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Annual Report 2002

Preface

As they say, the world changed on September 11, 2001. Throughout 2002, Focus coped with the many impacts of September 11, particularly the more aggressive turn in US foreign policy. In various writings, we condemned the attack on the Twin Towers but we joined many other commentators in warning that a mailed-fist response to terrorism, such as bombing Afghanistan, invading Iraq, or an official policy of assassination – in short, state-sponsored terrorism – was bound to fail and would simply breed more fear and terror. We said that without a strategy that made central addressing the roots of terrorism in injustice, inequality, and cultural and religious chauvinism, the US and its allies would be sowing the seeds of permanent war.

Acting on these beliefs, we put together an international peace mission to the island of Basilan in the Philippines, to which US Special Forces were deployed owing to the country's being designated Washington's "Second Front against Terror." Focus also played a central role along with other organisations in setting up the Asian Peace Alliance.

Even as we paid closer attention to peace and security issues, we continued our work of monitoring and organizing resistance to corporate-driven globalization and its institutions—the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank. With the approach of the Fifth Ministerial of the WTO, Focus redoubled its efforts to counter another round of trade and trade-related negotiations aimed at more and more destructive liberalization. The writing and publication of *Power Politics*, by Aileen Kwa, which exposed the intimidation and blackmail which developing country governments are constantly subjected in WTO negotiations, was one of Focus' key contributions to this enterprise. We also played an active role in defining the task of the global justice movement with respect to trade, which was not to put a priority on access to rich-country markets of developing country exports but to reduce the powers of the WTO by joining forces to derail the WTO's Fifth Ministerial in Cancun.

Opposition to the paradigm of corporate-driven globalization has been accompanied by our efforts to articulate alternatives at the community, national, regional, and global level. Participa-

tion at the World Social Forum and World Social Movements continued to be a priority activity, with a great deal of our efforts devoted to helping bring about the Asia Social Forum in January 2003. But perhaps our signal achievement in this area was the internal, collective process, which lasted over six months, that produced the paradigm and strategy of "deglobalization"—Focus' modest contribution to the search for alternatives to globalization.

In 2002, the Philippine programme became a full-fledged programme, our India programme met the challenge of playing a key role in staging the Asia Social Forum, and our Thailand programme expanded its work in support of progressive initiatives at the grassroots. Our work with societies in transition—Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, East Timor—intensified as several governments requested our input in issues ranging from dealing with the World Bank and Asian Development Bank to joining the WTO.

2002 was a challenging year. It was also a busy and productive year for Focus, and we thank the many partner organisations, funders, and friends that made this possible.

Walden Bello
Executive Director

Bangkok, May 26, 2003

Peace and Security

2002 was a very busy year for the Peace and Security Programme.

Basilan Peace Mission

Taking advantage of the events of September 11, the United States led an assault that toppled the Taliban government in Afghanistan and created a “second front against terrorism” by deploying US Special Forces in Basilan, the Southern Philippines. The move was ostensibly directed at helping the Philippine government fight the Abu Sayyaf “terrorist” group based in the island. However, many viewed the move as really aimed at establishing a permanent US military presence in Mindanao to enable Washington to intervene against Islamic political movements not only in Mindanao but throughout Southeast Asia.

In response to the US move, Focus organized a peace mission to Basilan in late March 2002. The team had 10 international and five Filipino members. During the four-day mission, the team interviewed victims of military abuse, local residents, local government officials, Philippine military officials, and US Special Forces personnel. It visited two key cities, Isabela and Lamitan, and a US Special Forces camp in the center of the island.

The mission was covered widely both in the local Philippine press and in the international press. Its findings, put together in a report at the end of the mission, were that:

- ◆ in the struggle against the Abu Sayyaf guerrillas, the Philippine military and government were violating the human and political rights of many Muslim civilians;
- ◆ the US military presence was not adding anything significant to the capabilities of the Philippine military;
- ◆ the US Special Forces presence constituted intervention in a purely domestic, police matter and thus violated Philippine constitutional processes;
- ◆ the US presence in Basilan was part of a larger, more long-term deployment of US military forces in the Mindanao area, a development that compromised Philippine

sovereignty and intensified the destabilization of the region.

The Asian Peace Alliance

Another key activity of the Peace and Security Programme was helping set up the Asian Peace Alliance (APA) during a conference held at the end of August 2002 in Manila. The APA conference brought together over 100 activists from Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia, North America, and Europe to forge a network to respond to the multiple crises to which the US was plunging the region and to advance a vision of peace. In the coming months, the APA network participated in mobilizations against the impending war in Iraq held in major cities throughout Asia. Focus is a member of the APA Steering Committee.

Throughout 2002, the programme actively produced and published analyses of war and peace issues in the Asian and global media. Members of the programme also spoke in many conferences, rallies, and assemblies in Asia and throughout the world.

With the war against Iraq threatening to break out any day as the US ceased to make any effort to get an endorsement of military action from the Security Council, Focus organized the Asian Peace Mission to Baghdad as part of a global last ditch effort to prevent war.

Palestine mission

Focus joined a delegation of 10 international representatives associated with the World Social Forum for a four-day mission to the West Bank during the early days of the Israeli government’s “Operation Defensive Shield”. This mission was preceded by a small demonstration in Bangkok organised by Focus alongside several Thai peace and human rights organisations. The contacts made in Israel and in Palestine during the visit developed during the year, and Focus sent a representative to the Palestine Social Forum in December 2002. Unfortunately he was denied entry into Israel.

Trade and Financial Liberalisation

Geneva

2002 saw the start of the Doha Round negotiations at the WTO. Focus was tracking and reporting on these negotiations particularly in the areas of agriculture and internal transparency issues, or more accurately the lack of internal transparency.

Exposing the anti-democratic strategies of manufacturing consensus in the WTO

Much effort went into looking at what had gone wrong at the November 2001 Doha Ministerial Conference. This was in response to many questions post-Doha by civil society groups, 'What happened?', 'Why did developing countries capitulate on their agreed upon position of No New Issues?'. Despite the fact that developing countries had prepared themselves very well nationally and regionally on their positions for the Doha Ministerial, their united resistance melted away in the last hours of the Ministerial. Comprehensive interviews were conducted at the beginning of 2002 with delegates in Geneva to find out the extent and nature of the arm-twisting strategies. This was also at the time when the mandate and chairmanship of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) of the WTO was being heatedly debated in Geneva and agreed upon, again in a process that had little transparency and accountability.

In order to highlight how WTO rules are unfortunately formulated based on arm-twisting and brow beating, the results of the interviews were collated in the booklet finally launched in November 'Power Politics in the WTO'. Throughout the year, it was also starkly clear that the same anti-democratic and ruleless, even illegitimate tactics were used to forge consensus in this 'multilateral' institute.

Focus reported on just a few examples of these processes at work:

- ◆ The way in which the appointment of Mike Moore as Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee took place despite the wishes of the African Group and many developing countries. (This work was done together with Shefali Sharma of the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy.)
- ◆ The appointment of a WTO Secretariat Staff member, ex-Hong Kong Ambassador,

Stuart Harbinson to the position of Chair of the Agriculture Committee. This was clearly flouting the existing rules and guidelines that Secretariat staff do not chair negotiating bodies.

- ◆ The Mini Ministerial which took place in Sydney where only about twenty-five Ministers were invited, despite clear assertions by the Australian Minister that the meeting was intended to move the Doha Agenda forward. This was clearly of interest to all 145 WTO Members, not only a handful.
- ◆ The disappointing position taken by Dr Supachai, the first developing country DG in the GATT/WTO who took office in September 2001, on how mini-ministerials and the convening of small groups to make critical decisions at the WTO are unavoidable, even desirable.
- ◆ The negotiations on internal transparency. The Like Minded Group's (LMG) WTO submission on the process for the preparation of Ministerials, and during Ministerials themselves calling for rules of procedure to be adhered to (WT/GC/W/471, 24 April 2002) was responded with disdain in a paper by Australia, Canada, Mexico, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore and Switzerland (WT/GC/W/477, 29 June 2002). These countries instead insisted that 'Prescriptive and detailed approaches to the preparatory processes are inappropriate and will not create the best circumstances for consensus to emerge in the Cancun meeting. In a Member-driven organization processes need to be kept flexible. We need to avoid rigidities'. In other words, we need to avoid having to follow rules of procedure in order to be able to forge consensus, despite being a 'rules-based' multilateral institution.
- ◆ Assistant USTR for Africa, Rosa Whitaker's letter to the Ministers of Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa dated 25 October 2002, just days before the Sydney Mini-Ministerial, calling on them to agree to a drastically narrow interpretation of the TRIPS and Health declaration signed in Doha. The letter clearly illustrated an attempt to split Sub-saharan Africa from other developing countries such as China and India.

In addition to reporting on what was taking place in Geneva, Focus undertook some campaign work on this issue. An open letter signed by over 40 organisations was sent to Dr Supachai in September, asking him to instruct Mr Harbinson to step down as Chair of the Agriculture Committee.

In addition to the Harbinson campaign, Focus also drew public attention to the Sydney mini-ministerial in November. The sign-on letter protesting against such an illegitimate meeting was endorsed by many civil society groups.

Agriculture

2002 was also a critical year for the agriculture negotiations. The government grouping, Friends of the Development Box had been launched in Doha with quite some publicity. From the beginning, Focus had been involved in lobby work on the Development Box as an inside, 'monkey wrenching' strategy. However, as negotiations entered a more intense phase in 2002, the concept was being diluted by negotiators and some civil society actors. Amongst civil society groups, there were some tense debates on what constituted an acceptable 'Development Box', and whether this was contrary to the 'Take WTO out of agriculture' position, which Focus endorses. Focus attempted to provide some guidance to this discussion in a paper 'Can the Development Box Adequately Address the Agricultural Crisis in Developing Countries?' fleshing out the pitfalls for an overly narrow definition of the Development Box.

In terms of lobbying work, Focus did provide some assistance to various government delegates. A substantive paper was written for the Least Developed Countries. Two papers were also written for the Indonesia delegates on Food Security and Rural Development.

The rest of the work on Agriculture in 2002 was focused on reporting on the negotiations in various articles published both in Focus-on-Trade as well as the South Centre's South Bulletin. In various fora, Focus also attempted to raise awareness of the problems of the Cairns Group export oriented, market access agenda in Cairns group countries particularly in Southeast Asia. The rather aggressive in-fighting and the North-South splits within the Cairns Group in Geneva were highlighted.

As part of the attempts to build and strengthen the work of civil society groups around the world on WTO issues, Focus played a key role in the

Our World Is Not For Sale Coalition, by providing Geneva-based information to the coalition, participating in conference calls and organising and participating in the November strategy meeting in Oslo. We also took on many speaking engagements in civil society gatherings and fora.

Substantive papers for delegates

LDCs and Agriculture: Moving forward from Doha (March, Written for LDCs)

Rural Development (March, Paper for Indonesia)

Food Security (March, Paper for Indonesia)

Agreement on Agriculture: Elements for modalities in Market Access, domestic supports and export subsidies, September 2002

Comments on Cairns Group Communique, September.

Dossier

Power Politics in the WTO, November.

Articles

War on Terrorism weakened South's opposition to New Trade Round in Doha, January.

US and EU's pointman Harbinson appointed as Supachai's Chef de Cabinet, July.

Europe's Trade agenda at the WTO and the positions of ASEM developing countries. September.

Laying the Groundwork for Cancun: Another Doha 'Success?', September.

Indonesia defies the Cairns Group in favour of Food Security, September.

Australia's Cairns agenda: The wrong agenda for the South, October.

Agriculture Negotiations: Widening the inequities, October.

WTO Members Fight over developing countries' agriculture markets: an ominous outcome for the South?, October.

Supachai and Harbinson endorse exclusive WTO Meetings, December.

Press releases

26 July 2002: Open Letter to Dr Supachai regarding Mr. Harbinson's chairmanship of the Agriculture Committee

26 July 2002: 'Harbinson considers taking action against accusations of non-neutrality'

23 September 2002: 'WTO Secretariat's Chef de Cabinet breaks the rules'.

14 November 2002: 'Launch of publication: Power Politics in the WTO'.

14 November 2002: '150 civil society groups denounce Sydney Mini-Ministerial as Illegitimate and anti-democratic'.

Speaking engagements

Public hearing by the German Parliament's Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development on 'Securing nutrition in developing countries', 30 January, Berlin.

Conference on 'Results of the WTO negotiations from a developmental viewpoint with a special focus on the Agreement on Agriculture', organized by Germanwatch, 30 January, Berlin. Presentation: 'The Agreement on Agriculture negotiations: A southern perspective'.

Expert Level Meeting of the Like Minded Group (LMG) on Agriculture, 10 April, organized by the LMG, Geneva. Presentation: 'Development Box Strategies for Phase III'.

Council on Foundations Annual Conference, 28 April, Chicago, Presentation to funders on Focus' work on the WTO.

WTO NGO Symposium at the WTO, Workshop on 'Internal transparency and decision-making processes: Critical issues and recommendations', organised by Focus on the Global South, 1 May.

Preparatory meeting for Rio+ 10, Bali, 2-5 June. Various workshops.

Second Roundtable of Trade Unions, 17-19 July, organized by Focus on the Global South, Bangkok. Presentation: 'What's happening with the AoA'.

Meeting on the Cairns Group Strategy, Bangkok, organized by Asia Pacific Network on Food Sovereignty, August 19.

Various meetings and workshops in Jakarta, organized by Institute of Global Justice, August 14-17. This included a workshop on 'Farmers and the AoA' on the 15th between government delegates and civil society actors. Presentation: AoA Negotiations in Geneva'.

WTO and the Doha Agenda – International workshop, 14-16 October 2002, Geneva, by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Spoke at a Roundtable Discussion with NGOs and Trade Union Representatives.

European Social Forum, Transnational Institute Seminar 'European Union and Corporate Globalisation', 8 November, Florence.

Workshop organized before the Sydney Mini-Ministerial, 'Alternatives to the WTO Agenda', 10 November, organized by AFTINET, Sydney. Presentation- International overview on trade, economic inequality, and the WTO: 'Power Politics in the WTO'.

European Trade Network, 25 November 2002, Brussels, organized by CIDSE. Presentation: 'WTO Negotiations in Geneva'.

Note: Reports on other trade and finance activities are included in the regional and country programme sections.

State, Market and Civil Society

International movement building and networking

In the past three years, and especially since the inauguration of the World Social Forum (WSF), Focus has become increasingly involved in building links and relationships between regions, sectors and forums. Focus is active in debates about directions for the WSF, as well as participating in local and regional processes as an important means of building an international public agenda from the bottom-up. Focus is also committed to facilitating the participation of grassroots activists from Asia (and from Thailand, India and the Philippines in particular) in regional and international forums, such as the WSF and the Asian Social Forum.

In 2002, Focus participated in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (see detailed report below), the Argentina Social Forum in Buenos Aires in August, the Social Movements Indaba and Peoples Global Forum during the WSSD in Johannesburg, the Quito Social Forum during the Free Trade Area of the Americas Ministerial Summit in October and the European Social Forum in Florence in November. In addition, Focus was a co-organiser of the Asia Social Movements meeting in August, participated in the WSF International Council meetings in Porto Alegre, Bangkok and Florence and helped organise and participate in the Asia Social Forum held in Hyderabad, India, in early January 2003.

Our priorities in these forums was to

- (i) understand the character of the growing movement against neo-liberal globalisation
- (ii) build links between the movements in Asia and the rest of the world
- (iii) look for common issues and perspectives and understand differences
- (iv) promote and support the involvement of social movements, trade unions, grassroots organisations and local NGOs and intellectuals, and
- (v) promote Focus' analysis and strategies for de-constructing the hegemony of neo-liberalism, supporting peoples resistance and building alternatives.

In addition, we worked actively with ATTAC France, CUT-Brazil, the World March of Women and Via Campesina to convene "social movements

meetings" in all of these Forums. At these open forums, activists from all sectors and organisations came together in debate to start building a common agenda of action. This process first started at the WSF in 2001 and continued again in 2002, resulting in the second "Call of the Social Movements." This process, we believe, has been integral to building the present level of internationalism and opposition to the US war on Iraq.

Throughout 2002 we helped draft and promote discussion in many forums on a "Proposal to Build a Social Movements World Network." This was debated at the 2003 WSF and the process is slowly gathering momentum, supported by a small secretariat in the office of the CUT-Brazil.

World Social Forum 2002

In order to increase the Asian participation at the WSF, Focus invited 34 activists from all over Asia to go to Porto Alegre. For most of them, Focus covered all the expenses related to this trip, but for some we only covered part or facilitated the travel arrangements (hotel, registration, visas, information, and so on).

The delegation held three formal meetings in Porto Alegre (30 Jan, 2 Feb, 5 Feb). But most of the delegation life happened informally, at breakfast time, in the lobby of the hotel, in the forum venue or in the evenings. Exchanges and discussions between the participants were extremely rich, friendly and useful for further networking. The group also showed a very high level of solidarity, supporting each other, translating in local languages, helping to find the rooms and to understand the programme and helping with logistics. The WSF is such an overwhelming event that it was very useful to belong to a smaller group to circulate information and to "digest" what was going on at the forum and to socialise.

Most of the participants were asked to make a presentation at the seminars organised by Focus. Many also had other commitments and spoke in many other events.

Focus organised two seminars during the WSF: "Deglobalisation: building alternatives to economic, cultural and political globalisation" (two sessions) and "Ending global apartheid: taking apart the IMF and the World Bank" (two ses-

sions). The later was in collaboration with 50 Years is Enough.

Six Focus staff attended the WSF. Each was involved in a variety of activities, including extensive press work, workshops and conferences and of course a great deal of interpretation (especially the Thai staff).

Our involvement (apart from the two Focus workshops mentioned above) included:

- Participation in the International Council meeting
- Facilitating WSF conference seminar “Financial Capital Controls”
- Preparing discussion paper and presenting paper in seminar “Global Governance.”
- Facilitating and working on drafting group for social movements meetings and statement
- Organising two Asia regional meetings, 31 January and 4 February
- Extensive interviews, press conferences and media work, including facilitating interviews for Asian delegates (for example, Lysa John was interviewed on PBC’s “Democracy Now” and Meena Menon and Ubon Romphothong appeared on the New York-Porto Alegre WSF-WEF link).
- Preparation of discussion paper and plenary speaker at the WSF Conference on the new global economic order with Susan George and Maud Barlow
- International Forum on Globalisation seminars introducing the IFG proposals for change of the international economy.
- Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS) seminar on the Doha Ministerial
- Press conference and briefing on the situation in the Philippines organized by Akbayan and other Philippine groups.
- Land Action Reform Network workshops (LARN)
- Jubilee South “Debt Tribunal”
- REDES Brazil seminar on World Bank and IMF
- ATTAC Brazil seminar on alternatives to globalisation
- CNB-CUT seminar on the Role of the Financial System and Social Development

Organisation of four field-trips with MST

Many members of the delegation took the opportunity to spend more time with MST, the landless farmers movement of Brazil. Thanks to MST’s secretariat, three one-day trips to the MST

co-operatives and camps were organised (29 Jan, 5 Feb and 6 Feb). A longer field trip initiated by the Thai delegation took place from Feb 7 to 9. Delegation members joined this activity according to their time availability and to their interest. Feed-back from those visits, especially from the three-day trip have been extremely positive. They gave a more “concrete” touch to the demonstration that another world is possible.

Focus evaluation and follow-up

Focus decided to facilitate the participation of a delegation of Asian grassroots and NGOs activists at the second World Social Forum for several reasons.

First, it was evident at the first Social Forum that there was very little Asian representation, especially from the grassroots. Second, we believe that the WSF is important as a symbol and as a political and ideological process. Therefore, to build on the success of the first WSF we must do more than simply go to Porto Alegre: we need to build the process and to broaden the participation and the experience to activists throughout the region. Third, Focus is one of the main Asian contact points for the WSF Brazilian Committee and we have a responsibility to connect our own networks and partners to the WSF. Finally, Focus is a policy research and advocacy organisation, not a social movement. We are committed to working with social movements and peoples organisations but realise that we do not and cannot speak for them. From our perspective, therefore, we have an important role to disseminate information, to facilitate South-South linkages and to help ensure that people are able to represent themselves in international fora.

Assessment

We were extremely happy with the quality and diversity of the “Focus” delegation and we would like to record our immense thanks to Isabelle Delforge who worked tirelessly and closely with all the participants before, during and after the WSF. Their presence in Porto Alegre was in many cases due to Isabelle’s persistence with faxes and visas. She also received excellent support from Focus staff in Manila, Mumbai and Bangkok. In particular, Sonila Shetty and Joy Chavez did a tremendous job of making arrangements for the Indian and Filipino participants.

There are some weaknesses with the WSF, most of which are due to the sheer size of the event. Within Focus, we decided that organising our own seminars should not be a priority in future, mainly

because there are so many other events that the audience is very limited and the effort does not justify the outcome. It is however important to ensure that there are platforms from which people from Asia can speak and in future it may be better to focus on getting Asian speakers in panels, seminars and workshops organised by others. We hope that this will start to break down the Brazilian-Latino-French hegemony of the WSF.

The WSF is also extremely important in breaking down the barriers between trade unions, social movements and non-government organisations. In some countries, these barriers border on suspicion and hostility and the opportunity for activists from different sectors, traditions and organisations to work together as a members of an Asian delegation has helped to change some of those dynamics.

All Focus staff were very active in the Forum (see above) however the heavy organisational and interpreting load on some staff during the Forum itself limited their own participation. In future, we need to ensure that the organising and translation work is shared so that all the staff can participate in and follow the rich programme of the Forum.

The assessment of the participants' speaks for itself: most found it a worthwhile experience, most found something useful and relevant to their own experiences and work and they all learned and made many new contacts. Our impression is that the people supported each other and formed some close friendships and solidarity links by being part of a semi-organised "delegation." Several of the participants have continued to work on the WSF since their return, especially in India where it is planned to hold the 2004 WSF. During the 4th prepcom of the WSSD in Bali, about twenty social movements and regional organisations discussed how to build the Asian Social Forum process. It was agreed to organise a social movements meeting in Bangkok in August (leading up to the International Council meeting) and building in the next two years via Asian Social Forums in Hyderabad and Manila, and the 2004 World Social Forum.

The future

At an organisational level, Focus is committed to continue our involvement in the WSF and the Asian Social Forum.

In 2002, Meena Menon represented Focus on the India Organising Committee for the WSF and

to work more generally in helping build the Asian process. We are also active in the WSF International Council and hosted the International Council meeting in Bangkok in August.

At Focus, we do not see the WSF as an event, but rather a symbol, a vision and a process which brings together diverse groups from the South and the North in a common rejection of neo-liberal policies and violence, and a common commitment to building another world. However, turning this rather Utopian dream into a practical reality requires a lot of work: research, preparing information, translating materials, organising meetings and exchanges, building networks, raising funds, and - most importantly - building locally grounded, effective, democratic and open political processes.

This needs time, people and money. We hope that the funders who supported this small initiative will continue to support the work of Focus, and other Asian social movements, peoples organisations, regional networks, trade unions, NGOs and activists, in our common project of building the Asian Social Forum and linking that with the World Social Forum.

Bangkok Roundtable

The second Bangkok Roundtable of Trade Unions, Social Movements and NGOs was held on 17 and 18 July, 2003. The roundtable was organised in partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and involved an intensive process of consultation with trade unions and other participants. Finally, more than 60 representatives, equally from trade unions, social movements and NGOs, and with a good balance between South and North, engaged in an intense two-day discussion, hammering out common ground and identifying areas requiring further discussion and exploration. The text of the final declarations follows.

Conclusions of the Second Bangkok Roundtable of Trade Unions, Social Movements and NGOs, 17-18 July, Bangkok, Thailand

1. On 17-18 July 2002, the second meeting of the Bangkok International Round Table brought together a significant number of trade unions, social movements and NGOs from all regions to discuss the scope for agreement on common actions and approaches on a number of issues including the WTO, the IMF and World Bank, food sovereignty and people's rights, and privatisation of water and power.

2. Since the first meeting in March 2001, there has been an exacerbation of the trends of declining wages, increasing unemployment, the spread of the informal economy, attacks on workers' rights, and worsening precariousness of employment in many countries. Impoverishment and malnutrition are increasing, commodity prices and rural incomes declining and there is a massive crisis for peasants and small farmers in large parts of the world, with particularly grave effects on poor women.

3. In the opinion of many participants, there has been a curtailment of human rights and civil liberties under the pretext of the "war on terrorism", which was also used as an argument to push the agenda for expanded trade liberalisation at the Doha 4th WTO Ministerial Conference.

4. The weight of foreign debt and IMF policies promoting unrestricted financial flows has been having an increasingly negative impact on development and equity. This has been seen most vividly in the deep misery and enduring economic collapse those policies have provoked in Argentina.

5. The global economy risks falling into recession due to a lack of adequate growth as aggregate demand falls. This is exacerbated by over-reliance on export-oriented strategies, over-capacity and declining profitability. The bursting of the stock-market bubble and mounting evidence of corporate governance failures, as typified by Enron and WorldCom, highlights a structural crisis in the world economic and financial system.

6. At the same time, there is an increasing demand for decent employment, a living wage and livelihood, and access to water, forests and land, to ensure a life of dignity for all.

7. The civil society movement for an alternative globalisation has been growing. Unions, social movements and NGOs have co-operated frequently in united action protesting the negative effects of corporate-led globalisation, as in their joint protests around the world during the last WTO Conference, and in proposing alternatives in forums such as the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre.

8. The WTO Conference saw a major push for further trade and investment liberalisation by the advocates of a new WTO round. However, the outcome is dubious, particularly since it was secured in a non-transparent manner and, in the opinion of many participants, was undemocratic.

Developing countries received many vague promises that remain so far unfulfilled.

9. The case for a profound reform of the world trading system oriented towards sustainable development and to address development, social, labour, gender and environmental concerns remains stronger than ever.

10. IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programmes and PRSPs based on privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation, whatever they may be called, have exacerbated poverty and unemployment, impoverished communities and populations, and failed to promote development, and must not be required or advocated.

11. The world needs multilateral institutions that are fundamentally different, with a much stronger role for the United Nations and its agencies, including the ILO. We need multilateral institutions that respond to the principles of subsidiarity, pluralism, inclusion, transparency and democracy.

12. Internationally-recognised human rights, including fundamental workers' rights, environmental protection, food security, and in the opinion of many participants food sovereignty, must have precedence over international trade and investment rules.

13. Binding rules for Export Credit and Investment Insurance Agencies (ECAs) are needed to protect development, human rights including fundamental workers' rights, and the environment; to prevent corruption; and to release information transparently and consult with locally affected communities and other stakeholders.

14. Education, health and other essential public services and utilities, including water, should not be the subject of negotiations at the WTO, nor turned into a commodity or privatised.

15. There are increasing violations of fundamental workers' rights stemming from international trade and investment, such as in export processing zones. Fundamental workers' rights and other human rights must be promoted, respected and realised by all relevant means, including action at the appropriate international institutions.

16. Capital controls are urgently needed, including a currency transactions tax (such as a Tobin tax) to effectively manage financial flows.

17. A decisive resolution of the debt crisis to meet the interests of people in developing countries,

and comprehensive and genuine agrarian reform is urgent and essential for sustainable development. Countries should have the right to decide whether to allow the entry and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

18. Current trends towards the consideration of the “Singapore issues” at the Cancun 5th WTO Ministerial Conference risk endangering development and social justice. There is also a need for vigilance to developments in bilateral trade and investment agreements, both those existing and those under negotiation.

19. There must be a strong mobilisation towards Cancun to stop continuing trends in the WTO to undermine development, social, labour, gender and environmental concerns.

20. The meeting highlighted the need for further discussions of a range of issues including corporate reform, international investment and the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Companies; intellectual property rights; future strategies for the WTO, IMF, WB and ECAs; and the campaign for “the WTO out of agriculture”.

21. The meeting agreed to continue dialogue and co-operation, and to use occasions such as the 3rd World Social Forum to develop further co-operation and a common vision of alternatives to achieve development, social equity, human and workers’ rights, gender equality, environmental protection and democracy.

International and Regional Financial Institutions

In 2002, Focus continued to monitor the operations of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the region, with special focus on land, water, power-electricity and poverty reduction programmes of the World Bank and the ADB. In the area of trade, Focus prepared papers on and participated in events related to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as well as on trade through other groupings such as ASEAN. Focus also participated in the UN sponsored final Preparatory Committee (Prep Com) meeting for the WSSD Summit.

Regional and international

Focus staff completed and released a study on the World Bank-IMF's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in the Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam. The study was based on secondary data from the World Bank, IMF and other independent researchers, and interviews in the three countries with government officials, members of civil society and staff from the World Bank. The document was publicised in the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January and also in the World Bank-IMF annual meetings in Washington DC in September. In addition, Focus staff monitoring the PRSP were invited to and participated in a number of international events organised by civil society organisations, donors and Northern governments to present their critique of the PRSP and HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) debt relief programmes.

In keeping with what is becoming an organisational tradition, Focus produced two dossiers to time with the ADB's Annual General Meeting (AGM) that was held in Shanghai, Peoples' Republic of China in May. The dossiers focussed on governance and the Samut Prakarn Wastewater Treatment Project Inspection process respectively. We were extremely pleased that regional interest in both dossiers was high and we received articles from many more activists across the Asia and Pacific than in earlier years. Focus staff also participated in the alternative seminars and workshops organised by the NGO Forum on the ADB parallel to the ADB AGM.

Focus intensified its monitoring and research on water and power sector privatisation trends in the Asia region. Focus staff participated in a regional

meeting of researchers and activists working on water issues in Cebu, Phillipines in February, and presented papers on privatisation and water rights. In October, in collaboration with Prayas in India and the Heinrich Boll Foundation in Thailand, Focus convened a regional meeting on power sector privatisation in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting brought together activists and researchers monitoring power sector privatisation across Asia, from Pakistan to the Philippines, to share their research and develop plans for coordinated monitoring of the power sector in the future. Prayas in India will compile the papers presented at the meeting into a publication. Prayas is a civil society organisation that has been monitoring privatisation in the power and health sectors in India for several years.

In May-June, Focus staff participated in the UN sponsored final Preparatory Committee (Prep Com) meeting for the WSSD Summit. The Prep Com was held in Bali, Indonesia and Focus staff were actively involved in sessions within the Prep Com meeting, as well as in the alternative events organised by the Indonesian Peoples' Forum, a broad coalition of Indonesian movements and NGOs. Focus staff served as resource persons in a range of workshops on the WTO, globalisation, women and globalisation, food security/sovereignty and debt. Focus also collaborated with the Federation of Indonesian Peasants (FSPI), La Via Campesina, Friends of the Earth Uruguay and the Land Research Action Network (LRAN) to convene a workshop on food sovereignty and land rights. In addition, Focus supported strategy meetings on the WTO and agriculture among peasant groups and NGOs from Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Uruguay who had gathered in Bali for the Prep Com meeting. These strategy meetings led to the formation of a loose coalition of activists interested in monitoring the impacts of WTO led trade liberalisation on the agriculture sector.

In collaboration with CSOs and movements in Asia, Focus organised a meeting of Asian Social Movements in August. The meeting preceded a meeting of the WSF International Council (IC) in Bangkok and brought together members from social movements, NGOs, civil society networks and several government representatives from across Asia. The main purpose of the meeting was to build links and solidarity among various

struggles against global capitalism and neoliberalism in Asia and the Pacific. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the WSF IC, the organising committee of the Asia Social Forum, and Asian movements and activists to interact and plan coordinated events for the Asia Social Forum scheduled to be held in India in January 2003. Over 300 people attended the three-day meeting and in addition to scheduled sessions, many groups and networks held informal meetings to build new relationships and collaborations. The meeting declaration can be found on the Focus website.

As part of its work on alternative regionalisms, Focus kept active participation in the Asia-Europe People's Forum in 2002. Focus staff participated in a workshop on a social policy agenda for ASEM and a planning meeting of the AEPF in Berlin in March. The AEPF organized ASEM4People to parallel the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit in Copenhagen in September. Focus staff resourced and/or facilitated sessions on trade, farmers and land rights, security, alternatives, and a session on defining a social pillar for ASEM. Focus staff also participated in the Fifth China-ASEAN Research Institutes Roundtable on Regionalism and Community Building in East Asia held at the University of Hong Kong in October. A paper, *Regionalism Beyond An Elite Project: The Challenge of Building Responsive Sub-Regional Communities*, was presented during the roundtable and Focus staff sat in the synthesis panel. The paper is available on the Focus website.

Country-specific activities

In Vietnam, Focus continued its collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Oxfam Solidarity Belgium in promoting debate about the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In January, MARD hosted a conference on possible opportunities and challenges for Vietnam in the WTO that was jointly organised by MARD, Oxfam Solidarity and Focus. Participants at the conference included government officials from MARD, the National Steering Committee for Economic Integration, National and province level Farmers' Unions, and a number of State-Owned Enterprises. A range of issues were covered in the workshop, from the history of the WTO to various agreements in the WTO, and the links between the WTO regime and other macro policy trends in Vietnam such as privatisation and deregulation.

As follow-up to the conference, MARD requested further assistance in learning about Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS). Focus and Oxfam

Solidarity identified a specialist on SPS and facilitated her visit to Vietnam to work with MARD. The National Farmer's Union also held discussions with Focus after the conference to plan future workshops on trade liberalisation with the national and provincial Union chapters.

In the Lao PDR, Focus organised a seminar with the team from the Ministry of Commerce's Foreign Trade Department as part of the Department's ongoing "in-house" study of the impact of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) on agriculture in the country. The initial draft of the study is expected to be ready by early 2003. Focus continued its relationship with the National Economic Research Institute (NERI) in the Lao PDR by assisting NERI to develop a research study on the impact of tourism in Vangvieng District. Vangvieng is one of the districts targeted for intensive tourism development and has undergone a range of environmental, social and economic changes in the past few years as a result of intensive tourism activity. Focus also facilitated a study trip for senior NERI officials to visit the 1 million Baht project in Thailand. The study trip involved meetings in target villages and districts in Khon Khaen province in Thailand, and meetings with concerned government officials in Bangkok. The purpose of the study trip was to assess the effectiveness of the 1 million baht project on living standards at the village level. NERI was interested in the project since senior expatriate advisors to the Lao Government proposed the same model for replication in the Lao PDR.

In Cambodia, Focus continued to follow the development of the PRSP and participated in a seminar organised by the Cambodian NGO Forum in March to discuss the findings of the three-country study of the PRSP process. In November, Focus staff participated in a regional civil society meeting on the Mekong Sub-region, and presented papers on the ADB's Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Programme (GMS) and trade in the subregion.

As a follow-up to previous discussions and visits, Focus staff visited East Timor in July. The purpose of the visit was two-fold: one, to understand the role of the UN, IFIs, bilateral donors and international aid agencies in the "reconstruction" of East Timor and the challenges that they pose to the country's political and economic sovereignty; and two, to develop relationships with government and non-government organisations for possible future research and monitoring of the reconstruction process. Focus staff met with government officials, Timorese and international

NGOs, and representatives from the student movement and the National Parliament. Focus agreed with colleagues in the Ministry of Planning and Timorese NGOs to serve as a source of alternative information and analysis on development issues, particularly in relation to the programmes of the World Bank, IMF, ADB and bilateral donors. More concrete plans for research and training will be developed in the coming year.

A relatively new activity in 2002 for Focus was working with Burmese groups in exile in Thailand and some based in Burma, on development

financing and globalisation. Focus staff participated in workshops organised by these groups in Northern Thailand and at the Thai-Burmese border to share the results of our research and monitoring work in these areas, and also to flag some critical issues for Burmese activists and the shadow government to consider as Burma moves towards a new political system. Focus will continue to participate in such activities in the future as per demand, and also facilitate the participation of Burmese activists in regional and international events on development and globalisation to the maximum extent possible.

Cultural Responses to Globalisation

With the increasing confrontation between the United States and Islamic forces since September 11, 2001, the urgency of understanding the phenomenon of Islamic Revivalism became even more apparent.

Research on Focus' project on Islamic Revivalism in Southeast Asia, which began in 2000, continued in 2002, with fieldwork completed in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Aceh. Preliminary write-ups of the results of the research were submitted.

A member of the research team spent two months (July-August) at the University of California at Berkeley gathering materials for the section of the study on the roots and dynamics of revivalist Islam.

Philippine Programme

The Philippine Programme got its bearing in 2002 and started a more programmatic approach to its work. While research and analysis remains a key component of the work, such research and analysis had been deliberately campaign-oriented. We joined and substantially contributed to two local campaign coalitions – the Stop the New Round! Trade coalition and the Bantay Tubig water policy watch coalition.

The Philippine Programme also deepened its interaction with Philippine policy circles and social movements in 2002. As a result, we have been invited to numerous meetings and consultations with government, international institutions and donor governments. Staff had also been invited as resource speakers and/or facilitators in forums/conferences on trade, security, land and common property, public utilities and the international financial institutions.

Trade

In October, Focus convened the core group of what would become the Stop the New Round! Coalition. The SNR! Coalition is a campaign coalition focused on the Fifth Ministerial of the World Trade Organization. It has basic calls against further trade liberalization of agriculture, the GATS, the extension of patent rights to life forms and traditional knowledge, and the inclusion of new issues in the WTO. The coalition also has specific calls on industrial tariffs, fisheries, and general industrial and development policy. Another major issue is process (against mini-ministerials and green room meetings) and transparency (disclosure of Philippine government negotiating positions among others in the WTO). The last three months of 2002 were crucial in the formation of the coalition and the drafting of its basic declaration. It sent a representative to the Strategy Meeting of trade activists in Mexico City in November. The coalition was launched in February, with 26 organisations/networks and six individuals as members, and 14 organisations/networks and six individuals as endorsers.

Finance and privatisation

The Philippine Programme's work on the international institutions focused mainly on public utilities, particularly power and water. In May, we joined the Bantay Tubig, a coalition that looks into water sector privatization. It is composed of the Institute for Popular Democracy, Alliance of

Progressive Labor, Freedom from Debt Coalition, Focus, a few individual activists and some members of Congress. Bantay Tubig gives particular attention to the first water sector privatization in the Philippines, that of the Manila Water and Sewerage System (MWSS). June was its launching month – having had its first mobilization on June 6, a Small Consumers Water Forum on June 15, and a launching press conference on June 18. Focus' main contribution is an analysis of the involvement of IFIs, particularly the ADB, in the water privatization. We also attended a number of public hearings on water and rate rebasing, meetings with ADB staff/consultants, and congressional briefings, and helped co-produce popular education materials.

In October, Focus sent four Filipino activists to the Asia Power Sector Privatization workshop in Bangkok. These activists come from public sector unions (Confederation of Independent Unions in the Public Sector), natural resource/indigenous people's rights advocacy (Legal Rights and Resource Center) and macroeconomics and governance advocacy (Action for Economic Reforms).

The Philippine Programme interacted closely with the NGO Forum on the ADB

Land and common property

The scoping paper for the land research was completed last year. From this scoping paper, several smaller papers were made and published in the Focus on the Philippines newsletter. The Philippine Programme has also started networking with Philippine agriculture and land activists, and slowly introduced itself to the various groups. In September, Focus staff visited Davao, General Santos and Cebu to do research and interviews (particularly on tuna fishing) and to introduce the Philippine Programme to the networks based in those areas. Together with the Tambuyog Development Center, the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and the Kilusang Mangingisda (Fisherfolk Movement), Focus co-organized a national fisheries consultation in Cebu City in September. Focus made a presentation on the general aspects of the World Trade Organization and specific issues to look into in trade advocacy. The consultation produced the Banilad Declaration, which contained the basic calls of Philippine fishers groups.

Security and conflict

The Philippine Programme did logistics, organizing and back-up work for Focus' regional Security and Conflict Programme. In March, Focus co-organized with the Transnational Institute, Akbayan, and Institute for Popular Democracy the Basilan Peace Mission to look into alleged human rights violations of the Philippine military and the impact of U.S. military presence in the area. Aside from logistics and overall backup work, the Philippine Programme did extensive media work. The Basilan Peace Mission had such media impact, prompting a prominent Filipino journalist to comment that the Basilan Peace Mission was "the only newsworthy event in 2002".

In August, the Asian Peace Alliance held its Founding Assembly in Manila. Focus is part of the regional steering committee, while the Philippine Programme was part of the local host committee and took active part in the organizing. Focus helped in the programme (co-sponsored two sub-plenary) and with media work.

Focus staff also wrote op-ed and analytical pieces on the war in Mindanao that were published in the Focus on the Philippines newsletter and in local papers.

Special projects

As part of our commitment to the World Social Forum process, we sent three Filipino non-Focus activists to the 2nd WSF. These activists came from the human rights and international solidarity (Mercy Ferrer), women (Rosalinda Ofreneo), and indigenous peoples and natural resource advocacy (Joanna Carino) networks. In August, we also sent activists to the Asian Social Movements Meeting in Bangkok.

A member of the Philippine Programme wrote the Philippine report for the "A Civil Society Perspective on Sustainable Development" Project sponsored by SEI-Boston, UNEP and RING alliance of policy research organisations. The report was presented and launched in the WSSD in Johannesburg in August. In the process of writing the report, we held consultations, interviews and a forum with our network.

Publications and media outreach

Focus on the Philippines came out more regularly in 2002, with a total of 32 issues in all. There were two thematic editions of FOP (in contrast with the single-article format) – one came out in July in time for the State of the Nation Address,

and the other in October for the World Food Day. FOP peaked at 900+ subscribers, with regular subscribers of more than 700+.

We have started to develop a good media network. Two FOPs written by Focus staff came out in the local newspapers. We also experienced some relative success in having our press releases and letters to the editor published. Finally, while Walden remains the most sought-after Focus person, Philippine staff had some media coverage of their own.

Staff

Herbert Docena and Mary Lou Malig joined as regular staff of the Philippine Programme. Two interns joined the office, Marco Garrido from Notre Dame University (August-December) and George Radics from the University of California Education Abroad Program (October-December). Marco Garrido looked into some issues surrounding the tuna industry, while George Radics did research on the attitudes of Filipinos towards the Balikatan exercises and U.S. military presence. Aside from their respective research projects, the two interns were given opportunity to learn from and interact with Focus' Philippine networks, and to familiarize themselves with the different aspects of Focus work in the Philippines. Finally, Marissa de Guzman left Focus in December after an extended leave of absence.

Thailand Programme

The Thailand Programme made effective use of international and regional events in which Focus was closely involved to build the capacity of key NGOs and people's organisations to analyze neoliberal policies and their implications. In the process, the NGOs were able to develop an advocacy agenda and make use of available channels for policy discussions with relevant government offices. At the same time, a number of civil society activists have become more linked to social movements in the regions that are struggling against global neoliberal policies. These include community leaders struggling against large projects that directly affect their livelihoods. Nonetheless, it became apparent that more effort is needed to enable the majority of organisations that are engaged in local issues to generate a critical mass to move more effectively on national-level policy advocacy.

Participation in international events for capacity-building

Throughout the year, 20-30 NGOs and grassroots organisations representatives have gained an understanding of common global experience, and issues concerning the impact of neoliberal policies on developing countries from their participation at international civil society gatherings.

The World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in January was followed by the Asia Social Movements Meeting in Bangkok in August. Of the 6 people who attended the WSF, 3 wrote and published articles about it. Many more joined the ASM and gained their first experience in learning about the similar issues and struggles of groups in other countries in the region and about the WSF process. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) PrepCom meeting in Bali and the summit itself in Johannesburg provided opportunities for a team of 15 Thai NGO and grassroots representatives to become engaged in the United Nations process of civil society participation.

The NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD), which coordinates NGO advocacy work in all sectors has obviously come to see participation in international civil society fora as means of effective capacity-building for their members and allies. This can be seen from the fact that they set about raising funds to send 30 more participants to the Asian Social Forum

in Hyderabad in January 2003. The Globalization Working Group and the People's Agenda Working Group of the NGOs worked together, with Focus staff, to coordinate the briefings and the preparation of Thai civil society positions with the delegates.

The Finance and Development workshop

Focus' own initiative in capacity-building was a 2-day workshop in February on "Finance and Development". This was designed to provide NGOs and community leaders with functional economic literacy that would help them understand better the basic issues and implications involved in the upcoming UN meetings on Financing for Development (FfD) and to prepare them for future policy dialogues and debates on macro-economic policies at the national and international levels.

The topics of the workshop ranged from mapping the flow of money within an economy, the role of state fiscal and monetary policies, financial liberalization and the financial crisis, how financial speculation works, and FfD negotiations and their implications, to the introduction of community currencies as financing alternatives. The workshop disagreed with the draft FfD declaration but did not feel that they could move on this in the short time available. Several issues were identified which warranted further study and which had potential for national level advocacy work. These include parliamentary scrutiny of foreign debt, resistance to the commodification of natural resources, progressive taxation, participatory budgeting at the local level, capital controls and challenges to the mainstream growth model of economic management in general.

It was agreed in this workshop that the method of work of the Globalization Working Group should be to organize more meetings and workshops at the local level with the objectives of linking local grassroots issues to these macro economic issues and possibly to implement alternatives such as community currencies.

Unfortunately, the Globalization Working Group was very much preoccupied with the preparation for the international events mentioned above. The rest of the time, the working group coordinator

carried out consultations with 3 regional committees under the structure of the NGO-COD in order to plan a three-year project and to raise funds for the research, capacity-building and advocacy work of the organisation. Consequently, two follow-up local level workshops planned jointly with Focus for the Northern and Southern regions and one for members of the women's network, the Alliance for the Advancement of Women, were postponed until next year.

Focus Thai staff, however, were invited to act as resource persons in several other workshops on globalization and neoliberalism by NGOs and other social activist groups.

Capacity-building by visiting activists

The Focus Thailand Programme was fortunate to have two of our Board Members as resource persons on global issues that are of great interest to Thai civil society. Alejandro Bendana of Jubilee South spoke at a meeting with local land activists in Lamphun Province on debt as an instrument of domination and the relationship between debt and trade and land rights. Peter Rosset of Food First gave two presentations in a one day workshop on the US Farm Act and the World Bank's market-based land reform programme.

Such knowledgeable personalities in combination with hot topics usually draw the attention of academics and students as well as activists who form the audience. Toward the end of the year, when Patrick Bond of the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, offered to make a presentation on cost recovery and water privatization. The room was filled with state enterprise unionists eager to learn from the South African experience.

The Social Agenda Working Group, which is a forum for joint programming and activities among Focus, several NGOs in the women, children and labour sectors and progressive academics in Chulalongkorn University, co-hosted these workshops. The Working Group coordinator made sure that reports of the meetings together with relevant papers were translated and disseminated to about 300 interested persons.

Advocacy in the Senate

As a result of direct participation in the WSSD process prior to the Johannesburg summit, NGO-COD gained a seat at two hearings called by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Senate. Focus staff joined the NGO representatives in

presenting civil society's analyses and viewpoints on Thailand's official positions in the WSSD and, later, the WTO negotiations, while members of the Committee questioned the reports of high-level officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectively. From this experience, it is envisaged that more planning should be done in order to make strategic use of such hearings in advocacy work.

On the invitation of Focus, two key members and an advisor of the Senate Foreign Affairs met with Aileen Kwa during their visit to the WTO in Geneva to hear the civil society side of the story about the processes and implications of the on-going negotiations in Geneva on developing countries.

Support to local struggles

With the failure of the WSSD to uphold sustainability over private investment in pursuit of economic growth, local communities now had to rely on themselves to fight off large-scale infrastructure and extraction investment projects that the government has been imposing on them. Focus joined other NGOs and progressive academics in supporting these grassroots movements.

Local activists opposing the Pak Mun Dam, Bo Nok and Hin Krut Power Plants, the Thai-Malaysian Gas Pipeline, the Samut Prakan Waste Water Treatment Plant, and a new Potash Mining project held joint meetings to exchange experiences, analyze the current situation and map out strategies, and to express solidarity in general. Despite efforts to bring up these issues in the media, the general public's faith in government authority has not wavered much. Rural communities are still expected to make sacrifices for the greater good of the country. The current Prime Minister, known as the CEO of Thailand Inc, got away with decisive and sometimes violent actions to staunch protests, seemingly without giving much thought to the communities' arguments.

In the process, NGOs were publicly dismissed by the Prime Minister as poverty-mongering in order to keep themselves employed with foreign donors' money. At year-end, many discussions were taking place on future strategies in alliance-building in support of local struggles as well as in resisting neoliberal trends and advancing alternatives at the policy level.

The Land Network

Since so many of the struggles of local groups brought together under the Assembly of the Poor

involve the issue of land rights, NGOs have been working with members of the Assembly of the Poor to come up with policy proposals on land reform to the government. Through Focus facilitation, this Land Network joined the Land Research and Action Network and produced a scoping paper documenting the historical context, current struggles and policy issues involving land in Thailand. The Northern Peasants Federation (NPF), a member of the Land Network, visited the Brazilian landless movement MST sites during the World Social Forum and held a meeting with visiting representatives of the MST in Thailand. An NGO activist and an academic participated in the Lran meeting on the World Bank and land policies in Washington D.C.

The Land Network has been working with the Northern Peasants Federation (NPF) to study land holdings and transactions in Lamphun Province. They have identified land speculation during the economic boom period during the 1980-90s as a cause of an expansion of large-scale private holdings of public land that are now left idle because of the financial crisis. The landless NPF farmers reoccupied some of this land while raising the issue of land redistribution with the authorities. The movement, however, met with a setback when the 200 families were brutally evicted and 97 people arrested on various charges.

Action research on Community Currencies

Focus and the Kud Chum community currency group were invited to participate in a regional seminar on community currencies sponsored by Sasakawa Foundation of Japan. Representatives from Japan, Indonesia and Thailand presented their experience in implementing community currencies. As a result of this seminar, the Thai Community Currencies Project joined with the Multidisciplinary Research Programme of Thammasat University to design a participatory action research project in order to promote the implementation of community exchange systems and to study the strengths and weaknesses of alternative currency systems.

The 16 month first phase of the project was launched in October with financial support of a government grant from the Thai Research Fund. Apart from the Kud Chum community, the project will cover 10 other communities in all regions of the country. Joining this project has provided Kud Chum and other communities with an opportunity to bypass for the time being the current legal constraints so that they can freely

and fully experiment with this alternative system in order to arrive at their own decisions about its benefits.

Translation, publications and information dissemination

Over a dozen articles were written by Focus Thai staff in 2002; most were published in a monthly NGO Newsletter and a few were published in local newspapers as well. Ten more pieces mostly written by Focus staff were translated and distributed electronically to the globalization-watch e-mail list and by regular mail to about 300 interested persons.

The Social Agenda Working Group published a book of articles and reports from the previous seminars on structural poverty that it organized. Its coordinator wrote an annual report on situations in Thailand that was published in the Social Watch Report.

India Programme

Trade and finance

Campaign on the ADB and the World Bank

In 2002, the India Programme intensified its engagement with various actors that have been interrogating the developmental role of the ADB and the World Bank at the national and sub-national level. The India Programme worked with Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) in Madhya Pradesh to critique the ADB developmental agenda, producing a paper entitled, “Is ADB Hijacking the Development Agenda of Madhya Pradesh?” analysing the various processes and methods adopted by the State of Madhya Pradesh and the ADB to push their market-driven and anti-poor reforms on people. Focus staff also participated in events and rallies organized by the Coalition of People’s Movements (Jan Sangharsh Morcha) in Madhya Pradesh against the ADB and the State Government.

The India Programme along with groups like Samajik Nyay Prathisthan, Vikas Sahyog Prathisthan, YUVA-Rural, associated with the Land, Water and Forest Movement (Jamin, Jungle Pani – Lokadhikar Andolan) in Maharashtra started working together to challenge the World Bank’s efforts to make the State of Maharashtra accept their structural adjustment package. Focus’s critique (jointly with Centre for Environment Concerns (CEC)) of the World Bank sponsored Andhra Pradesh Economic Restructuring Programme, was well received and the critique helped in other similar campaigns.

Involvement with struggles

The India Programme also played an active role and coordinated actions on behalf of struggles taking place in other states. For example, the Programme with ‘Shoshit Jan Andolan’ (Struggle of the Exploited and Oppressed) and Indian People’s Tribunal on Environment and Human Rights, organized a demonstration to protest against the apathy shown by National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) against the violations of human rights, legal entitlements and right to natural resources of the Maan dam affected tribals in Dhar District of Madhya Pradesh.

Delegitimizing the WTO

As a first step towards exploring the possibilities of building coalitions, the India Programme along with EQUATIONS (Bangalore) and International Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) conducted interviews of leadership associated with trade unions in services and manufacturing sector. The India Programme worked on creating awareness on the impacts of the evolving WTO agenda on employment and livelihoods of labour and marginalized sections. Significant events were organised by Trade Union Joint Action Committee of Maharashtra, the Public Sector Unions at Delhi, the Farmers Unions of Andhra Pradesh and other smaller local events were held in various parts of Maharashtra, which included an exposé of the Maharashtra Infrastructural Development and Support Act (MIDAS).

Taking forward our work with marginalized communities in Maharashtra

In January 2002, the India Programme presented its analysis “Economic Reforms and Marginalized Communities – A Case Study of Maharashtra” to a peer review team comprising activists, academics and representatives of Dalit groups from the state of Maharashtra. The analysis was based on a sample survey of 2000 households from 16 districts.

The India Programme and ‘Samajik Nyay Prathisthan’ (Social Justice Foundation) decided to find whether the “Aarthik Vikas Maha Mandals” (Statutory Economic Development Commissions) created as a result of struggles of various marginalized communities were actually delivering goods. A sample survey of around 500 individuals who had approached such Commissions was conducted. The India team has presented and written about the results of these surveys in public meetings and in newspapers.

Expanding presence in South Asia

The India Programme has been exploring the possibilities of carrying out a joint research with MONLAR in Sri Lanka to analyse the economic and structural reforms being promoted by the World Bank and the Sri Lanka government in the name of peace. The project is to critically evaluate the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP)

and the unfolding reform programme with respect to its impacts on socioeconomic and political processes and decisions, specifically in relation to agriculture, food security and employment with a special focus on small and marginal farmers, workers, women and vulnerable groups. The second objective of this study is to research on alternatives in the area of sustainable agriculture and food security focusing on the needs of the poor, small and marginal farmers, labour and women with an emphasis on exploring the possibilities, of women leading such alternative processes.

Security and conflict

The India Programme concentrated on the following activities:

- Focus India Programme initiated a workshop with grassroots level workers and activists' on the definition of terrorism, various forms of terrorism and anti-terrorist legislation.
- Along with our work on terrorism we also collected a series of articles on the debate on the anti-terrorist legislation and contributed to the compendium, which was being put together at the Bangkok office.
- In response to the Gujarat Carnage – the indiscriminate killings of Muslims and the rising Hindu fundamentalism, we organized a national seminar on the lessons from Gujarat, in Mumbai. This was done together with YUVA and Vikas Adhyayan Kendra and now we are working together on a book based on the presentations made at the seminar.
- Focus India programme came up with a unique idea to take the happenings and message of Gujarat to the masses, especially youth, in the form of cartoons and illustrations. We came out with a cartoon booklet called "Never Again."
- We have been working in conjunction with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP) and have given several talks on issues of war, terrorism, and nuclearisation in various colleges of Mumbai.

Asia Social Forum

In January 2002 the decision to hold the WSF in India was tentatively taken in Porto Alegre. Later the Indian groups endorsed the suggestion in a National Consultation in mid 2002. The International Committee of the WSF decided that India should first host a regional event as a forerun-

ner to the WSF and the Asian Social Forum was held in January 2003. Focus has played a major role in representing Asian concerns in the IC and the WSF in general. The Focus India programme and also our other country programmes became actively involved in mobilization of people as well as the programme content for the ASF in January 2003 during the course of the year. The Programme staff spent a great deal of energy to incorporate Asian concerns and maintain the Asian identity of the process.

Capacity building, networking and information dissemination

These actions have also been very critical to the expanding and deepening the presence of the India Programme. Throughout the year a number of local groups from various parts of India have been invited Focus staff to their events to discuss issues ranging from second generation reforms, sectoral reforms, food security, to livelihood impacts of the nuclear regime on the poor. Departments of Mumbai University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Management Schools have continued their engagement with the India Programme with respect to building capacities of their staff and students.

The active role played by Focus staff in various committees that were formed to organize the Asia Social Forum provided a good opportunity to the India Programme to engage with a number of groups and link with their struggles.

The India Programme continues to run a list-serve, disseminating information on many issues. The response from readers is encouraging and this appears to be quite an effective form of outreach.

Focus staff also contribute regularly to the English and Marathi press during the year and some of the articles were used in the debates that took place in the legislative bodies.

Communications

Reaching out

Focus' strategy of effective outreach of information has involved a combination of traditional methods of information dissemination and the harnessing of new technologies towards a larger audience.

The website (www.focusweb.org)

The Focus website has been one of the main platforms of Focus' communication strategy. In 2002, the website was made dynamic and more interactive through a database driven backend running on open source products. The site provides the visitor with the ability not only to have snapshots of various programmes of Focus but enables visitors to have constant updates on issues Focus deals with along with a wealth of information that Focus produces. The popularity of the Focus site underwent a substantial increase after the new site was put into place. The site has also become multi-lingual and translations of Focus material are now available in Thai, Bahasa Indonesia, Arabic and Spanish.

The website will be overhauled in the near future to reflect the new three-year work plan. The experience of the dynamic website would be used to develop a much more campaign oriented, resource rich site.

Focus on Trade

Focus on Trade remains Focus's flagship electronic bulletin. It has become a 'must read' for activists, researchers, and academics alike. The readership of the Bulletin has gone beyond the 6000 mark and still growing. This number does not reflect the readership of the bulletin, which is re-sent through several other lists and translated in Bahasa Indonesia and Spanish. Focus on Trade is also distributed widely by organisations and groups in the printed form (Focus on Trade is available in PDF format on the website for producing print-quality printouts).

In 2002, Focus on Trade was translated into Spanish by Gerard Coffey from the Centro de Informacion Globalizacion in Quito, Ecuador and into Bahasa Indonesian by the Institute for Global Justice in Jakarta, Indonesia. It is widely distributed in both languages.

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Commercialising sustainability: the WTO in the WSSD

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Forcing shades of green

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Another world is possible

Dark clouds amassing on Afghanistan's political horizon

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Laying the groundwork for Cancun: another Doha 'success'?

Aileen Kwa

The Mississippi-Mekong catfish wars

Shalmali Guttal

The world summit on sustaining global apartheid

Mary Louise Malig

Unraveling of the atlantic alliance?

Walden Bello

"Before they killed us with guns, now they do it with hunger"

Some moments from the Argentina Social Forum

Nicola Bullard

The decay of capitalism and global resistance

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

What alternative to globalization?

A review of *The Future in the Balance: Essays on Globalization and Resistance*

Victor Wallis

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Brazil on threshold of new era with Lula victory

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Collective security is working

Jeremy Brecher

From seattle to doha: solidarity is the only weapon of developing countries

Nguyen Van Thanh

Wasted by the World Bank

Sulak Sivaraksa

No one is immune

Supara Janchitfah

Canadian potash miner faces constitutional hurdles and community opposition

Project for Ecological Recovery & Mining Watch Canada

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Is the WTO collapsing under its own ambitions?

Nicola Bullard

The blood of innocents and our liberation — an Asian testament

Walden Bello

Gujarat election shifts balance of power in Indian politics

Raghav Narsalay

The European Social Forum: reviving the spirit of Seattle, dispelling the ghosts of Genoa

Peter Wahl

Supachai endorses exclusive meetings

Aileen Kwa

“Boom and the bubble” captures dynamics of global economic crisis

Walden Bello

Storm clouds over Latin America

William I. Robinson

Proposal for a social movements world network

MST, CUT Brasil, ATTAC France, World Wide

March of Women, Focus on the Global South

The Dossiers

Focus produced three Dossiers in 2002.

Too Hot to Handle: The Samut Prakan Waste Water Management Project inspection process .

Good Governance or Bad management: An overview of the ADB's Decision making processes and policies.

The dossiers were a compilation of incisive, investigative and analytical pieces on the ADB's policies and processes. The dossier *Too Hot to Handle* dealt specifically with the flawed Samut Prakan Wastewater management project in Thailand.

Porto Alegre 2002

This is compilation of analytical essays produced for the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil 2002.

Books

Deglobalisation: Ideas for a new economy by Walden Bello (Zed books, London. New York, 2002)

The book has been described as “ a superb dissection of contemporary capitalism's multiple crises, a powerful indictment of the US's brutal

re-subordination of the global south in the interests of its MNCs and banks, an unanswerable demonstration of the unreformability of the IMF and its sister institutions, and a stirring call to arms for the movements for economic justice by one of its major theorists and organizers.” – Robert Brenner

Democratizing Global Governance., ed. Esref Aksu and Joseph A. Camilleri. (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002)

This book is the culmination of the Global Governance Reform Project, in which Focus was involved. The book contains essays by focus staff members.

Basilan: The New Afghanistan

In February 2002, the US sent troops to the Philippine Island Province of Basilan ostensibly for routine military exercises with the Philippine army and to help wipe out the terrorist group Abu Syyaf which is supposed to have links with the Al-Queda group. The official claims notwithstanding, fears of renewed US military presence in the Philippines prompted a group of parliamentarians, civil society leaders, and human rights activists from 10 countries to form a 16 member international peace mission to look into the human rights violations committed by the Philippine military and the implications of the US involvement on the unresolved separatist struggle in the area. This is report of that mission. The report clearly brings forth the Human Rights violations of the Philippine army but finds no justification for US involvement in the region.

A cartoon booklet called *Never Again*, by Hemant Morparia and Anant Kulkarni. A booklet of cartoons on the Communal carnage in Gujarat in India. This publication was produced by YUVA and the Focus India Programme in the light of the communal carnage that racked the Indian State of Gujarat in 2002. The damage to life and property in the three month long carnage was considerable, but pales into insignificance when compared to the deeper and long lasting socio-cultural wounds that it left behind. The book is a compilation of politically hard hitting cartoons and those with a message of hope in the darkness of communal animosity and religious hatred.

Power Politics in the WTO by Aileen Kwa. This book exposed the undemocratic nature of negotiations at the WTO. It brings out eloquently the coercive nature of ‘green room’ negotiations and puts under the spotlight the true nature of the WTO. (Also in Spanish)

Regional outreach

Focus offices in Thailand, India and the Philippines provide country-based outreach for Focus.

In the Philippines, Focus contributes regularly to leading national newspapers and journals. The Basilan mission and its coverage were aired on Philippines most widely watched television channel. The press regularly contacts the offices for views on a host of issues.

In India, as well, Focus staff contribute articles and analysis to local language newspapers and journals. Focus has also been invited to television debates on India's main television channel, viewed by millions in the country. The press in India sees Focus's opinion as a necessary input on many issues.

In Thailand, staff are regular contributors to both Thai and English language newspapers and magazines. Like in India and the Philippines the press looks to Focus for its views on a host of issues.

Organisation and Administration

Organisational development

In May 2002, we initiated an internal review of Focus' structure and programmes to help develop a new workplan for 2003-2005 and to identify structural problems that needed to be addressed.

Focus invited Ramesh Singh, regional director of Action Aid, Dominique Van Der Borght, Laos representative for Oxfam Solidarity and Dr. Chantana Banpasirichote of Chulalongkorn University to undertake the review. They carried out interviews with all staff and Board members, and a sample of funders and partners. The draft report formed the basis of our discussions during a three-day staff retreat and planning session held in July. In the next months, we started to flesh out the new Focus 'paradigm' and held a second planning meeting in December to finalise the work plan and set out priority activities for 2003 and beyond.

The key recommendations of the internal review were:

Conclusions and recommendations

Focus has been a phenomenally successful organisation by any account. This is a mature organisation with substantial depth in its work, relationships, reputation and profile. There is a huge build-up of energy and ambition in Focus' staff and partners. This all poses a great challenge for Focus. The challenge is about making sure that the organisation continues to remain highly relevant, productive and influential. This may not come through incremental improvement in doing more of the same. Here are a few strategic issues that will require consideration for future strategy:

Which kind of institution would Focus like to be in 3 to 5 years in terms of governance, structure, organisation, etc.

We have the feeling that until now, there is no clear perspective on the institutional side. Focus staff and directors give more importance to the issues they are pushing for, to the capacity to attend important gatherings and to link up with movements than to build a strong institution. It is ex-

tremely positive as it is recognised that Focus is playing an important role at that level and wants to be able to continue playing it in the future. Focus clearly doesn't want to become an institution that mainly acts to perpetuate itself.

Focus's unclear perspectives and vision of what kind of organisation or institution it wants to be or does not want to be are also showing its limitations, especially to respond to the growth of the work/demands/expectation and the need to maintain a strategic coherence and to manage a complex programme. It is important to understand that a lot of important improvements can be brought into the structure and systems of the organisation without affecting the current positive culture of the organisation. In fact, interventions will be required to maintain the high energy and congruence for another period, without waiting for it to drop.

There is an immediate need to streamline the organisational structure, systems and processes. There is a need to streamline and reconcile the programme structure with the organisational structure, including responsibility and authority centres. The exercise should also include the repositioning of country programmes in the overall organisational structural in a way that will increase staff connectivity and communication, as well as synergy with thematic programming. In each country programme, it is important that the staff remain connected to the issues that Focus is working on at international level. As we observed in the Thai programme, the integration from the country programme to the global programme comes partly because some staff members are involved at both levels. In this sense, it would be important to define how to strengthen the dynamics between the country programmes and other Focus international activities.

The organisation could be seen with a double entry matrix structure, using geographic and thematic divisions. Later, we will propose some comments on the geographic approach as well as on the thematic division.

In our opinion, there is a real need to find a way to improve the programme management system. As we observed, the management team has been doing a good job, but mainly focuses on political decisions, and not enough on strategy, planning, and monitoring and evaluation issues. One possibility could be to define clear roles among the management team to cover the different tasks that should be listed. What the management team has to take into account is the fact that all of them are travelling a lot and that there are not many opportunities for good co-ordination. Another way to do it would be to find a programme manager with a clear job description to address the current gaps in coordination and communication.

It is never too early in any organisation to consider the issue of leadership succession. We feel that Focus should look very openly and seriously at the leadership succession issue in the organisation at the earliest. This is not so much about the need for the change in leadership at present but more about how that change can be managed effectively whenever that may take place. Dealing with leadership succession is also likely to address, at least partly, the issues related to the demands on and expectation from the Executive Director (and the Management Team) at present. It is urgent and important that the staff and the organisation and feel and receive adequate leadership (if not management) access and support. Better organisation procedures could cover part of this role, but this would not be enough. The need for more internal capacity building in terms of analysis, political vision and programme management is also an important aspect to face in the next 3 to 5 years. In this sense, clear commitment from the management team regarding their plan/personal perspectives should help to define a better strategy. The board members could play a key role in this field.

Where does Focus want to concentrate/extend their actions?

As we are proposing to have a double entry or matrix structure, it is important for Focus to be able to define strategically their geographical focus and in this strategy the role of the country programmes. Where, in which country or region to deepen the work and how this will be integrated with

thematic goals and objectives. Each country programme should be reviewed in this perspective.

In order to create clarity, it would be good to define the "in-transition countries" and some regional activities under a geographic entry as well as under a team responsibility. For the moment, these activities depend very much on one person. It seems that there is enough work to try to build a team to take care of those activities and maybe to rationalise more the work.

There is already good coverage in the Southeast Asia region but the work to expand coverage in South Asia is only just beginning. This is an important initiative that will need careful strategizing and investment.

The importance of China in relation to Asia or the global economy, security and politics does not need to be justified. Expanding work in and around China will add significant value to Focus' work and relationships, as well as to the global debate.

These expansions in coverage will strain the organisation, at least in the immediate phase. The suggestion, therefore, to expand its presence and programmes in Latin America should perhaps be de-prioritised, or achieved through alternative ways of linking into strategic partnerships with other organisations.

Which axes will orient Focus' global programme?

The overwhelmingly prevalent feeling is that there is a lack of focus and prioritisation that needs to be overcome. It can be overcome partly, through management redress: e.g. clear responsibility centres and teams, better internal communications and linkages, improved organisational processes, increased staff, etc. as we already touched in the first point.

But, there is an urgent need to address the prevalent feeling about whether the peace and security programmes, as well as the culture and globalisation programmes, are misfits or are of lesser importance. A great deal of analytical integration between these two programmes and the mainstream economic justice programmes will need to be developed and articulated. They are intri-

cately linked and exclusion of any of the three stream of work is likely to come at some cost.

A considerable amount of groundwork and relationships already exist both in South and Southeast Asia for the peace and security programme in particular to take off significantly in response to only little investment of time and money. Done properly, these two programmes will provide the cutting edge and uniqueness to Focus in the coming years. Integration of these programmes at analytical but especially strategy level could avoid the limitations observed until now.

The Trade and Finance is also a very broad theme/programme and it could be useful to divide it according to sub-issues like WTO, Debt, PRSP, etc. At this point we prefer not to enter into the details, as it would be better to have a first discussion with the staff and management and probably the Board before going ahead on this.

We would suggest giving a priority on three main axes: Trade and Finance, Peace and Security and WSF. The work on Trade and Finance in the past 3 years has been particularly strong both in terms of analysis/research and networking/capacity building. It would be good to do a kind of “need assessment” in order to see what Focus should and could continue to do in this field. The same could be done for the Peace and Security issues. On the other hand, there is the whole process of the WSF where Focus is playing a central role both at international level and regional level. Again, Focus should make an inventory of the actions that could be part of Focus priority in this process.

If the staff and Board agree that these axes should guide the perspectives for the next 3 years, it is essential to have a clear decision within the country programmes regarding the 3 aspects, and see how they could also become the main axes at that level.

The other themes (Cultural response, State and Civil society) that are defined for the moment should be also revisited maybe in relation with the 3 axes that we are proposing. How to build on synergy rather than on dispersion? What could be useful

to support the work on the 3 axes? What is the current Focus capacity and what other initiatives should be taken? (Alliance; country programme; networking, etc.) are question that will need to be discussed in the strategic planning process.

More generally, there is also a need to give clear priority to the alternatives. After the experimentation of WSF, the aggressive approach to the search for alternatives is in progress. It is time to pursue further discussion how the work of FOCUS can systematically deliver a spectrum of new alternatives through various mechanisms of research and advocacy. The ideas to be taken into consideration are primarily a reverse learning from the grassroots initiatives and the principle of diversity in the nature of alternative. Should the next three years work plan allocate sufficiently a space to accommodate the conceptualisation of alternative can be a topic of debate within FOCUS

What is Focus' strategy?

As we already mentioned, Focus should define explicitly their general strategy in order to maintain the coherence at the different levels. What we understand by strategy is to define how Focus as an organisation is working and dealing with the different actors. The strategy has to be connected to the priorities that need to be defined and reflect the evolution of the organisation.

We would like to propose some reflections on three important aspects of the strategy: the partnership, the relationship with social movement and the rhetoric and real politic issue.

Partnership aspects

Working in partnership with NGOs and social movements - particularly at the grassroots level - is fundamental to Focus' approach and methods. This engagement with grassroots NGOs and social movements provides Focus with evidence and legitimacy to deconstruct globalisation on the one hand and the space for reconstructing or testing alternatives on the other. Partnership is a generic term to describe relations but in actual fact, the nature and extent of relationships between Focus, NGOs and social movements varies considerably. Focus does not enter into for-

mal agreements or contracts for long- or medium-term partnerships with NGOs and social movements. Relationships between Focus and social movements take place around certain events, activities and, in some limited cases, for short- to medium-term projects. In this sense, there is a need to develop a more clear and explicit strategy on this.

The recent initiatives around the Round Table with Trade Unions as well as initiatives in Thailand and India should also conduct to more clarity on the role of Trade Union in social movement against globalisation.

In the past, Focus has used the creation of 'councils' as a way to "co-ordinate" better among movements and NGOs. Both in the food security aspect and security one, these councils didn't work properly. It would be important to take in account this experience to find more creative and sustainable way to dynamise these relationships.

In the transition economy countries in Southeast Asia, where there are no real social movements to link with, Focus has developed sustained partnerships with one or other government agencies. These partnerships are with ministries or departments related to trade, finance or agriculture and are for strengthening their understanding and negotiating capacity with international finance or trade institutions. These relationships with government bodies are very dependent, or leveraged through one or other individuals who understand Focus well and with whom Focus has built a relationship over time. Confusion arises when Focus engages, as now, with governments (e.g., Laos and Vietnam) to help them engage with the processes and organisations with which Focus itself would not like to engage. Focus' direct engagement with the WTO processes in Geneva also appears to have caused confusion.

The role of governments in the general strategy should be precised. In country programme, like Thailand and the Philippines, the question of engagement/partnership with government is also present and needs to be further clarified.

Relation with Social Movements:

Focus' emphasis on working with social movements is critical for ensuring economic justice, social justice and peace in reality. Working with social movements is, in effect, Focus' main process strategy (as opposed to content strategy like trade, finance, security) that will ground Focus' analyses, evidence, alternatives and reconstruction - and will give Focus additional legitimacy and credibility. Focus has had considerable experience over the past 2-3 years of working with social movements and grass roots organisations to be able to develop and articulate a clear positioning and strategy.

This strategy preparation will require consultation with and the advice of the social movements and grassroots organisations. The reviewers feel a sense of urgency for a well-articulated strategy now, when the relationships are still on high notes.

There is some feeling that Focus' rhetoric (political analyses and critiques) is increasingly becoming predictable (one donor pointed out that he has stopped reading the 'Focus on Trade' for its predictability) and might have hit the glass ceiling. This is perhaps a function of the current imbalance between Focus' presentation about deconstructing globalisation and reconstructing alternatives. Strategic engagement with the grassroots organisations and social movements will help overcome this situation.

In terms of political positioning, it will be necessary for Focus to be clear about its role in relation to social movements. The strategic review process should perhaps look at the overall roles and positioning of the organising as a whole. There is sufficient in Focus' system (the four powers: political, intellectual, convening, financing) to eschew the roles and relationship before too long and lead to the kind of relationship many northern international NGOs have with smaller southern NGOs whom they call 'partners'. Support, capacity and solidarity roles get particularly complicated when these involve financial transactions. Subtle hints of these concerns were present in discussion with activists in Thailand.

Rhetoric and the reality of political positioning

Focus will benefit from taking a critical look at its 'abolitionist' positioning and the policy of non-engagement with international finance and trade organisations.

Virtually no one that we spoke to had any disagreement with Focus' political position, including its proposition of decommissioning the World Bank, IMF or the WTO. People both inside and outside Focus, however, had questions about whether and how the policy of non-engagement (we did not check if such policy officially existed but it was so prevalent in many discussions that this must be the case in practical realities—for example, with PRSP and World Bank) will influence and bring about changes in the institutions that need to change. Also, it is not clear - but it is speculated - that Focus' policy of non-engagement is also extended to some extent to the civil society organisations that are engaged with those organisations and processes (perhaps due to the space created by Focus' radical political positioning), thus limiting even the indirect policy advocacy potential. A review and clear articulation of policies and positions in this area will help clarify the situation.

Excerpt from Internal Review, October 2002

The final report was sent to all funders and is available to any one who is interested. As part of the internal review process and staff discussions, we agreed to expand the management team to include coordinators of the country programmes and the finance manager, and to establish a new administrative and programme position to take on fund raising and report writing. There was also agreement to have a largely Bangkok based deputy director.

Staff updates

Bangkok

Marco Mezzera, who was based in Singapore, relocated to Italy in May 2002.

A part-time Librarian, Mrs Thitiganya Sumon, was hired to set up the system for our library.

There were two volunteers, Jeff Duritz and Ian Stutt, to help coordinating the Second Labour Roundtable in July.

India

Meena Menon joined Focus India Programme as a Senior Associate in March. Her task is to coordinate the WSF-South Asia and India Process working with the organising committee and other major social movements and organisations. Manpreet Sethi joined Focus-India programme as a researcher on Land reforms.

Philippines

Mary Lou Malig was promoted to be a Research Associate for Trade campaign. Herbert Docena joined Focus Manila Office in November taking responsibility for the security program. Marissa de Guzman left Focus in December after an extended leave of absence.

Board members

There was a full board meeting in March 2-3, 2002 in Bangkok. One of the discussions was on the role and purpose of the board, the tenure of existing board and new board members. There were some changes on the existing board as Binny Buchori resigned from the board due to her tremendous workload at the national level in Indonesia.

Staff retreat

As proposed and agreed at the Board meeting in March, 3 days joint board and staff retreat was held in July at Khao Yai, in Northeastern Thailand. The first day was the introduction of the review process by Ramesh Singh and Dominique van der Borcht. Further discussions were held both in plenary and small groups. Other main discussion was on Work Plan 2003-2005 that has been developed through an intensive process of internal review, discussion with our partners and friends and a follow-up two-day staff retreat in Bangkok in December.

Annual Report 2002

Financial Report Period January - December, 2002 **

Comparison of Revenue, Expenses and Budget

	Budget*	Exp. Actual	Var. fr. Budget	Revenue	Rev. over Exp.	Amount in USD.
General Management & Administration	84,250.00	73,935.61	10,314.39	73,267.52	(668.09)	(668.09)
National & Regional Micro-Macro Programme - India	7,672.00	4,030.80	3,641.20	4,275.16	244.36	244.36
India Programme	116,500.00	99,731.29	16,768.71	93,464.20	(6,267.09)	(6,267.09)
National & Regional Micro-Macro Programme - SEATES	69,046.00	46,913.14	22,132.86	52,422.93	5,509.79	5,509.79
National & Regional Micro-Macro Programme - Thailand	74,685.00	58,172.81	16,512.19	60,243.18	2,070.37	2,070.37
National & Regional Micro-Macro Programme-Regional/Global & Other	82,308.00	61,734.21	20,573.79	64,845.17	3,110.96	3,110.96
Economic & Financial Liberalization	114,279.00	107,983.46	6,295.54	110,964.45	2,980.99	2,980.99
Security & Conflict	76,524.00	40,491.58	36,032.42	41,698.52	1,206.94	1,206.94
State, Markets & Civil Society	24,068.00	16,932.48	7,135.52	18,652.02	1,719.54	1,719.54
Culture & Globalization	48,959.00	40,447.66	8,511.34	41,895.57	1,447.91	1,447.91
Publications and Resources Center	79,962.00	57,708.50	22,253.50	56,980.88	(727.62)	(727.62)
Sub Total	778,253.00	608,081.54	170,171.46	618,709.60	10,628.06	10,628.06
Power Sector Meeting	0.00	29,563.43	-29,563.43	26,522.65	(3,040.78)	(3,040.78)
Conference related exp.: WSF II(Focus Budget)	25,000.00	18,918.84	6,081.16	0.00	(18,918.84)	(18,918.84)
Conference related exp.: WSF II(Donors support)	75,000.00	68,227.19	6,772.81	68,227.19	-	-
Professional Fee				1,177.94	1,177.94	1,177.94
Interest income				2,634.85	2,634.85	2,634.85
Other income				5,370.30	5,370.30	5,370.30
Gain or Loss on Exchange				36,890.01	36,890.01	36,890.01
Revenue over Expenses 2002				759,532.54	34,741.54	34,741.54
Opening Balance Jan.1.2002					196,570.09	196,570.09
Total *****	878,253.00	724,791.00	153,462.00	759,532.54	231,311.63	231,311.63

Legend:

- * Exchange rate USD.= 44 Bht.(As Budget'02)
- ** Did not include India & Philippines funds direct through their country.
- *** Focus India had new BUDGET item for Support activities to WSF = USD.24,000
- **** Items carry forward from last year .We booked our accounting in Bht.currency and for Yr.2002 exchange rate was 1 USD =44.00 Bht. That changed the figure in USD.
- ***** One conference -Asia:Post September 11 USD.80,000 was cancelled.

Glossary

- Exp. Actual = Actual Expenditure
- Var. fr. Budget = Variance from budget
- Rev. over Exp. = Revenue over Expenditure

Funders

Core funders

11.11.11 (NCOS), the Philippines/Belgium
Christian Aid, UK
Community Aid Abroad, Australia
CORDAID, the Netherlands
Development and Peace, Canada
Department for International Development (DFID), UK
Ford Foundation, USA
HIVOS, the Netherlands
Inter Pares, Canada
NOVIB, The Netherlands
Oxfam America, USA
Oxfam Great Britain, UK
Oxfam HK, Hong Kong
Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), USA
Solidago Foundation, USA
The United Methodist Church, USA
Trocaire, Republic of Ireland
Mr. Boyd Reimer, Canada (individual)

We would also like to thank the following organisations for supporting the conferences and specific projects.

Asian Social Forum-Hyderabad

11.11.11, Heinrich Boll Foundation and Oxfam Solidarity, Belgium.

Asia Social Movements Meeting

Action Aid Asia, Jere Samuel Locke (individual), Oxfam GB and Oxfam Hong Kong

Finance and Development Workshop

Action Aid Asia

Second Labour Roundtable

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

Land Research Action Network (LRAN)

Food First/Ford Foundation

Basilan Peace Mission

11.11.11., Inter Pares, Oxfam Solidarity (Oxfam Belgium in Laos) and TNI

Asia Power Sector Privatization Workshop

Heinrich Boll Foundation

World Social Forum

Action Aid Asia, Novib, Oxfam GB and Oxfam Solidarity, Belgium, Terre des Hommes, Germany

Focus Advisers and Board Members

Board Members

- Gothom Arya** (Board Chair), Thailand
Walden Bello, Focus, Thailand/Philippines
Alejandro Bendaña, Centro de Estudios Internacionales, Nicaragua
Leonor Briones, National College of Public Administration and Governance University of the Philippines, Philippines
Binny Buchori, Executive Secretary, International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development Indonesia (resigned during the year)
Josefa Francisco, Southeast Asia Regional Coordinator, DAWN, Philippines.
Muto Ichiyo, People's Plan Study Group, Japan.
Lee Mi Kyung, Member of National Assembly, Republic of Korea (resigned during the year)
Kamal Malhotra, Senior Advisor, Bureau of Policy Development (BPD) United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), USA.
Rajagopal P. V., Secretary, CESCO-Training Centre, India
Amara Pongsapich, Director, CUSRI, Thailand
Peter Rosset, Institute for Food and Development Policy, USA
Nguyen Van Thanh, President of Vietnam-Italy Friendship association, Vietnam

Advisers

- Victor Karunan**, Senior Expert/Project Coordinator, UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific
Martin Khor, Director, Third World Network (TWN)

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Executive Director

Walden Bello

Thailand

Nicola Bullard (Deputy Director)
Chanida Chanyapate Bamford
Chirawatana Charoonpatarapong
Jacques-chai Chomthongdi
Shalmali Guttal
Ranee Hassarungsee,
Praphai Jundee
Marco Mezzera
Soontaree Nakaviroj
Mayuree Ruechakiattikul
Anoop Sukumaran
Thitiganya Sumon

Volunteers

Jeff Duritz
Ian Stutt

India

Vasha R. Berry
Meena Menon
Raghav Narsalay
Minar Pimple
Manpreet Sethi
Sonila S. Shetty

Philippines

Jenina Joy Chavez-Malaluan
Herbert Docena
Marylou Malig
Lou Torres
Marissa de Guzman

Geneva

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