30 civil society events for the whole period. Focus also coordinated the joint programme and mobilisation attended by 5,000 people on 5 October. Focus also supported and joined daily mobilisations in front of

the UN building.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

THAILAND

Thai Working Group for Climate Justice: Focus' Thailand programme does most of the national work as part of a coalition called the Thai Working Group for Climate Justice (TCJ). During the first part of the year, the TCJ concentrated on building up the movements' position regarding climate change and on the negotiations under the UNFCCC in particular. The TCJ also participated in regional and international discussions, especially during the preparation for the UNFCCC Bangkok Intersessional meetings in September/October 2009 and the COP 15.

People's Energy Security and Climate Justice: At the ASEAN Peoples' Forum in February where many regional civil society organisations gathered to discuss issues and challenges facing Southeast Asian countries and made recommendations to the ASEAN leaders, the TCJ organised 2 two-hour workshops on People's Energy Security and Climate Justice. These workshops served the purpose of building awareness of the urgency of climate change, the need for government to shift immediately towards policies based on sustainability, and the demonstrated capacity of communities to devise renewable and efficient energy production to meet their own needs.

National consultations: TCJ convened a two days national consultation with NGOs, activists, and social movements including farmers, indigenous peoples, community forests, home workers, consumers, land movements, and fisher folk groups. As a result of this meeting a larger network

was set up to achieve a People's Position on Climate Change by early September. Moreover, a mobilisation plan (together with regional and international groups) for the Bangkok Intersessional was adopted. This position paper was adopted and presented to the public in September at the National Dialogue meeting between civil society groups and government officials, including climate negotiators.

Monitoring climate negotiations: With the support of Focus on the Global South, a member of TCJ went to the June Intersessional in Bonn and to CJN and CJA meetings in Copenhagen in order to understand and monitor the negotiations and to establish links with international groups and networks. Following this, a briefing for Thai civil society organisations on the Bonn negotiations was organised. This happened alongside increasing engagement with the official process in the country. Also, in the effort to facilitate cross regional and international links, Focus supported one member of the TCJ and one community leader (fighting against coal-fired power plant in the upper southern part of Thailand) to this year's alternative G8 summit in Sardinia.

During the Bangkok Intersessional, TCJ coordinated a national conference on Climate Justice where more than 600 participants from both the NGOs and grassroots groups were involved. This event helped to promote community concerns at the policy level. The position paper on climate change was also improved as a result of this gathering. Finally, just before COP15, representatives of the TCJ had an official meeting with the Prime Minister who is also the Chair of the National Climate Change Committee. The position paper was not only presented to the PM but TCJ had the opportunity to discuss the content and obtained assurance on some is-

sues, i.e. certain issues such as land title in state designated preserved forest areas have to be resolved before any consideration of a REDD type scheme in Thailand.

TCJ organised a large delegation of grassroots and network activists to participate in the COP15, the Klimaforum and in various climate justice actions and events. See details in COP15 report.

INDIA

In January, Focus was invited by the All India Peoples Science Network (AIPSN) to a workshop that assessed a modelling tool that looked at scenarios resulting out of various levels of emission cuts in select groups of countries. Scientists at the AIPSN hope to use the tool to inform civil society groups in advocating for a more proactive Indian position at the global climate negotiations.

Focus joined with trade unions, social movements and other NGOs to co-organise a national level consultation on climate change in Ranchi in the state of Jharkhand from 20-21 June 2009. The meeting was the result of a process (initiated in September 2008 by the National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers (NFFPFW)) which saw several planning meetings before the actual consultation itself. Over 80 representatives from across the country participated in the meeting and shared local community experiences, implications of the climate crisis, the response of international and national actors and strategies for a political campaign in India on climate justice. Several briefing notes on issues such as REDD, carbon trading, energy and agriculture were prepared for the meeting by the organising group. Follow-up activities include the formation of working groups on key issues and regional meetings across the country.

Focus was invited by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences - Centre for Science, Technology and Society to a conference on Breaking the Climate Deadlock: Towards a New Climate Policy for India held in Mumbai from 31 July - 1 August 2009. We contributed to the declaration from the conference which argued for an alternative approach for India at the international climate treaty negotiations. We also participated in a follow-up one day seminar held in New Delhi on 18 September 2009 which worked out the specifics of an alternative Indian position at Copenhagen and beyond, especially in the context of its own developmental agenda.

On 17 August, Focus participated in a public forum on The Climate crisis: ecological debt and role of international financial institutions organised by the Peoples Forum Against ADB, of which Focus is in the Organising Committee.

During the people's summit held during the mobilisations against the WTO Ministerial in Geneva from 30 November - 2 December 2009, Focus was invited to give its input in a panel on trade and the climate crisis. (See Trade Programme report for details of the Trade Climate Caravan that started out from the Geneva ministerial and travelled to Copenhagen.)

In the run-up to the 15th Conference of Parties (COP) at Copenhagen, Focus organised a series of strategy meetings with allies such as the National Forum of Forest Peoples and Forest Workers (NFFPFW), Kerala Independent Fishworkers Federation (KSMTF), Via Campesina South Asia, the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI) and the Delhi Platform on Climate Change. After several rounds of meetings and email discussions, the India Climate Justice Forum (of which Focus is a founding mem-

ber), issued a statement directed at the Indian Government on the Copenhagen conference. The statement was circulated across the country and more than 200 groups, including key social movements signed on. Copies of the statement were sent to the Prime Minister, Environment Minister, Members of Parliament and the National Advisory Council on Climate Change. Press Releases on the statement were issued from Copenhagen and New Delhi on 8 December 2009.

Focus also supported activists from the NFFPFW, KSMTF and Tamil Nadu Farmers Association (member of Via Campesina South Asia) to attend the official and peoples summit at Copenhagen.

Focus hosted a meeting at our Delhi office to meet with India members of 350.org on 14 September, in which several activists from Delhi participated. The meeting saw a spirited debate on the use of tactics that would ensure media attention and attract the youth versus actions that facilitate deeper structural change.

In December 2009, Focus also published an occasional paper titled World Bank and Asian Development Bank: Carbon Trading and Climate Finance in India. The paper, by Konrad Fisher, takes a critical look at so called 'climate' projects funded by the World Bank and ADB and also maps out key clean development mechanism (CDM) projects in the country and shows how IFIs continue to fund polluting projects and at the same time masquerade as 'responsible brokers'.

China

To strengthen our new programme on Climate Justice and in recognition of China's crucial role in the climate negotiations and the global efforts to address the growing climate crisis, Focus added the

theme of climate change among our main concerns in China. We started to monitor China's new environmental and energy policies, its position in the ongoing negotiations at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other inter-governmental discussions and summits (G20, G8+5, etc.) where the challenge of climate change is discussed. We contracted a Chinese researcher to write a paper Climate Change and China: Technology, Market and beyond, which came out as Focus Occasional Paper in May.

To share timely analysis from the South on climate justice issues and related themes with Chinese groups, Focus started an email list service "Climate Justice News" in order to forward articles, movement/campaign news, and analysis to selected Chinese contacts. It is a weekly service (average 2-3 articles). Whenever possible we also translate statements from major events of member organisations of the Climate Justice Now! Network, as well as articles produced by Focus, into the Chinese language.

We also supported the participation of three Chinese to the activities of the Asian Peoples Solidarity on Climate Justice around the UNFCCC Bangkok Inter-Sessional.

PHILIPPINES

The Philippines Programme's engagement with the Climate Justice issue is thus far limited to participating in meetings of local networks and contributing Focus' perspective on the issues.

Following the Climate Justice conference in Bangkok last July 2008, Focus has worked to raise the issue of climate justice in the Philippines by linking it with ongoing national and local issues and concerns. In January, Focus spearheaded

efforts to convene a large civil society gathering to understand and forge a collective response to the worsening global economic meltdown. The result of the two-part conference is the Balay Kalinaw People's Agenda to Respond to the Economic Crisis, a comprehensive program of action that has been endorsed by over a hundred civil society groups and social movements and that has elicited a lot of discussion and response, even from the government. Among its recommendations include specific proposals on advancing and promoting climate justice.

One of the stated aims of the climate work in the Philippines for 2009 is to be able to help build a constituency for climate justice in the Philippines, by building resources in terms of analysis, publication, conferences/workshops and trainings. Focus will also actively facilitate the engagement of groups and networks in climate issues as well as with their regional and international counterparts.

Towards this objective, Focus immersed itself in the work of two national platforms working on climate change in the Philippines. We participated in activities (meetings, forums and strategy sessions) organised by the CSO working group on climate change - a "loose formation initiated by the Christian Aid as a result of the Bali and Poznan meetings" of mostly NGOs seeking to engage the government in the crafting of progressive climate policy including but not limited to positions on the climate negotiations under the UNFCCC.

We participated in the Working group-initiated round table discussion on adaptation financing organised by Oxfam and training on the negotiations process.

Our participation in CSO Working Group

is geared towards stirring the debate on controversial issues and infusing elements of the climate justice framework in the analysis.

The other platform that we were active in the Philippines is the Climate Exchange (Climex) which has a broader constituency of NGOs and social movements. Climex work includes forums and discussions on climate justice and climate debt as the main framework of the network. Under the Climex banner, we organised two caucuses on climate as part of the DDARP Larry Lohmann speaker tour together with some of our allies. We organised a caucus on critical perspectives on REDD together with the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Centre (LRC) and a caucus on alternatives and solutions with the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), LRC and La Liga Policy Institute.

We also organised two trade and climate discussions with Larry Lohmann in Manila and Davao with trade activists from the Stop the New Round network.

We also provided support for social movement participation in international climate talks. Two indigenous leaders from Mindanao were supported to participate in the Bangkok Climate Talks in October and support was provided as well for two CSO leaders (from LRC and Afrim (Mindanao) to participate in actions around COP 15 in Copenhagen. In coordination with the trade team, we also provided support for two fisher leaders to participate in the trade and climate caravan.

Research on Clean Development Mechanism projects in the Philippines – the scheme which has brought the country into the global carbon trading market – continued throughout the first half of the

year. The research finds that, contrary to the scheme's stated purpose, the CDM has been promoting unsustainable climate change-promoting practices and re-

warding the very conglomerates that are responsible for the most emissions in the country. The research was completed in 2009 and will be published and launched in the first half of 2010.

VIDEOS



GR8 CLIMATE SALE

Seeing the success of past videos in popularising complicated issues such as the negotiations in the World Trade Organisation, the Focus climate and trade teams collaborated in making a video that would aim to show the link between free trade and climate change.

This video talks about what has happened since the Kyoto Protocol came into force, and how the neo-liberal system has contributed to global warming. It emphasises the intimate connection between increasing trade liberalisation and rising greenhouse gas emissions, how trade rules prevent effective action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and how institutions like the WTO and other trade regimes are trying to control what governments can and cannot do about global warming. It also talks about the Group of 8 and the role of these developed nations in pushing for market-based solutions where corporations will make the most out of the climate crisis. It shows how trade liberalisation is being promoted as one of the solutions to global warming and emphasises the need to link the anti-globalisation and environmental movements in this struggle.

Launched in January this year, the video is enjoying tremendous positive feedback with many campaigners from different countries writing in to say that they find the video useful and have been using it in their campaigning. The video is now currently being translated by other groups into Polish, Spanish, German, Thai and Chinese.

The Gr8 Climate Sale is a play on words, the “Gr8” is short hand for “great” in popular language used in the internet and phone instant messaging. But it can also mean the Group of 8 to emphasise the role of these developed nations in contributing to the climate crisis.

Watch the trailer:

<http://focusweb.org/videos/videodirectlink-15.html?Itemid=167>

Download the full video:

<http://focusweb.org/videos/videodirectlink-14.html?Itemid=167>

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- Benny Kuruvilla. Leaked Danish text sets the stage for Copenhagen showdown, Focus on Trade #149, December 2009
- Dorothy Guerrero. Saving China's Economy and the Climate: Can the twain meet? Focus on Trade #146, July 2009.
- Focus on the Global South Philippines (ed.), In search of just solutions to the climate crisis: the Larry Lohmann speaking tour of the Philippines, 18 November – 3 December 2009.
- Herbert Docena. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) in the Philippines: Costly, Dirty, Money-making Schemes. Unpublished report 2009
- Joseph Purugganan. Traversing a road of unfulfilled Commitments: An Interview with Bernarditas Muller. FOP November 2009
- Konrad Fisher. World Bank and Asian Development Bank: Carbon Trading and Climate Finance in India. Occasional Paper #7, December 2009.
- Marylou Malig and Cecilia Olivet, Free Trade and Climate Change Resistance: Voices from the South. Profiles of Amparo Miciano and Jorge Galeano, Focus on Trade #149, December 2009
- Nicola Bullard, Get thee to Copenhagen! (because there is no redemption in a monastery), Focus on Trade #148, November 2009
- Nicola Bullard. "To live well", in People First Economics, New Internationalist, November 2009. Editors David Ransom and Vanessa Baird
- Nicola Bullard. Gut leben. Abscheid von der "Macho-Okonomie", in Luxemburg Gesellschaftsanalyse und linke praxis, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, October 2009
- Nicola Bullard. Tenere la torta e mangiarsela, Guerre & Pace, Numero 156, December 2009
- Ulrich Brand, Nicola Bullard, Edgardo Lander and Tadzio Mueller (eds). Contours of Climate Justice, Ideas for shaping new climate and energy politics. Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, December 2009
- Walden Bello, Climate and Capitalism in Copenhagen, Focus on Trade #149, December 2009
- Walden Bello, The Meaning of Seattle: Truth Only Becomes True Through Action, Focus on Trade #148, November 2009
- Wen, Jiajun Dale, Climate Change and China: Technology, Market and Beyond, Occasional Paper No. 6, Focus on the Global South, May 2009

A photograph of three women of Asian descent smiling and posing together. The woman on the left is wearing a white t-shirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a dark blue top. The woman on the right is wearing a light blue top and glasses, and is resting her chin on her hand. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

ORGANISATION & ADMINISTRATION

2009 is the first year of the new three-year (2009-2011) work plan of Focus on the Global South, and it was a productive year packed with series of meetings, as well as internal and public workshops as we re-organised the teams to suit the new programme structure and objectives. There were a number of staff changes in the Bangkok and Manila offices and in the Peace and Democracy programme.

In May, we held our Annual Staff Retreat and the Climate Justice Workshop, followed by the internal Systematisation of Experiences activity. We planned to hold the Board Meeting in the same period but it had to be postponed to July. The programme staff meeting, which is usually held in November or December, was also postponed till January 2010 due to the numerous events and programme activities taking place towards the end of 2009.

Annual Staff Retreat 22-23 May

It was held at the usual CUSRI meeting room next to the Focus office in Bangkok and attended by all 28 Focus staff members. Each program team reported on how the work was progressing according to the new work plan and raised key issues that needed to be discussed across the thematic programmes, including staffing needs and joint programmatic work.

We also discussed and agreed on various organisational issues including the division of responsibilities between the four thematic programme teams – planning, implementing and monitoring program activities -- and the Management Team – personnel and financial management. Programme and sub-programme coordinators were appointed and the staffs signed up on the new list serves for each programme which constitute the fora for intra-team communications and consul-

tations.

As four senior staff resigned from the Management Team, each of the three country offices' nominated new members who were all formally confirmed at the meeting.

Internal Climate Justice Workshop, 24-25 May

This was attended by the Climate team members and other interested staff. The objectives were to deepen Focus' staff understanding of climate change issues, to provide an opportunity for Focus staff to share perspectives on specific climate change debates to develop collective Focus positions on key issues. It was also meant to assess whether Focus has unique perspectives on/contributions to the issue to rationalize the need for us to develop and conduct our own climate justice module and course. We also identified issues that Focus needs to work on more, or gaps in research and advocacy which Focus may want to fill. Each team member carried out studies on specific topics prior to the workshop which were then presented for discussion in the workshop.

Internal Evaluation, 26-27 May

The internal evaluation was facilitated by Dorothy Guerrero following the process called systematisation of experiences promoted by Focus donor partner Development and Peace in a training workshop for their partners. The aim was to review and assess our own experiences in working for social transformation in a more systematic manner. Individual staff filled out a form describing the experience of working on trade, peace and security and alternative regionalisms and then shared and discussed them in groups to formulate conclusions and recommendations. Apart from Focus staff, the exercise was

also attended by one of the external evaluator who joined in the group discussion. The outcomes of the exercise constituted Focus staff input into the external evaluation.

External Evaluation, May-August

Upon the request and with the support of Oxfam Novib, Focus prepared a Terms of Reference and commissioned two external evaluators, Mark Deasey from Australia and Anuradha Chenoy from India, to conduct an external evaluation of Focus work in the last work plan period, 2006-2008. The evaluators visited and interviewed key Focus partners in Thailand, Philippines, India, and Cambodia, as well as conducted telephone or email interviews with the regional and international partners in other countries. A draft evaluation report was presented to the Board by one of the evaluators for comments in the July meeting and the final report was submitted to Focus in August 2009. The Executive Summary of the evaluation report can be found in the annex to this annual report.

Board Meeting, 11-12 July

The annual Board Meeting was held at CUSRI meeting room, Focus Bangkok Office. The agenda of the first day included the presentation of the draft evaluation report by Anuradha Chenoy, the discussion on current conjuncture and trends, and the presentation and discussion of 2009-2011 work plan.

The second day the discussion was on the 2008 Financial Report and 2009-2011 budget, the funding situation and fundraising issues, and staff policy review. One of the important decisions of the Board in this meeting concerned the harmonisation of staff benefits in compliance with

the progressive labour laws of India and Thailand and the use of financial reserve for gratuity and severance benefits payment.

The Board composition review was also on the agenda. Among the three Board members whose 4-year term ended, two were re-nominated and accepted to remain on the Board, but one declined. The meeting nominated a replacement to be invited to the next meeting. Since two Advisors had resigned due to the fact that their new positions did not allow such association with other organisations, and the remaining advisors had not been able to attend the meeting for many years, the meeting decided to do without Advisors altogether.

Website

2009 has been a very good year for focusweb.org website. A total of 244,264 unique visitors made 9,517,880 hits (average of 19 hits per visit) for the whole 2009 excluding the hits recorded from web indexing robots from several known search engines. January has the record of the most visited month with 21,327 unique visitors. When it comes to daily statistics Sunday has the most number of unique visitors. People from the United States are the most to have visited the website with 1.9 Million hits followed by the Russian Federation with 640,000 hits followed by Switzerland (460,000), Norway (154,000), the Philippines (140,000), Thailand (94,000), Canada (60,000), Germany (54,000), Japan (53,000), China (49,000), GB (44,000) and India (40,000).

The main website (focusweb.org) is the most visited page followed by the India, Philippines and drts pages. Most of the

redirects that the website gets are from google and bing searches, some of them are links from bilaterals.org, wikipedia, alliance21, hao-ran, globalissues.org and facebook. Top keyword searches in search engines are: global south, agriculture in developing countries, focusweb, focus on the global south, walden bello etc.

For the whole year, focusweb has faced tremendous challenges in terms of security. Several hackers tried to penetrate into the system leaving the website inaccessible for a few minutes. Therefore as a solution, focus has decided to hire the services of koumbit, a canadian based web redesign organization to implement a new content management system which is more secured, reliable and flexible. Another great challenge is to make all the existing documents/articles available in the web. 30% of the original focus created articles are not available or may have been dislocated from the system resulting into page cannot be found error. Focus is committed to fix this problem by reindexing all articles so users may still locate important analyses presented in the past.

Website Redesign and Logo

Focus on exerts effort in reorganizing the way how information should reach our readers and supporters. In line with this, focus has decided to redesign its website and come up with a new logo.

The process of selecting the new focus logo had been a tremendous decision

making as we had to undergo 3 sets of selection. First we wanted more designs so we posted a contest on logotournament.com. We have received a total of 150 designs however we could not arrive to a single decision. We consulted another design firm in the Philippines, 2720+, the same thing happened as we were not happy with their designs. Finally, an award winning artist from New York volunteered to do our logo. Mr. Aissa Debi, a palestinian artist who recently won the 2009 Best arab artist designed our modern Focus on the Global South logo.

The website is one of the most important part of Focus' daily activities. We have received a lot of comments and complaints from our readers that they could not find information and the website is too cluttered and disorganized. Therefore we have decided to find a web developer who will help us in the design and restructuring. We got koumbit to do the job. Koumbit is canadian based web design company which promotes the use of open source content management Drupal. Drupal is more secured and has a lot of features. Focus and koumbit have been working hard to integrate modern technologies to reach out our 150,000+ unique visitors. We have included integration of our video library, mediatheque resource centers, document mangement system, facebook and other social networking capabilities. Our website is due to launch first week of April 2010.

BOARD MEMBERS 2009:

Abdul Hameed Nayyar, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan

Alejandro Bendaña, Centro de Estudios Internacionales, Managua City, Nicaragua

Boua Chanthou, Padek, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Jayati Ghosh, Centre for Economic Studies & Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University,

India

Nguyen Van Thanh, Center for Development Study and Outreach, Vietnam Peace and Development Foundation, Vietnam (term ended 2009)

Niyada Kiatying-Angsulee, Director, Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand (from October 2009)

Somchai Homlaor, Internet Law Consultants Limited, Bangkok, Thailand

Peter Rosset, Chiapas, Mexico

Surichai Wun'Gaeo (Chair), Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies,

Bangkok, Thailand

Suwattana Thadaniti, Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok,

Thailand

Yoon Youngmo, Korea Labour & Society Institute (KLSI), Seoul, Korea

Walden Bello, Focus on the Global South, Bangkok, Thailand

ADVISORS (TILL JULY 2009):

Victor P. Karunan, UNICEF Headquarter, New York, USA

Martin Khor, Third South Centre, Switzerland

STAFF 2009:

- Afsar Jafri
- Alinaya Fabros
- Ashish More
- Benny Kuruvilla
- Carmina Flores Obanil (from August)
- Cathy Ordon (till September)
- Chanida Bamford
- Dorothy Guerrero
- Herbert Docena (till July)
- Jacques-chai Chomthongdi
- Jatin Desai (from June)
- Joseph Purugganan
- Joy Chavez
- Julie Anne delos Reyes (till June)
- Lou Torres
- Mary Ann Manahan
- Mary Lou Malig
- Mayuree Ruechakiattikul
- Meena Mennon
- Nicola Bullard
- Nilesh More
- Praphai Jundee
- Raffy Simbol
- Sarita Ramamoorthy
- Shalmali Guttal
- Sonila Shetty
- Soontaree Nakaviroj
- Sudhir Khalkho (from April)
- Thomas Sommer (from November)
- Tu Wenwen (till June)
- Varsha Berry
- Walden Bello
- Yu Yin (from October)

WORKING PARTNERS / INTERNS / VOLUNTEERS:

Anastasia S

Arunima Chakraborty (June - December)

Chung-Chi Chao (from October)

Chih-Yung Fang (from October)

Jena Talan (April to May)

Jerome Patrick Cruz (May to October)

Joanne Ditson (July to September)

Jonathan Mok (from October)

Kriz Mae Amante (June to September)

Ryan Alex (Jan-March)

Shane Capili (April to September)

Yu-Tin Su (till August)

CORE FUNDERS 2009:

- 11.11.11, Belgium
- Christian Aid, UK
- CORDAID, the Netherlands
- Development and Peace, Canada
- ICCO & Kerk and Actie, the Netherlands
- Inter Pares, Canada
- Oxfam GB, East Asia Regional Management Centre, Thailand
- Oxfam HK, Hong Kong
- Oxfam NOVIB, the Netherlands
- World Development Movement / Isvara Fund, UK

FUNDERS OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS OR ACTIVITIES IN 2009:

- Action Aid Asia
- Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI)
- ICCO & Kerk and Actie
- KEPA
- OWINFS / Isvara Fund
- Siemenpuu Foundation

ANNEXES

FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH EVALUATION OF PROGRAM

2006 – 2008

Professor Anuradha Chenoy & Mark Deasey

Summary Report for General Distribution

August 2009

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SCOPE OF REPORT

This evaluation was commissioned by Focus on the Global South to cover program work undertaken in the framework of its 2006 – 2008 Workplan. A full report including detailed recounting of partner interviews was prepared for internal use by Focus and Oxfam Novib as the sponsoring donor for the Evaluation. This summary version has been provided in order to make available to the wider participating audience of Focus' partners and allies the key observations, learnings and recommendations, while protecting all necessary confidentiality for contributing partners, particularly in politically sensitive situations.

OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION

The main purposes set for the evaluation were to a) understand the role that Focus has played in the past in promoting and supporting positive change; b) determine what roles Focus should play in the future, given the latest conjuncture; c) assess Focus' organizational and staff capacity to play these and other appropriate roles, and; d) come up with a plan to strengthen Focus' capacity, skills, competence and ways of working.

These were elaborated into the 12 Key Questions as set out in the attached Terms of Reference.

METHODOLOGY

The principle steps agreed and followed were

1. Providing an evaluation of Focus' progress against its own goals and objectives as previously set, and as expressed in the ToR
2. Beginning to identify some tools and standards for future planning and monitoring, which will make further evaluation easier and more meaningful.
3. Evaluators jointly developed an outline interview format, taking the Key Questions, and also the issues raised above, as basic guidelines. This was clarified and agreed with Focus staff.

Points to be emphasised included:

1. How can the transformative agendas of Focus be evaluated?
2. Area focus for questioning was on trade, alternate regionalism, food sovereignty, peace and peoples security, according to the availability of partners to discuss this with. This systematization for planning ahead, judging work and changing mode of work if necessary.
3. Particularly in interviews with staff, and board members, probing was around the question that: Given that change is going to require long-term commitment, does the organisation have structures and supports to see it through? In particular, how can it record and benefit the accumulated learning from

The evaluation was conducted by a team of two persons, Professor Anuradha Chenoy and Mark Deasey; both of whom had longstanding familiarity with Focus programmes and staff. Each of them looked into specific programmes, organizational issues and the working of the regional offices. Focus teams had previously identified key partners to be interviewed, and it was stated that the ones identified had been selected particularly for their readiness to speak out frankly about areas which they saw requiring change, as well as being able to identify any achievements by Focus.

The Sources of information included:

- Reading and analysis of Focus documentation over the last 3-4 years
- Individual face to face interviews with collaborators and partners of Focus in several countries.
- Email Questionnaires, and telephonic interviews with partners and collaborators
- Interviews with Focus staff in Bangkok, Manila, Mumbai, and Delhi
- Focussed group discussion with staff and observations during annual staff evaluation meeting in Bangkok in May 2009.

Limitations

This evaluation had some limitations:

- A few of the partners that we requested for interviews did not respond, though many did and were very helpful
- Focus has such a huge mandate and scope of activities that it is not easy to measure its impacts or determine its effect on policy measures in different countries. This was in fact one of the reasons for undertaking the evaluation, in seeking to identify what some meaningful indicators of this might be.
- Focus has many new programmes that are starting out, like climate justice and a new country offices in Delhi and the China program, so it is still early to evaluate impacts of these in themselves
- The evaluators had to work fairly separately, with nearly all communication by distance, and talking with largely separate sets of staff and partners. Fortunately, there was strong similarity of approach and consonance of findings across several programmes and partners, and the communication flow was probably as good as circumstances allowed.

Resulting Foci of the Evaluation

Given the breadth of the programme, this did not attempt to be an evaluation against *stated objectives*, so much as an assessment of how well objectives had been set, and whether the right approaches had been chosen by Focus in trying to reach them.

To an outside perspective, the separate Focus programs often seem to ‘bleed’ across boundaries. Within the common framework of deglobalisation, partners did not readily distinguish work on trade; debt; privatization and the commons under the same heads as the Focus workplans do; nor was this always apparent in discussions with staff. This is not to suggest insufficient management or design, but possibly more the difficulty of setting formal and traditional program structures around an interlinked and dynamic area of work.

Focus goals are highly aspirational for change on a global level, particularly the first and second, viz

- -Dismantle oppressive economic and political structures and institutions, and
- Create liberating structures and institutions.

Both are clearly the roles of global mass movements over time; the third and fourth goals, viz

- Promote demilitarisation and peace-building, and
- Map, conceptualise and evolve alternative structures, institutions and systems

give a possibly closer ‘fix’ on what Focus’ role is to be within the larger movement.

In both Workplans and reports, it is quite clear that Focus staff and board understand that, as an organisation with 29 staff covering this range of issues, the role is in concert with others. What is not quite so clear, on the face of the documentation, is just what Focus’ particular value-adding role is within movements towards achieving these ends, though at several points it is implicit. This is taken up under the section on Monitoring & Definitions of Success.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND FINDINGS EMERGING - As Against the Original Key Questions

Program

What are the positive outcomes of Focus' work in the past three years (intended and unintended)? – How successful has Focus been in attaining its program objectives?

The evaluation's scope allowed a small sampling across the huge spectrum of activities and partners with which Focus has engaged over the last four years. The evaluators engaged with around forty partners in all, through fairly brief interviews, and were able to take a small sampling of documentation. Focus's own standard reports do not greatly assist in assessing actual benefits and achievements, as they tend to report in detail on activities undertaken, while apparently sidestepping attempts to really attempt measurement of progress against abstract and often highly aspirational objectives – this is a very common phenomenon among advocacy-focussed NGOs. In Focus's particular case, this appears to be aggravated by a form of humility; as the organisation casts its role as a facilitator, catalyst and enabler, rather than 'leader', it seems hesitant to claim particular gains; this would run counter to its central philosophy of making space for grassroots people's movements, rather than speaking on their behalf.

The organisation needs to better define its distinctive inputs, and from there work to more clearly identify what its particular contribution has been to broad movement successes, in order to learn and further improve performance. Some ways and means through which this could be done are further approached in this report.

Partners far more readily identified what they thought successes had been in the program areas, and where they thought that Focus had been an important contributor to the gains made. Some examples which were cited included:

- The apparent derailment of the Doha round of WTO talks. Neoliberalism in trade is a long way from dead, but the Doha defeat inflicted some wounds, and Focus' contribution was not insignificant.
- The strengthening of peoples' movements should in itself be regarded as an achievement, and several partners cited Focus as a significant contributor to their growth and greater voice and confidence.
- Focus has provided rigour and credibility in analysis of oppressive structures, policies and systems which have in turn enabled partners to take on struggles more effectively.
- Equally important, Focus has articulated positive and credible alternatives in several thematic areas.
- Regaining alienated commons has scored some concrete successes, in terms of land reform and rights to public water; Focus's partners in this area do attribute part of the success to resourcing provided by Focus.
- In some instances, the simple maintaining of an alternative discourse to the

Further examples appear in the retelling of the thematic and country programs. The evaluation process has readily identified these, and the task of more systematically identifying success, positive progress and challenges should not be too difficult to integrate into Focus's future work.

What has been Focus' role in bringing about progressive change? How do local and national CSOs and social movements, coalitions and networks see Focus' role?

The partners interviewed overall had a view of Focus's role which is quite closely consonant with the organisation's own stated ways of working: Focus is a facilitator, enabler, catalyst and coordinator. It has a particular ability to make linkages vertically – making high-level and global, abstract analysis accessible to activists at the grassroots; and grounding analysis used to inform national to global level campaigns and advocacy in the lived experience at ground level. This perspective was reflected both from social movements and peer organisations based in both north and south

Paradoxically, the fact that Focus does not have a grassroots constituency of its own was cited as an asset; not being accountable to a sectional constituency was seen by staff and some partners as giving Focus greater flexibility to work across very diverse approaches and perspectives.

Horizontal linking was also cited consistently as an unusual strength of Focus: The organisation has an ability and consistent practice of building and enabling broad coalitions of partners with widely differing political perspectives and stances. Focus is clearly recognised as having a strong position (or positions) of its own, and a very clear agenda; but operates without hidden agendas. It is generally viewed as radical and adversarial, but is able to collaborate with partners who see engagement with government or other 'elite' bodies as a legitimate strategy. Focus itself does not eschew engagement of this kind; and this was recognised as being an increasing feature of Focus's own approach in several program areas. Focus can hold strong positions 'without name-calling', and maintaining respect and good humour for all interlocutors.

Several social movements spoke of high levels of trust and mutual respect between their staff and members, and Focus staff – particularly as a contrast to the approach of many other NGOs; Focus offers knowledge, but does not force it, was the way one women's organisation put it.

Focus was cited as able to enunciate and hold a long-term vision and commit to the long haul; while also having sufficient flexibility to seize strategic opportunities when they arose; and would stick with campaigns even when there were no obvious easy wins at hand. As an example, with regard to the WTO Ministerial which may or may not eventually take place in 2009, one partner said "If and when there is a Ministerial, Focus will be there".

Different north-based partners flagged some changes of tactical approach which might be necessary for Focus in the coming years: First, as the Global Financial Crisis had changed configurations and coalitions in Europe, there were opportunities for Focus to engage in a unified way with a range of interlocutors who might previously have barely been on communicating terms. In the context of the new US administration, another cited the need to engage more with US-based movements, and not be ‘seen to be a party spoiler’ – though the same partner stressed the need for Focus to ‘remain radical where a radical perspective was needed’

The feedback gathered amounted to an overwhelming vote of confidence in Focus by its partners. Needs and hopes were somewhat different, however: for the future, most partners connected to the academic sector spoke of a need for Focus to build or rebuild its capacity in analysis; saying much documentation currently produced lacks the rigour needed for credibility. Social movement partners were more likely to emphasise the need for greater immediate resourcing and facilitating. This is reflected in the current ‘Centre of Gravity’ discussions within Focus – on how to maintain the essential balance and symbiotic dynamic between hands-on participation to the street level in campaigning; with maintaining or developing the level of analysis and documentation which allows movements to achieve impacts at the levels they are seeking.

To what extent have Focus' programme objectives and activities responded to the needs and priorities of progressive social movements and CSOs?

At the outset, it is important to note that the program objectives as enumerated and described by Focus are not often part of partners’ awareness, and there seems to be quite a lot of ‘bleeding’ across program boundaries; probably unsurprisingly and even desirable in the broad context of deglobalisation goals.

Feedback on the relationship with Focus was close to universally positive, but it is also clear that Focus will often need to make its own judgment calls as to how it serves partners’ needs, particularly when dealing with a large volume of requests for immediate campaigning assistance.

“The closer you get to social movements, the more you get drawn into their agenda,” was the way one Focus Philippines staff put it; Focus will need to differentiate at times for itself, if it is going to navigate through the Centre of Gravity issue in a positive way.

From another perspective, a southern coalition partner flagged emphatically that Focus needs to take better consciousness of its actual position of power vis-à-vis some movement partners. Around events such as the World Social Forum, Focus has been the means through which some northern donors have reached peoples’ movements, rather than entering into direct partner relationships themselves. The ability to then choose – with funding back-up – which partners to work with, does give Focus a greater degree of power than sits easily with its internal discourse. There was no suggestion that this power had been misused to date; but that Focus needed to develop greater sensitivity around its objective role, and build in greater safeguards, and/or reassess its position vis-à-vis northern donors. In this perspective also, Focus lack of direct constituency was

a potentially weakening factor, as it deprived the organisation of direct accountability to the grassroots.

What have we contributed towards the discourse among progressive groups on and in China? What kind of presence have we been able to establish in China?

After four years operation, the Focus China program remains small, and run mainly on a fly-in, fly-out basis. Given the enormity of the undertaking and Focus's newness to the situation, the contribution is significant and positive in the eyes of the China-based partners interviewed. One activist remarked that new private sector actors there characteristically spend the first ten years 'trying to work out which way is up', and that Focus should take this into account in setting realistic expectations.

The situation is particularly dynamic, with the space for civil society and popular mobilisation changing rapidly – in both expansion and periodic contraction – during the time Focus has been present. Focus was spoken of as enjoying a high degree of trust. Picking partners where Government Organised NGOs (GONGOs) still take up a lot of supposed civil society space is a constant and shifting challenge. Also, it needs to be recognised that perspectives from within China on Focus 'traditional' issues of trade and neoliberalism may give less resonance than elsewhere in Asia; whereas issues of climate justice and possibly Commons may provide better opportunities to both link and raise awareness.

Focus's work in linking, and providing exposure and training on issues of globalisation was valued by China partners, and to some popular movements working on China issues from close in. This was most clearly stated with reference to the Globalisation and Social Transformation course conducted by Focus: "Without this course, we would not have known about the effects of globalisation" being the comment of one China partner.

Less was discovered about Focus impact in work on China abroad. As one China-based partner remarked "China is the 800lb gorilla which isn't in the room, but should be". The tangential mentions by northern partners were positive, but general.

Focus has yet to fully define its level and role in and on China; but given the magnitude of the task, the steepness of the learning curve and the rapidity with which the landscape is changing, progress to date represents real success to be built on.

What roles do our current and potential allies want us to play in the future?

and

What issues and types of activities should Focus devote its energies and resources to in the future? What types of roles is Focus best positioned to play in the global peace and social justice movement?

Sections above have begun to address this: seemingly, nearly all partners want more of Focus, and from their different positionalities, generally more of the same. Partners were specifically selected by the teams, the evaluators were informed, as being particularly likely to offer critique and suggest areas where change was needed; but surprisingly little emerged through our digging.

This in itself gives some cause for concern given the issues to be addressed under Organisational Objectives below. Consistently, overstretch was cited by nearly all staff, and spontaneously by many partners. Requests for more of both high level analysis, and engagement in front-line campaigning, cannot both be fully met if the organisation is to retain its current size and many of the valued attributes that go with it.

Many partners made positive observations of the kind “Only Focus does..”, particularly with regard to ways of working; of linking levels horizontally and vertically. It is a great compliment, but also probably cause for concern and even frustration. The fact that only Focus does, does not mean that only Focus can; are there ways in which Focus might achieve some adoption by other progressive organisations of some of the approaches which are most valued and even celebrated in their work?

Organisational Objectives: *(Unlike the Program objectives and key questions, this is the subject of a relatively succinct section; so findings presented here are even more summary.)*

How effective, or ineffective, are Focus' ways of functioning? This includes setting priorities, implementing activities, meeting objectives and goals, etc.

How strong and capable is Focus as an organisation? How does Focus build the competence and knowledge of its staff? How well is it equipped to meet its organizational goals and programme objectives?

How well and effectively do the Focus teams work at thematic and country programme levels? To what extent are actions by the staff genuinely collective and supportive of one another, and of the organisation as a whole?

How accountable are Focus staff to each other and to the organisation as a whole with regard to their programme work?

Discussions with staff and board members did not readily follow the above questions, and a lot of information was arrived at tangentially. However, some salient issues were that:

- With regard to meeting objectives and goals, the task is not rendered easy by the goals and objectives as currently set. To an outside perspective, large (even enormous) amounts of work are done, and to a high quality. However, as is more fully explored in the Monitoring section, the structures which would allow for better identification and tracking of both of these are in need of attention, particularly in the sense of giving space and resource for reflection and shared learning.

- For an organisation of its size, Focus does appear to possess considerable strengths, and to have integrated ‘the capacity to reinvent itself’, more than once over. Restructure of programs and teams has been readily undertaken – though to an outside perspective, the boundaries still do not always seem clear and meaningful on first acquaintance.
- Setting and adhering to priorities was felt as problematic by several. On the one hand, the flexibility to set aside planned trajectories for immediate needs is valued across the board. On the other hand, some felt that more united approach in determining overall program priorities on which funding allocation could be based, would be valuable.
- The organisation has an emphatically flat structure; with an exceptionally high degree of autonomy given to all staff, including the youngest and newest. This is valued, but also felt by many that more orientation, accompaniment and professional development would serve the organisation well, without detracting from the essential equality. Current approach was described by more than one as ‘sink or swim’.
- Overstretch is universally cited as a major issue; and one to which no obvious solutions seem to be currently on the board. The phenomenon does seem to be largely self-inflicted – fairly characteristically for advocacy organisations - one factor being staff’s personal strong commitment to the causes and goals in question. While the risk of burn-out was raised from several quarters, on superficial survey, Focus staffing seems to be remarkably stable (not necessarily typical of advocacy organisations), suggesting strong counterbalancing factors of satisfaction and validation. However, it would be unwise to rely on this always to be sufficient to retain Focus body of exceptionally skilled and motivated staff.

How effective and efficient (or not) are the decision-making and management structures in Focus? How useful and effective (or not) has Focus' collective management structure been?

This question was not deeply examined; though neither were strong dissatisfactions spontaneously raised. One partner spoke emphatically of Focus management as “a model for collective decision-making”. The suggestion that there was a ‘hidden hierarchy’ was only once made, and possibly has some credibility although at a level which is probably minimal and benign compared to many organisations supposedly committed to collective process.

How can Focus staff reduce their carbon foot-print and work in ecologically sustainable ways?

Addressing this question did not fall within the final scope of evaluators’ investigations, nor were the issues spontaneously raised in staff and partner interviews.

How can Focus staff integrate feminist ways of thinking and working? (many Focus staff are active feminists, but this has not percolated into an organisational culture as yet).

On quick read, a surprising amount of Focus documentation appears ‘gender blind’, and overt feminist discourse was not in particular evidence. Contrasting with this was the observation of some Southern partners that they found Focus staff particularly gender sensitive. In the Philippines office, the need for better gender balance in staffing was particularly raised – in the need to achieve a greater proportion of male staff.

The absence of overt gender discourse is maybe most startlingly obvious in the Peace and People’s Security program; given both the urgency of need here, and the availability of resources and partners to build a more effective gender approach in the area, this could possibly be prioritised as a program area in which to pilot more consistent gender perspective across Focus’s work.

What changes should Focus make to its organisational structure, systems and working methods to make it stronger, more competent and politically accountable?

Focus does appear to be achieving a considerable amount of work of real value; not just generating frantic activity and prolific publications. Reflection from partners appears also to affirm that Focus is largely succeeding in performing the role it sets and aspires to.

The current context does seem to be amplifying some of the inherent challenges and potential tensions and contradictions between different parts of Focus’s role and priorities; it is likely that during the forthcoming work planning period, some choices will confront the organisation, particularly on whether to continue with its relatively small, flat and decentralised structure – while shedding at least one major program area; or seeing to respond to the apparently increasing level of partner expectations and demands, which would almost essentially require moving to a larger scale organisation with some more element of hierarchy. A third path could yet be invented which manages to reconcile the apparent contradictions, but this would of itself also require major commitment by the organisation to discern and bring into being the required changes.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

From the evaluators' side, it has been seen as more appropriate to emphasise issues around ways of working; partnership; communication and internal structure than program content and direction as such; our scope did not allow for in-depth assessment of appropriateness of program design and objectives to the external issues being approached. Certainly requests and recommendations of this kind arose from partners, which now need to be assessed by Focus staff and board in the light of their own knowledge and likely resources. Evaluators' initial recommendations are also included, and concluding /overarching points given.

PARTNERSHIP

Nearly all partners interviewed were satisfied or better with the way Focus already functions and were grateful to it. 'Focus is a good school' was a comment from more than one grassroots partner - so Focus should consider incorporating more volunteers into its structure, as many people can learn from them. Focus could also have more interns and possibly students to help with their work. This will benefit the partners also.

Some said Focus staff were spread too thin, but other partners said that on issues like trade, and specifically FTAs, Focus goes deep into the issue and provides knowledge. Focus work on agriculture is very important as agriculture is the most basic part of life; this should continue at least at current levels.

Most partners concluded that working with Focus has been an excellent experience; though some stated that they have not been able to make optimal use of all of Focus resources because they had worked mainly on one thematic field, and could work with them on other issues also – Focus needs to 'hide its light' a bit less, and give its partners more sense of the areas in which they could engage. .

If Focus prioritises support to developing a regional civil society in the various regions where they work (particularly ASEAN and SAARC), a more deliberate strategy needs to be developed..

It was felt that people outside peoples' movements do not understand how severe the problems are at the grass roots. Several movements wanted that Focus help the general public to better understand this so that they can help the movement.

Some partners in the South wanted Focus to give more priority to the peasantry and farmers' issues. Their research capacity on this could improve and be put to better use. This will need to be considered in Focus's determination of priorities.

The issue of power possibly accruing to Focus when it is used as a funding conduit or facilitator by donors reaching to peoples' movements needs to be carefully considered in order to ensure clear-sighted development of relationships with partners, especially where Focus highly values its supportive and facilitative role.

TRADE

The challenge in the future will be to link Focus's work and successes on the WTO with the new crises that are being caused by globalization like climate change, food crises, and the continuing global financial crisis. Focus will have to sustain the energy it had in its earlier work to this new challenge and also bring in new groups and build new networks.

Focus will need to take up opportunities to engage in a unified way with a range of Europe- and North America-based interlocutors who might previously have barely been on communicating terms.

PEACE AND PEOPLE'S SECURITY

Peace and People's Security has been a successful program of Focus since they have been able to bring many peace movements together world from world over on many issues. Focus has effectively helped challenge imperialist hegemony and question the occupationist policies in West Asia.

:Focus produces valuable information in this field for its partners. It would be useful if they engage in collective research with new partners from universities, institutes etc and find ways of popularizing this work.

Some felt that in the peace and security programme there was too much focussed on only an anti-American programme, and not dealing with other types of power, so Focus leadership needs some reflection on this also, though they have become more adaptive.

There is a need to develop a more compelling narrative in the peace program. Focus should incorporate a feminist perspective in their work plan on peace. This is especially important because the anti- imperialist framework is not enough, since fundamentalist groups that can be anti-imperialist for their convenience but at the same time are gender insensitive, opposed to women's equality and use violence against women as well as controlling the autonomy of women.

Properly incorporating gender considerations in the peace program could serve as a model for the broader Focus program

The Peace and People's Security program is one field in which Focus could pilot more conscious integration of gender and feminist perspectives, given both the urgency of need here, and the availability of resources and partners to build a more effective gender approach in the area. This could possibly be prioritised as a program area in which to pilot more consistent gender perspective across Focus's work

In the context of the new US administration, Focus needs to closely examine the emerging opportunities for more positive engagement with US-based movements.

CHINA

The China program has achieved a very credible record in a short time, and should definitely be continued and if possible, supported to grow, with an expanded in-country base.

In the dynamic China context, Focus staff need to continue their vigilance in identifying the effective voices as well as representatives of civil society it works with and enables, to maximise access for these to the limited democratic space

Partners expressed a need for a larger, or more consistent, Focus commitment on the ground in China; given the promise of the program to date, greater investment in the infrastructure of the China program should be seriously considered

Focus needs to demarcate a strategy to set the longer-term scope of transnational channels of learning. The China and India programmes are necessary but need a clearer strategy, particularly where linkages are to be made, or otherwise the available resources will be spread too thin.

PHILIPPINES

The possibility of extending the reach of the Development Round Table Series beyond Manila to the Visayas and Mindanao should be considered, given the strong role partners perceive it to play.

INDIA

Focus is well known in India even where they do not have regional offices because they have worked with so many different social movements. Focus needs some theoretical inputs in their new efforts at the alternative regionalism program of South Asia and to the nature of regionalism and peace that they are looking for. This is because there is a triumphalism in peace that the states in South Asia are seeking for example the Sri Lankan Government over the LTTE.

CAMBODIA

Despite frustrations, the catalytic and facilitative work done by Focus in Cambodia is vital to the support of embryonic and emerging social movements, and should be continued if at all possible.

RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Research work by Focus is perceived as being of fairly high calibre, and all Focus researchers have developed and grown. The organisation has to consider how to deal with the perceived unevenness in their research and programmes, and the relative

investment of time and human resources between in-depth research, analysis and publication; and the demands of supporting front-line campaigning.

Some felt that their target audience though was mainly public, can also extend to academics and students, who can learn from them.

Focus has been long-term resident in Chulalongkorn University, and now there is more work and there are legitimate grounds to suggest more, and more vibrant, interaction.

There should be more collaborative research, particularly at Chulalongkorn, as a means to Focus becoming more of the broader part of the learning process of the University system and as a facilitating organism in the transformative challenge.

The Focus website needs improvement, as it is currently very user-unfriendly and difficult to navigate, as has already been recognised by Focus. Improvement is needed as a key tool in internal as well as external communication.

The partner suggestions that Focus do an e-letter in Thai and Spanish language also so it is spread more locally should be considered as part of a more balanced communications strategy.

Focus could help production of simple educational materials on issues like climate change and impacts of globalisation in local language so they can directly reach the grassroots

Focus produces valuable information for its partners. It would be useful if they engage in collective research with new partners from universities, institutes etc to strengthen academic rigour, and also find ways of popularising this work so it is readily accessible to peoples' movements.

ORGANISATIONAL

The organisation needs to better define its distinctive inputs, and from there work to more clearly identify what its particular contribution has been to broad movement successes, in order to learn and further improve performance.

Focus is viewed by movement partners as consistently supportive; but the organisation will increasingly need to make its own judgment calls as to how it serves partners' needs, particularly when dealing with a large volume of requests for immediate campaigning assistance.

Current individual and team workloads are extremely high; although work with Focus offers major satisfactions and rewards that so far seem to counterbalance the burn-out factors. This should not give cause for complacency, however, Focus should address the issue if it is to reduce the risk of loss of some of its crucial assets. Specific recommendations include:

- Better protocols for how short term staff secondments or borrowings across teams to reduce stress on coordinators who are expected to continue with planned programs on the reduced staffing complement.

- More realistic Position Descriptions, reflecting what one well-qualified and highly motivated human being can do, rather than everything a given program requires at the recruitment time in question.
- Better induction , accompaniment and support to professional development to new staff, balancing the high trust and autonomy Focus accords to them.

Exchanges between teams would facilitate better learning across teams, as well as catalysing it within them.

More routine space for reflection, sharing and discussion would boost learning within the team and improve outward communication as well.

The periodic meetings of the whole team in Bangkok are valued as an opportunity to gain more of a sense of what the organisation as a whole was doing; but on an annual schedule, these are too few and far between to give as full an understanding as is needed. Improving opportunities for relatively unstructured and reflective interactions among the team will support better overall learning.

More consistently addressing the issues of overcommitment, and boundary setting, could give fairly automatic dividends in terms of improved internal communication

If the issue of overstretch and proper allocation of resources between campaigning and research is to be fully addressed, it is expected that in the planning period ahead, Focus will need to decide on one of the two following courses of action:

- To shed one or more of its thematic programs, to devote approximately the current level of staffing resources to working on the remaining themes with a greater degree of sustainability and balance
- To continue with the current range of program commitment, but slightly increases the number of staff, while also mildly modifying current structure to allow more specialised complementary roles and more explicit intra-team management support

Focus can and should improve its monitoring and reporting, to improve internal accountability and promote learning as much or more as to provide better reporting to donors and others. The issues raised in this section of the Evaluation report should be given careful consideration by the Board.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

From the evaluators' perspective, offering definitive recommendations on program direction and priorities is difficult, given that the current and potential demands on the organisation far exceed current resources. Focus' strengths are evident in all program areas; with a few caveats, ways of working with partners are strongly appreciated and endorsed (at least by the range of partners it was possible to engage in this process). There is no one area of work which appears as an obvious candidate to be dropped.

Decisions on program priorities and direction will need to be informed by prior Board and staff decisions on the following fundamentals:

- Where should Focus strike the balance between in-depth analytical and documentary work on the one hand, and immediate support to front-line campaigning and networking on the other?
- What is the optimal size for the organisation; and how much growth, with attendant increase in hierarchy, can Focus accommodate while retaining its key internal strengths?
- Can Focus and its donors and partners support the growing of a 'Focus-like' approach in other Southern organisations – i.e. a linking of rigorous analysis to engagement with popular movements and highly creative networking – so the kind of support and resourcing which is most valued can be available from a greater variety of points. 'Only Focus does' does not mean 'Only Focus *can*'.

The core bottom-line recommendations the evaluators would make whatever the Board decisions on the above are:

- Wherever the balance is struck, it must be a **balance**; and probably not too far from where it now sits. Focus would have far less impact if it were to evolve into a quasi-academic think-tank; or purely a campaign-resourcing body. Within this, some specific points could be identified as to where greater rigour of analysis can be developed, as well as better refining and defining the Ways of Working by which Focus can best resource immediate campaigning.
- The organisational development and staff support issues; and the monitoring and communications strategies outlined above, should be addressed as priority in whichever way Focus chooses to evolve.

Better incorporation of gender analysis and discourse is imperative, and the Peace and People's Security Program offers an obvious starting point.

Attachment 1. Terms of Reference

Background

Focus on the Global South (Focus) is a non-governmental organisation that employs 29 staff in offices in Thailand, the Philippines and India. Focus was established in 1995 in Bangkok, Thailand, which continues to date to serve as the organisation's head office.

Focus combines policy research, advocacy, activism and grassroots capacity building in order to generate critical analysis and debates among social movements, civil society organisations, elected officials, government functionaries and the general public on national and international policies related to corporate-led globalisation, neo-liberalism and militarisation.

Focus's overall goals are to:

- a) dismantle oppressive economic and political structures and institutions;
- b) create liberating structures and institutions;
- c) promote demilitarization and peace-building;

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- b) create liberating structures and institutions;
- c) promote demilitarization and peace-building;
- d) map, conceptualise and evolve alternative structures, institutions and systems;

These goals are brought together in the paradigm of deglobalisation. This term describes the transformation of the global economy from one centred around the needs of transnational corporations to one that meets the needs of people, communities and nations, and in which the capacities of local and national economies and societies are strengthened.

Although not a social movement in and of itself, Focus sees itself as a member of a growing and diverse international social movement that seeks to dismantle the power of global capital and militarism, and establish alternative systems and structures of economy, politics and society. Focus places tremendous importance on participating in, building and supporting progressive networks and alliances at multiple levels—local to global.

Since its founding, Focus has tailored its work-programme to respond to the prevailing macro, meso and micro political and economic conjunctures of the day. Up until 2002, Focus's activities were broadly divided into two types or levels of operations: The Paradigm programme, which was responsible for monitoring, analysing and writing about global political and economic trends, and; the Micro-Macro Issues Linking Programme, which sought to make the crucial linkages between the impacts of these macro trends at national and local levels, and promote responsible policy making informed by the aspirations of people most deeply affected by these trends. These two levels of operation were fleshed out through our analytical, writing, educational (such as workshops, conferences and seminars) and publishing work at international, regional

and national levels.

The above operational structure changed in 2003, following a programme review commissioned by Focus. Focus's reviewers interviewed social movements, civil society organisations and independent writers/analysts about the accessibility, usefulness and effectiveness of Focus's work and made recommendations that helped give new shape to Focus' working methods, form and substance. Focus decided to become more proactively a campaign oriented organisation, especially in areas such as trade, finance and peace-security, and to make a concerted effort to work with progressive social movements and civil society in the articulation of alternatives to global capitalism and militarism. At the same time, we saw clearly that our former operational levels of Paradigm and Micro-Macro Linkages were integral elements of Focus' working methodology regardless of theme, issue or campaign. These elements were retained in our commitment to work at multiple levels and through critiques to “deconstruct” the ideologies, policies, structures and practices of neoliberalism and imperialism, and proposals to “reconstruct” society and economy through progressive alternatives.

2005 marked the tenth anniversary of Focus' founding and Focus embarked on a strategic reorientation of its work in mid 2005. The process started with a comprehensive evaluation of Focus' past activities and relationships by an external team, and based on the evaluation results, Focus developed a new programme of activities. The 2006-2008 work-plan retained Focus' emphasis on being campaign oriented, producing critiques of the paradigm and institutions of neoliberalism (deconstruction), and the elaboration of alternatives with progressive social movements and civil society (reconstruction).

With regard to themes and issues, the 2006-2008 work-plan directed Focus' attention to building campaigns and strategies to resist privatisation, defend and reclaim the commons, dismantle the power of Transnational Corporations (TNCs), and articulate an alternative global trade paradigm built on the principles of food sovereignty and comprehensive regional cooperation. In its Peace and Security work, Focus continued its engagement with the Middle East with added emphasis on the “War on Terror” in Southeast Asia, peace and security issues in South Asia, and campaigns to put an end to military bases globally. A key aim of Focus' Alternatives work in this work-plan was putting more flesh on the perspective of “deglobalisation” that Focus advanced in 2003. This included participating in collective efforts to develop an alternative system of global peace and security to supplant the institutions of global hegemony.

A new area of work in the 2006-2008 work-plan was Focus' China programme, that sought to: a) develop a framework for Focus' engagement with progressive Chinese NGOs, institutions, opinion leaders and movements; b) contribute towards positive change in China by supporting critical analyses and debates among CSOs, mass organisations, academics, movements and government officials, and; c) create opportunities to engage progressive Chinese activists, academics and journalists in the global peace and justice movement.

Another important addition to Focus' work areas was our entry into the debates and campaigns related to global warming and climate change. In mid 2007, after more than

a year of internal discussion, Focus started to formulate a specific programme of activities on global warming and climate change. The main aims of this programme were to integrate climate change dimensions into Focus' work on trade, finance, the commons, peace and security, and alternatives, and to work with progressive CSOs and social movements to build broad-based and grassroots oriented climate justice movements.

These thematic areas have been complemented by country based programmes in India, the Philippines and Thailand. Teams made up of staff from each of the country offices are responsible for taking forward work on each thematic area. While thematic and country teams retain a fair measure of autonomy in planning and implementing activities, Focus staff recognise the inter-connectedness of these activities thematically, and at country, regional and international levels.

Focus staff identify the core roles of the organisation as:

- initiating and organising
- undertaking analysis and setting the terms of debates
- political clarity and solidarity
- networking and acting as a catalyst – bringing diverse groups together
- fundraising and reporting
- coordinating and following up

An important change in Focus' ways of working was moving towards a more horizontal and collective decision making structure through a broader management team, coordinated by the Focus Coordinator rather than an Executive Director.

Purpose of the Evaluation

Since it was founded, the size, scope and complexity of Focus' work have grown significantly. So also have demands on Focus' staff capacity and resources by Focus' allies and partners. The rapidly changing external environment challenges us and moves us to engage in more and more public debates and popularly oriented campaigns on peace, justice and equality. As the negative consequences of economic globalisation have become increasingly obvious, governments and institutions have grown less confident that neoliberalism and the free market paradigm will deliver the benefits they had expected. At the same time, governments and much of 'global' civil society appear unable to find ways to arrest the course of global capitalism, and imagine and articulate genuinely alternative paradigms. The current financial, food, energy and climate crises clearly show the failure of global capitalism in sustaining the economy, society and the planet; at the same time however, because of a general timidity on the part of governments and civil society to challenge the root causes of the crises, the main actors and institutions of global capitalism are using these very crises to shore up their capacities and reinvent their roles.

At this juncture, it is extremely important for Focus to reassess its own role in national, regional and global peace and social justice movements, and equally important, its organisational and staff capacity to respond appropriately to the latest developments in politics and the economy.

For Focus therefore, the main purposes of the evaluation are to a) understand the role that Focus has played in the past in promoting and supporting positive change; b) determine what roles Focus should play in the future, given the latest conjuncture; c) assess our organisational and staff capacity to play these and other appropriate roles, and; d) come up with a plan to strengthen Focus' capacity, skills, competence and ways of working.

Focus would like to use this evaluation strategically to both, strengthen our organisational capacity and competence, and also to find effective ways to evaluate impacts of advocacy work. More specifically, Focus is interested to know the following:

Programme:

1. What are the positive outcomes of Focus' work in the past three years (intended and unintended)?
2. What has been Focus' role in bringing about progressive change? How do local and national CSOs and social movements, coalitions and networks see Focus' role?
3. To what extent have Focus' programme objectives and activities responded to the needs and priorities of progressive social movements and CSOs?
4. How successful, or not, has Focus been in attaining its programme objectives?
5. What have we contributed towards the discourse among progressive groups on and in China? What kind of presence have we been able to establish in China?
6. What roles do our current and potential allies want us to play in the future?
7. What issues and types of activities should Focus devote its energies and resources to in the future? What types of roles is Focus best positioned to play in the global peace and social justice movement?

Organisation:

- 1) How effective, or ineffective, are Focus' ways of functioning? This includes setting priorities, implementing activities, meeting objectives and goals, etc.
- 2) How strong and capable is Focus as an organisation? How does Focus build the competence and knowledge of its staff? How well is it equipped to meet its organizational goals and programme objectives?
- 3) How well and effectively do the Focus teams work at thematic and country programme levels? To what extent are actions by the staff genuinely collective and supportive of one another, and of the organisation as a whole?
- 4) How accountable are Focus staff to each other and to the organisation as a whole with regard to their programme work?
- 5) How effective and efficient (or not) are the decision-making and management structures in Focus? How useful and effective (or not) has Focus' collective management structure been?

- 6) How can Focus staff reduce their carbon foot-print and work in ecologically sustainable ways?
- 7) How can Focus staff integrate feminist ways of thinking and working? (many Focus staff are active feminists, but this has not percolated into an organisational culture as yet).
- 8) What changes should Focus make to its organisational structure, systems and working methods to make it stronger, more competent and politically accountable?

The period under review/evaluation will be 2006-2008. The primary beneficiaries of this evaluation will be Focus as an organisation and Focus staff, although we hope that the evaluation will yield information that will be useful to our donors, allies and partners about how to assess advocacy work and strengthen the organisational capacities of advocacy organisations to bring about progressive social, economic and political change.

Evaluation Team and Methodology

Focus is considering recruiting the services of a newly formed organisation called The NGO Clinic, based in the Queen Mary School of Business and Management Affiliation in the University of London. The NGO Clinic offers organisational development services to activist NGOs from an activist perspective.

Additional evaluators will be identified after we have made contact with the NGO Clinic and confirmed their availability and the range of services they offer.

It is expected that the evaluation methodology will be developed by the evaluation team.