

FOCUS IN PROGRESS

Triennial Report
2003-2005

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2005 A FITTING CLIMAX TO FOCUS' FIRST DECADE

2005 was memorable for two reasons.

First, it was one long year of preparation for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) ministerial meeting in Hong Kong from 13-18 December. Throughout the year, we in Focus, along with other groups in the global justice movement, were engaged in one unending campaign to win global civil society and governments to the view that "No deal is better than a bad deal".

Through our monitoring and analysis of the WTO negotiations, conferences, and mass mobilizations, we tried to drive home the point that there was no possible outcome except one that would be detrimental to the interests of developing countries and to most of the world's peoples. The key junctures in this global process of education and mobilization were an Asian regional strategy meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in June, a conference on migrant workers and the WTO in July, two "People's General Council" meetings in Geneva in July and October, and finally the "People's Week of Action" in Hong Kong in December. In typical Focus fashion, during the tumultuous December events, we were lobbying government delegates and staging protests inside the Hong Kong Convention Center at the same time that we were participating and helping to organize demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience outside, in the streets of Hong Kong and in the cold waters of Hong Kong Harbour.

While the ministerial salvaged the WTO with a declaration that compromised the interests of the developing countries, the people's protests in Hong Kong marked an important stage in the delegitimation of this organisation: there are now very few organizations in global civil society that still entertain any hope that this anti-development body can be reformed. So far apart are most developing countries and the trade superpower -- the United States and the European Union -- that, despite the face-saving Hong Kong declaration, it seems increasingly unlikely that the EU and the US will be able to force a viable agreement to end the misnamed "Doha Development Round".

The second reason 2005 was very significant for Focus was that to mark our 10th year of existence, we commissioned a comprehensive external review of the impact of our programmes. The work was conducted by a team of independent reviewers and took up most of the second half of the year. It yielded extremely valuable insights into Focus' perceived strengths and weaknesses. (See Annex to this report.)

Among the strengths cited by respondents were Focus' effectiveness despite the small size of its staff, its competence in progressive research and analysis, and its being a source of ideas and a "network builder" in global civil society. The weaknesses pointed out by the respondents included staff overstretch or overextension, unclear prioritization of goals, the uneven quality of Focus' peace and security work, and inadequate articulation of its views on alternatives to current local and global structures. The review has served as the basis for our work plan for 2006-2008. (The 2006-2008 workplan can be downloaded at <http://www.focus-web.org/content/view/694/54/>)

Preparing for the WTO ministerial in Hong Kong and participating in an internal programme review did not exhaust Focus' activities in 2005. As in earlier years, we participated in the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre in January. We also intensified our efforts to help the WSF take deeper roots in Asia by organizing regional meetings in June in Colombo, and in December in Hong Kong to plan polycentric social forums in Asia. We helped organize the Anti-War Assembly at the WSF as well as other events throughout the year to oppose the US war in Iraq, expose the hegemonic motivations of the so-called "war on terror," and push for the dismantling of foreign military bases globally. A highlight of our work on peace and security was our participation in the World Tribunal on Iraq that was held in Istanbul in mid-June. (http://www.freespeech.org/videodb/index.php?action=detail&video_id=10493&browse=0)

The Group of Eight (G8) meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, saw an attempt by the global elite to sugarcoat the damaging impact of their policies with promises of aid and “fair trade” that they tried to sell with the assistance of rock stars. Focus served as one of the counter-centers producing an alternative analysis of the sources of global crises and an alternative strategy for addressing international problems to the much hyped-up but empty “Millennium Development Goals.”

As in other years, Focus kept up the pressure on the international financial institutions (IFIs). In May, 2005, Focus co-organised a series of events on development, debt and war with the Istanbul Social Forum, as a counter-forum to the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) Annual Meetings, which were held in Istanbul. Focus released a dossier of articles entitled “The ADB and Policy (Mis)governance in Asia” (<http://www.focusweb.org/content/view/603/30/>) that document the ADB’s failures in governance and poverty reduction, and propose an alternative development framework for the region. Focus is also a leading initiator of a regional alliance of organizations and social movements preparing a “Peoples’ Forum” to counter the ADB’s Annual Meetings in 2006, which will be held in Hyderabad India.

Focus targeted its sights on the roles of the World Bank, the IMF, the UN and bilateral donors in post war/post conflict reconstruction. In the WSF in Porto Alegre, Focus organized a seminar on post war reconstruction, which brought together movement leaders, researchers and civil society organizations from Timor Leste, Cambodia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and Palestine as well as interested individuals from other countries. Focus released its first dossier on post war reconstruction again at this seminar, “Silent War: The US’ economic and ideological occupation of Iraq”. (<http://www.focusweb.org/content/view/584/30/>)

Focus’ research, monitoring and writing on reconstruction intensified and expanded over the year to include the negative impacts on local communities and peoples of some of the relief activities following the 26 December, 2004 tsunami in South and Southeast Asia. Linking the common pro-corporate trends in post-war and post-disaster reconstruction, Focus prepared a second dossier on reconstruction, which was released in January, 2006. Titled, “Destroy and Profit: Wars, Disasters, and Corporations”, this collection of articles shows the explicit connections between corporate profiteering and military strategic interests in post-war and post-disaster reconstruction programmes. (<http://www.focusweb.org/content/view/819/30/>)

Our work on alternatives to the current neoliberal order, based on the ideas of food sovereignty and de-globalisation, proceeded apace, in joint activities with like-minded organizations in India, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as regionally and internationally. In the WSF in Porto Alegre in January 2005, Focus joined the MST and La Via Campesina in organizing three days of conferences, seminars and cultural events on agrarian reform and natural resources. Focus was actively involved with members of La Via Campesina in the Asia region in documenting violations of peasant rights in their struggles for land and natural resources in Indonesia and the Philippines in the second half of 2005. Focus also joined with an alliance of peasant and artisanal fishers groups, and other civil society organizations in preparing a charter for ‘peoples’ reconstruction’ efforts following the 26 December tsunami.

Focus’ output of electronic and print publications continued unabated, with Focus on Trade continuing to serve an indispensable source of analysis for many organizations globally and the Focus website (<http://www.focusweb.org>) gaining a reputation as the place to visit to keep abreast of what is going on in the global peace and justice movement. In preparation for the Hong Kong ministerial, Focus produced two important campaign tools: a booklet entitled “The Derailer’s Guide to the WTO” and the video “The WTO: Why it is REALLY bad for you”. These and all Focus publications are free to download from our website.

Following on from our external review, we are now entering into a new phase of thinking, strategizing and working. In an attempt to reflect the importance of this transition and mark the end of the 2003-2005 work plan, this year’s annual report summarises and analyses our main achievements and the shortfalls in our intended outcomes over the past three years.

Focus’ strength has always come, in large part, from its partners in the various networks we participate in. We would like to thank our many partners as well as the donors that faithfully supported our activities in 2005 and over the last decade. We look forward to a new phase of collaborations, dreams and struggles with all of you.

The Focus Team, March 2006



Focus Staff at the Staff Retreat in Jomtien, Thailand, June 2005



FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

In the period 2003-2005, Focus' activities in the Finance and Development programme included research, writing, monitoring and campaigning on international financial institutions (IFIs), links between IFIs, the WTO and bilateral aid, post-conflict and post war reconstruction, the United Nations (UN), and debt. In 2003, finance and development activities took a bit of a back seat since most Focus staff were involved in mobilizing against the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun. Despite this, Focus conducted useful research on IFIs and organized several educational events on IFI influence on development and trade policies.

Focus did not plan to launch any specific campaigns of its own in the 2003-2005 period. Rather, we sought to bring new analyses and ideas into existing IFI campaigns, deepen our own research and outreach work at local, national and international levels, and support networking and collaborative work among local, national, regional and international movements and groups in selected IFI and IFI related campaigns.

The intended outcomes of Focus' participation in campaigns against the IFIs were to:

- Continue to expose the failures of these institutions in reducing poverty, fostering economic and social well-being, and practicing good governance in their own "houses"
- Increase awareness among the general public about the damaging impacts of IFI led reform programmes
- Deepen the crisis of legitimacy of these institutions by highlighting their poor performance records and irrelevance in today's world.

For the most part, Focus was successful in achieving the above outcomes.

Another extremely important outcome over the past three years is that we deepened our engagements and alliances at national and local levels, especially in India, Thailand and the Philippines. In India, Focus drew

attention to the links between India's economic and financial policies and 'sectoral reforms' with the policy conditions imposed by the World Bank, IMF and the ADB, and their impacts on farmers, workers, women, and rural and urban poor. In the Philippines, Focus started intensive monitoring of water privatisation and water policy and governance issues. Also in the Philippines, Focus convened a series of "round table" meetings (called the Development Round Table Series, DRTS) which addressed key issues related to debt and development financing. These activities are described in more detail in the country programme reports.

A shortfall in Focus' work on finance and development in the past three years is that we were unable to do substantial research on private capital flows in the Asia-Pacific region. The reason for this is that Focus staff at national and regional levels were extremely involved in educational, outreach and mobilisation activities, and were not able to make the time to start research on a relatively new area of research. Campaign building and mobilisation activities tend to demand a great deal of time and human resources, especially since they are undertaken in coalitions where Focus is assigned to do the research and analytical work, and prepare informational and educational materials. Also, such activities often tend to be concentrated in tight time-lines leading up to deadlines for approvals of policies, projects or loans, and thus require intense concentration of efforts from all involved. In its future work, Focus will have to consider seriously how to balance the demands of campaign building, solidarity actions and popular education with the necessity of conducting research in new areas.

Details about the main activities, outcomes and shortfalls in the Finance and Development programme follow.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund

In 2003, Focus updated its research on the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) in a paper titled "A Poor Package for Poverty Reduction." The paper was published by the Austrian Journal of Development Studies in their May 2003 issue, and was also presented in the PRSP colloquium in Namur, Belgium in the same year. Also in 2003, in an attempt to link mobilisations against the WTO with those against IFIs, Focus highlighted the "policy coherence" across the World Bank, IMF and the WTO, whereby the former demand that developing countries agree to liberalise trade unilaterally and "harmonise" their national policy regimes to be compatible with WTO rules. In the months leading up to the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun in 2003, Focus conducted briefings for national and regional social movements and civil society organisations on the roles of the World Bank and IMF in shaping trade negotiations in the WTO and trade policies in the Asia region.

The bulk of Focus' work on the World Bank and the IMF in 2004-2005 was at national and sub-national levels, although Focus staff also participated in some international fora and actions. In India, Focus helped to organize broad based coalitions of farmers' and workers' organizations, unions, NGOs and researchers in the states of Karnataka and Maharashtra to analyse and understand state level economic and financial reforms, and plan coordinated actions to demand public and parliamentary scrutiny of these policy reforms, accountability from state governments for loans taken from the IFIs, and long term resolutions to the debt crises in both states. Focus initiated and coordinated a broad based civil society critique of the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for India. This critique is being used by social movements and civil society groups all over India.

In January-February, 2004, Focus participated in a strategy meeting on the World Bank and IMF in Penang, Malaysia. The meeting was attended by a number of national, regional and international groups and networks, and focused on building collective strategies to counter the economic, social and environmental destruction that result from IFI led programmes. Focus staff also made presentations on trade-finance linkages and the urgent need for alternative development models at a series of public education seminars and workshops in Washington DC in April, 2004, during the World Bank-IMF meetings. Focus also continued to monitor the World Bank's involvement in large infrastructure projects, and in July 2004, Focus staff collaborated with an external researcher on preparing a paper that critiqued World Bank support for the Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric project in the Lao PDR.

Focus has been active in several national, regional and international networks monitoring and campaigning against the IFIs. Focus staff are on the steering

committee of IFI Watch Net (a web based information sharing space on IFIs), World Bank Bonds Boycott (an international campaign committed to cutting off the Bank's financial lifeline) and IFIs-Out (a loose network of organisations aimed at disempowering all IFIs). Focus is on the South Council of the Fifty Years is Enough Campaign and also on the IFIs Advisory Board of the Global Greengrants Fund. In the ASF in Hyderabad (2003) and the WSF's in Mumbai (2004) and Porto Alegre (2005), Focus staff were invited to present critiques of the World Bank and IMF speak at several events.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Focus was able to achieve most of the outcomes it set out in its work on the World Bank and the IMF. Our writing, campaigning and educational activities have been successful in exposing the roles of these institutions in entrenching policy induced poverty, hastening the processes of privatization, liberalisation and deregulation, and imposing a destructive development model on developing countries. We were also successful in critiquing the poor quality of technical competence and governance in these institutions through writing and collaborative campaign work.

There are, however, three shortfalls in our outcomes over the past three years. The first is that although we produced an updated overall critique of the PRSP-PRGF frameworks in 2003, we were not able to monitor the PRSP-PRGF in depth at selected country levels, as intended. This inhibited our ability to take our critiques of the PRSP-PRGF further. Second, Focus has done almost no first hand monitoring of the IMF in Asia over the past three years. Third, Focus was not able to facilitate the emergence of a common strategy to disempower the World Bank and the IMF among the various campaigns and networks we were involved with. One reason for this is that majority of the NGOs prominent in international campaigns against these institutions have become locked into negotiating relationships with them. Also, there is a growing gulf between social movements and communities affected by World Bank-IMF policies on one hand and NGOs in international campaigns on the other hand, in terms of goals, tactics and strategies. Bringing these various streams together is an extremely challenging task, and something that Focus will have to pay attention to in our future work.

The Asian Development Bank

Focus was extremely active in research, monitoring, writing and campaigning on the Asian Development Bank (ADB) over the 2003-2005 period.

In June 2003, together with the Philippine Working Group on the ADB and the NGO Forum on the ADB, Focus co-organized a public forum on "Policies of Plunder: The Role of the ADB in the Philippines," a press conference, and a mass mobilization in front of the ADB headquarters in Manila. These events were timed to coin-

cide with the ADB's ersatz Annual Governors' Meeting (the original was scheduled for Istanbul but was cancelled because of the US' war on Iraq) and were widely covered in the media, with Focus staff figuring in print and radio interviews. Focus also produced a collection of articles that critiqued the ADB's governance policies, which were also carried in the Focus on the Philippines electronic newsletter and as a special edition of Focus on Trade.

Starting from 2003, Focus began to work actively with local communities, organizations and peoples' movements in India on understanding and monitoring the impacts of ADB loans and project financing in various states. Over the past three years, this work has expanded to Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat states, and the Northeast region of India. Over the past three years, Focus has responded to numerous requests for information and materials from organizations and movements in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Cambodia and Vietnam. The dossiers on the ADB that Focus produced since 2000 continued to be in great demand. Focus was also regularly invited to address public meetings and run workshop sessions on the ADB, although we were not able to respond to every invitation.

In 2004, Focus continued to monitor specific ADB projects and programmes such as the Chashma Right Bank Irrigation Project in Pakistan, the Karnataka Urban Development and Coastal Environment Project in India, the Greater Mekong Sub-regional Economic Cooperation Programme (GMS) in mainland Southeast Asia and the Maynilad water privatization in the Philippines. Focus supported local/national groups protesting such projects to prepare position statements and informational materials for public distribution. Focus was active in the civil society review and critiques of the ADB's Public Communications Policy (PCP) and in collaboration with other civil society organisations, registered strong protest against the ADB consultation processes regarding the PCP. In the PCP consultation that was organized in Bangalore, India, civil society groups presented the ADB with a statement that articulated their objections to the ADB's consultation processes and then staged a walk-out from the meeting.

In 2005, Focus co-organised a series of events with the Istanbul Social Forum (ISF) to counter the ADB' Annual Governors' Meeting (AGM) that was finally held in Istanbul in May 2005. While the NGO Forum on the ADB took the responsibility of organizing events inside the AGM venue, Focus was given the responsibility of working with the ISF on events outside the AGM. These events covered a range of topics, from the role of the IFIs in creating economic and social crises, to development induced conflicts and post-war reconstruction. These events were attended by student activists, researchers, academics, union leaders and representatives from social movements in Turkey, and were greatly appreciated by all participants. They received a great deal of press and media coverage, and Focus staff were

interviewed by print, radio and television journalists. These events were also extremely helpful for Focus in strengthening existing contacts and making new ones in Turkey for future collaborative work.

In Istanbul, Focus also released a dossier titled "The ADB and Policy (Mis) Governance in Asia," which consists of articles by Focus staff as well as other activists in Asia that analyse problems in the ADB's governance policies. Focus had originally intended to release the dossier in 2003 or 2004, but for pragmatic reasons, decided to release it in Istanbul in 2005. The dossier has been well received and Focus has already been through several print runs of the document.

From September 2005, Focus has been involved with several Indian, regional and international organizations in mobilizing social movements, project affected communities, civil society organisations and the general public against the ADB's 39th AGM, which will be held in the Indian city of Hyderabad in May 2006. A number of meetings have already been held to plan the events and strategies for a counter summit during the AGM. Focus is a member of the overall organizing committee, as well as of numerous working groups such as media, events and resources.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Over the period 2003-2005, Focus has intensified its analytical work on the ADB as well as strengthened its links with community organizations, social movements, NGOs and networks resisting the ADB. It would be fair to conclude that Focus is viewed as a leading campaigner against the ADB, and a trustworthy and credible source of information and analysis on the ADB. Focus' analytical and strategic inputs on the ADB (and also on the World Bank) are sought and appreciated by groups and networks from within the Asia-Pacific regions, as well as from other regions. Focus also has a strong working relationship with the Manila based NGO Forum on the ADB, and is collaborating with them on preparing briefing materials on the impacts of ADB projects and policies on local/national governance, the rights of farmers and workers, and the lives of women. Focus Philippines staff have also supported the NGO Forum in organizing and running strategy planning meetings, seminars and conferences.

The main shortfall in Focus' intended outcomes regarding its work on the ADB is that Focus has not been able to write as many research papers as it wanted to on critical issues such as privatization, infrastructure development, etc. Campaigning and responding to requests for materials, while important and rewarding, has also been taxing on Focus staff time and resources. These constraints will have to be addressed in our next work programme.

The United Nations

Focus made concerted efforts to link its work on finance, development and IFIs with trends in the United Nations (UN) system. One way of doing this was through understanding and monitoring the UN promoted Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Focus has been and continues to be skeptical of the MDGs and does not participate in campaigns that promote the MDGs. In 2003, the UN's Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) requested Focus to organise and convene a civil society dialogue to accompany a meeting of finance ministers from Asia-Pacific on the first two MDGs: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The civil society dialogue was attended by representatives from a wide range of organisations and social movements. Participants discussed the causes of extreme poverty and hunger, the successes and failures of past 'official' attempts to address them, and the role of IFI led financial and economic reforms in increasing poverty and hunger. A comprehensive discussion paper and position statement on MDGs, poverty and hunger emerged from the dialogue. As a follow up to the dialogue, Focus produced a dossier of articles titled: Anti Poverty or Anti Poor, The Millennium Development Goals and the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger. The dossier includes articles on poverty reduction approaches and the MDGs, and also carried the discussion and position papers from the dialogue. Again in 2005, Focus was invited to participate in an event organised at the UN ESCAP in Bangkok to mark the international day against poverty where the critique of the MDGs and a call for universal approaches to rights and service provision was welcomed warmly by some participants.

In October, 2003, Focus participated in the Asia Region Consultation Meeting of the UN High Level Panel on UN-Civil Society Relations in October. The meeting was organized by CONGO (Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations) Working Group on Asia (WGA) and hosted by the Asian Forum on Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia), a regional non-government organisation based in Bangkok. Since then, Focus has participated in other similar events organized by CONGO and Forum Asia.

In April 2004, Focus was invited to present a paper at a conference organised by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) in Geneva on Social Knowledge and Policy Making. The paper, titled, Integrating Knowledge, Politics and Policy for Social Change was selected by UNRISD for publication in a monograph titled Reclaiming Development Agendas: Knowledge, Power and International Policy Making.

Focus contributed an essay to a volume on UN reform published in 2005 by the Geneva based NGO CETIM entitled "ONU: droits pour tous ou loi du plus fort? Regards militants sur les Nations Unies" (The UN: rights for all or law of the strong? Activist views on the UN).

Focus also participated in parallel events during the 2005 UN summit, including a public event entitled "Open UN" held at the Riverside Centre in New York.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Although Focus was able to make some useful contributions to debates about the UN system, our monitoring of the UN system and its inter-relationship with the Bretton Woods Institutions dominated development model was not regular or consistent. One reason for this is that Focus was ambivalent about the amount of time it was willing to devote to engagement with the UN system. While we responded positively to specific requests from UN and their allied agencies, these requests themselves have been ad hoc in nature, and Focus has not made a systematic commitment to engaging with UN processes. This area of work will be revisited and discussed when planning our next phase of work.

Timor Leste

Focus had started studying the 'reconstruction' of independent Timor Leste since late 2001, and had developed close ties with some leading officials in the Timorese Government's National Directorate of Planning and External Assistance Coordination, in the Ministry of Planning and Finance. In 2003, Focus formalized this relationship by placing a staff person in Timor-Leste to help develop research capacity among Timorese government officials and NGO staff to be able to monitor donor and creditor programmes. Titled the "Rolling Think Tank" (RTT), this initiative brought together officials from various ministries and local civil society organisations to study and analyse the impact of donors and creditors on national development. The first study conducted by the RTT was on the World Bank-led Community Empowerment and Local Governance Project (CEP). The RTT team gathered information about the project through document analyses, interviews and site visits, and prepared a report that was accepted and released by the Timor-Leste Government. By November, 2003, the RTT was ready for its next project: an examination of the possible impacts of World Bank and ADB loan conditionalities on Timor-Leste's economic sovereignty.

During 2003-2004, Focus staff continued to provide analytical support and training as required to members of the RTT, local civil society organisations and other government formations. Focus developed links with the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR)—a body set up to address the human rights violations committed in the country following the August 1999 referendum for independence from Indonesia. Focus also assisted in the planning and implementation of the first meeting of a "High Level Mechanism" (HLM) to develop strategies for monitoring the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP). The HLM meeting brought together government and civil society to discuss Timor-Leste's development priorities, the challenges they have faced

in working together and possible ways to overcome these challenges.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Although Focus achieved extremely positive outcomes from its work in Timor Leste, it was not able to maintain the momentum of this work. Keeping a staff person in Timor Leste was expensive, as was travel by other Focus staff from Bangkok and Manila to Dili, the capital city. Also, our most important contacts in the relevant government departments left the country, and Focus did not develop the same quality of contacts with other government officials. Civil society organizations in the country were undecided about what type of research and monitoring they wished to pursue, and it is not Focus' work style to be directive with local organizations. Clearly, if Focus wants to resume in-country work in Timor Leste, it will have to be prepared to make at least a medium term commitment of staff time and resources.

Post-War Reconstruction

A new and important area of study for Focus that took shape over the last three years is post-war reconstruction. Since 1999, Focus had already started to pay attention to UN and IFI-led reconstruction and development programmes in Central Asia, Southeast Asia and Timor Leste. In 2003, Focus started to study the reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, especially extraction of Iraq's oil by US corporations, and the farming out of security, physical, financial and social infrastructure contracts to US approved corporations.

In July 2003, together with the Philippine-based Initiatives for International Dialogue and the University of the Philippines' Third World Studies Center, Focus organised a lecture-forum on "Post Conflict Reconstruction: Lessons Learned from a New Country," that focused on Timor Leste's experiences in dealing with the IFIs. In the World Social Forums in Mumbai (2004) and Porto Alegre (2005), Focus co-organised seminars on post-war reconstruction. Representatives from Cambodia, Timor Leste, Haiti, Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine shared experiences and analyses of the influence of IFIs and donors on the formulation of national policies, awarding of contracts and the manipulation of local-national politics, and the impacts of these processes on local communities. In both Mumbai and Porto Alegre, participants requested that Focus convene a large international conference on reconstruction that also brings in activists and organizations from the donor countries that finance reconstruction.

In January 2005, Focus released a dossier titled, *Silent War: The US' Economic and Ideological Occupation of Iraq*. The dossier carries articles that provide analyses of different aspects of Iraq's reconstruction, Nicaragua's reconstruction and the overall emerging reconstruction paradigm.

Over the course of 2005 it became clear to Focus—as also to movements and organizations in the affected countries—that rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia following the 2004 tsunami had numerous similarities with post war reconstruction programmes. Reconstruction efforts in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the Southern United States highlighted these similarities further as it became clear that the same US corporations had received the most lucrative contracts in the post Katrina reconstruction, Iraq and Afghanistan. In December, 2005, Focus prepared another dossier on reconstruction that factored in these similarities. The dossier -- *Destroy and Profit: Wars, Disasters and Corporations* -- carries articles on Iraq, Central Asia, Sri Lanka, Hurricane Katrina, post tsunami reconstruction, and the close tie-ups between the US Government and the World Bank in post-war/post-disaster reconstruction.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Focus was able to achieve its intended outcomes in this work area. Our work on reconstruction has been well received and appreciated by organizations in the affected countries, academics and researchers.

Debt

Focus' work on debt in the past three years was mainly through the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD). In 2003, Focus joined with APMDD to co-organise a conference on debt in the Asia Social Forum (ASF) in Hyderabad, India. This conference was considered one of the most successful events in the ASF. Also during the ASF, Focus co-convened a strategy meeting on export credit agencies and debt, which was attended by Indian, regional and international participants. In the following year, again in collaboration with APMDD, Focus co-organised a conference on water and power sector privatization. In the WSFs in Mumbai (2004) and Porto Alegre (2005), Focus participated in several events on external, IFI created debt. Focus was also active in co-organising the second APMDD Assembly that was held in Bangkok in August, 2005. The aim of the Assembly was to consolidate and expand the anti-debt movement in the Asia Pacific region and plan campaigns against the privatization and liberalisation of services, with a special focus on the services liberalisation negotiations in the WTO. A seminar on the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and a conference on aid were also organized in the days immediately preceding the Assembly.

Up until August 2005, Focus was on the APMDD Steering Committee and was active in planning campaigns, workshops and other events related to debt. Focus also assisted in drafting APMDD position statements and preparing briefing papers on debt and IFI conditionalities for general educational purposes. During

the APMDD Assembly in August 2005, Focus resigned from the Steering Committee so that a new regional organisation could join the committee. However, Focus remains committed to working actively in the APMDD and on debt issues in general.

Focus was not able to do the grounded research on debt that it set out to do in the past three years. It did however bring together farmers and farm workers' organizations, researchers, journalists and academics together in Karnataka, India in July 2004 to share information and initiate actions on the debts of peasant farmers that were a major cause of farmers' suicides in the state. Later in 2004, Focus also brought together farmers' movements, unions and NGOs to prepare a position statement on the debt crisis in Karnataka state. The statement was presented to the state's Chief Minister and the State Legislative Assembly by selected representatives of this group.

Local level debt among farmers and workers continues to be a serious problem and cause of social and economic distress and impoverishment across Asia. Focus will direct more resources towards planning campaigns and actions on these issues in the coming work phase.

Water

Focus's work on water issues in the 2003-2005 period was largely at local and national levels in India and the Philippines. In 2003, the Focus Philippines programme worked with the Bantay Tubig Water Vigilance Alliance to make the International Finance Corporation (IFC) disclose information about an investment mission to look into the Maynilad water privatisation case (Maynilad was the first case of water utilities privatization in the country). In 2004-2005, Focus continued to work on water privatisation and water policy and governance issues with Bantay Tubig. In order to broaden advocacy on water issues, Focus Philippines co-convened the Philippine Freshwater Network, a group committed to monitoring and launching actions not only on water utilities privatization, but also on general water access and governance issues. Focus organised press conferences, media events and forums around these issues and later in 2004, Focus Philippines joined the Action for Economic Reforms (AER) in filing a court petition and related motions to intervene in the Maynilad Rehabilitation case.

In India, Focus supported local struggles against the privatization of water. In 2005, Focus joined with several social movements, grassroots research groups and civil society organizations to launch an initiative to study and monitor water sector reforms. The first meeting was held in New Delhi in July, 2005 in which, areas of study were agreed on. This initiative is likely to gather more energy in 2006, as more movements and organizations join in.

Overall, Focus' work on water was weak over the past

three years, and Focus did not conduct the research it had intended to do on water privatization, management and financing as promoted by IFIs. Along with land, water is the most crucial public good in peril under the current neo-liberal development model. Focus hopes to give research and campaigning on water issues greater priority in the coming years.

Outreach, Education and Participation in Events

Over the past three years, Focus staff have served as resource persons in numerous training workshops, seminars, public meetings and conferences on topics such as IFIs, the UN system, debt, aid, privatization, the G8, and other issues related to finance and development. Focus staff have also prepared briefing notes for social movements and local/national organisations on IFIs, privatisation, trade, debt, etc., and assisted groups challenging IFI financed projects to prepare campaign materials and documents. Many of these are in local languages and are being used extensively by local networks, organizations and journalists.

In July 2003, at the invitation of the Burma Refugee Council (BRC) based in Chiangmai, Thailand, Focus facilitated a workshop in Mae Hong Son (Northern Thailand) on global economic issues. The topics covered in the workshop included agricultural policies, international trade, roles of the IMF, World Bank, ADB and WTO, and alternative development approaches. The workshop was attended by about 40 researchers, development workers and pro-democracy activists from Burma. Also in 2003, Focus conducted sessions on the impact of globalisation on women to members of the Burmese Women's League. Participants came from various ethnic groups settled in Burma, and the sessions were part of a course on women's development organised by the Women's League of Burma. In 2004 and 2005, Focus conducted workshop sessions on IFIs, development and post conflict reconstruction for the BRC and Shan Women's Network respectively.

Participating in and/or organising educational and outreach activities have helped to deepen Focus's engagement in finance and development issues at local and national levels. In India, Focus' work on finance and development was revitalized through such activities. Focus staff have participated in and made presentations in public meetings and workshops organised by local movements, unions and organizations on issues such as the privatisation of water and power, the roles of the World Bank and ADB in pushing sectoral reforms in agriculture, etc. For example, in 2003, the Coalition of Peoples' Movements in the state of Madhya Pradesh in India carried out a number of actions against the ADB led privatization of the power sector. In support of these actions, Focus attended public meetings with farmers to give them information about the ADB and prepared materials on the ADB's involvement in project financing at the national and sub-national levels.



Dancing participant at WSF, Mumbai, India, 2004

These materials were translated into Hindi and were used as popular literature for mobilising farmers and activists against the privatisation processes. Similarly in the Philippines, Focus conducted seminars and workshop sessions on such diverse issues as water privatisation, the Hernando de Soto model of development, IFIs in transition countries, etc.

Focus' outreach work has also been at regional and international levels, some of which have already been described above. In addition, Focus staff have participated in and helped to organize numerous actions, seminars, and conferences on finance and development issues in Asia and also other regions. In June 2004, Focus worked with South Korean coalitions to organise mobilisations and public education activities during the World Economic Forum in South Korea. Walden Bello, Executive Director of Focus, was an invited speaker at the plenary of the counter summit during the G8 Summit in Gleneagles in July, 2005. Similarly, other Focus staff members have been invited to speak at G8 meetings in previous years. Focus staff have also been invited to address plenaries, seminars and workshops on finance and development issues in every WSF since the a start of the WSF process.

In September 2004, Focus participated in an international meeting on investment treaties and global governance organized by FERN and the Mott Foundation. The main issues addressed in the meeting were the emerging patterns of foreign direct investments (FDIs) and the proliferation of bilateral investment treaties (BITs). Discussions centered on how to address the imbalances of power in these treaties, the political space for public interest organizations, questioning the power and legitimacy of BITs, and dispute settlement processes between governments and Transnational Corporations (TNCs). In November, 2004, Focus participated in and made presentations on water politics, access to water and the role of IFIs at various forums

in Bangkok, Thailand and Amsterdam, Netherlands. The forum in Bangkok was a gathering of economists, academics and activists from France, USA, India, Thailand, Japan and South Korea. The fora in the Netherlands included a conference on the "Global Sell-Out of Public Services" which was sponsored by the EU-NGO Network on GATS, and events on water issues at the Dutch Social Forum.

It would be accurate to say that an important outcome of Focus' work in finance and development in the past three years is a tremendous increase in the amount of educational and outreach work we have been able to do with social movements and civil society organizations and networks.

Key Activities in 2005

January: WSF events, seminars and workshops.

May: ADB AGM and counter events in Istanbul, Turkey.

July: G8 events in Gleneagles and Edinburgh

August: APMDDD Regional Assembly

September: "Open UN" Forum in New York

TRADE

The past three years, 2003 to 2005, began and ended with a World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial but had many road stops in between.

In 2003, the main focus of the trade campaign was the derailment of the Fifth Ministerial of the WTO in Cancun, Mexico. And while the derailment of the WTO Ministerial is certainly a major achievement for all involved, there were several others that the Focus trade campaign can list down.

Role in National Campaigns

In 2003, a major achievement for Focus was the establishment and strengthening of national campaigns in the Philippines, Thailand and India.

In the Philippines, Focus played a key role in the establishment of a national coalition called Stop the New Round!! Coalition (SNR) and served as secretariat. SNR brought together a broad and diverse range of groups, movements, unions and trade analysts who have not previously worked together on trade issues. It ran a full



Civil society activists, victorious in Cancun, 2003

campaign from direct engagements with government, demanding disclosure and public debate to mobilizing public opinion and doing popular education in the different provinces across the country.

In Thailand, Focus worked closely with an NGO working group called Thai Action on Globalisation. The national campaign included a series of public education seminars around different cities in Thailand. It also organized public debates and forums with the national institutions, particularly the Senate and Human Rights Commission. Later on in the year, Focus was one of the founding members of a new Thai civil society coalition, FTA Watch, with the objective of conducting studies and raising public awareness on the issues arising from the Thailand-US bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

In India, Focus used national and international forums to mobilize public opinion. Focus organized a debate between the chief negotiator of the Indian Commerce Ministry and central trade union leaders and other trade activists. Focus also worked closely with the "WTO Virodhi Jan Abhiyaan" (Coalition of Peoples' Movements Against the WTO) in organizing a series of meetings with social movements, trade unions and peoples movements.

Role in Regional Campaigns

In the run up to the 2003 5th Ministerial of the WTO in Cancun, Mexico, Focus organized together with Oxfam GB a two-day regional briefing in Bangkok. Participants came from Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and East Timor. Representatives of trade unions, social movements, non-government organizations and trade activists came together in Bangkok to discuss the Cancun agenda and formulate strategy and actions in re-

sponse. Trade analysts, some of them based in Geneva, reported on the state of negotiations and the stakes in Cancun while others presented their positions and analysis.

This informal grouping worked so well that after Cancun, there was an agreement to have a follow up regional trade strategy meeting in 2004.

The East and Southeast Asia Trade Campaign Strategy Meeting in 2004 had a much broader range and higher number of participants than the first regional meeting. The steering group included ATTAC Japan, Focus, the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU), Institute of Global Justice (IGJ) of Indonesia, Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and the Thai Action on Globalisation; and participants hailed from ten countries.

The meeting was highly successful in producing a concrete plan for coordinated actions in the run up to and during the 6th WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong, with the Hong Kong groups encouraged to take the lead and other groups committed to support them. It also significantly strengthened and built links between national social movements around the region, not just on the WTO issues, but also on struggles against bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) negotiations and privatization of basic services, witnessed by the response to a call to mobilize together against the World Economic Forum in Seoul in June 2004, where one of the highlights of the demonstration was a rousing speech by a member of the EGAT (Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand) union against privatization.

Key Role in International Campaigns

Focus also played a very active role in the international campaigns to derail the 5th Ministerial of the WTO.

The international campaign for 2003 was launched at the Asia Social Forum in India and the World Social Forum in Brazil. In both Forums, Focus organized various seminars, debates, panels and press events to contribute to mobilizing people and public opinion. Focus put out publications and creative campaign materials like the “Derail the WTO” t-shirt, which were widely worn at the Forums.

Together with the Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS) network, Agri-Trade network and the Social Movements International Network, Focus organized various teach-ins, public debates and press events in Mexico, Geneva and numerous other cities.

Timely and Innovative Materials

In 2003, Focus produced timely and innovative materials that contributed greatly to the campaign.

In cooperation with Zed, Focus published the book “Behind the Scenes at the WTO: The real world of international negotiations” coauthored by Fatoumata Jawara and veteran Focus trade analyst Aileen Kwa.

Focus also contributed to the popular education efforts of national, regional and international campaigns by producing the video “WTO: Why is it BAD for you?” The video was widely used with thousands of copies being made in VCD, DVD, VHS formats and could also be downloaded for free from the Focus website. It was translated by various national campaigns and is now available in 12 languages: Thai, Filipino, Cebuano, Bahasa, Khmer, Hungarian, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, French and Arabic

2005: All roads lead to Hong Kong

2005 was the culmination of the network building and campaigning efforts of the past years. It was a very busy year with the Focus trade team working closely with its allies in national, regional and international level to prepare for the 6th Ministerial of the WTO in Hong Kong in December.

Although the campaign in 2005 carried the same elements of the campaign in 2003, such as supporting national campaigns, strengthening regional campaigns and doing popular education, it also differed from the campaign in 2003 in two major ways:

- Because the Ministerial was happening in Asia, it was even more crucial to have a coherent and coordinated strategy so that organizations from the region could take the lead role in the mobilization.
- The political landscape had changed since Cancun with Geneva being a more critical place to watch as the UNCTAD report detailed, “The fact that the Framework Agreement was decided at the General



Photo by Joseph Purugganan

Focus participated in actions and political theatre inside the Hong Kong Convention Centre during the WTO Ministerial: here, “Evil Sorcerer” Pascal Lamy (a.k.a Jacques-chai Chom-tongdi) casts his spell on the South.

Council level with some Ministerial participation... taking into account the setbacks at Seattle and Cancun, the future role of Ministerial Conferences may be increasingly geared towards stocktaking, the injection of momentum, and putting a political seal on deals already worked out in the General Council." This meant that the campaign in 2005 had to learn from lessons of past campaigns, adapt to the new political climate and follow a multi-level strategy with mass pressure and actions in Geneva held in conjunction with national, regional and international efforts.

Given these two new elements, Focus poured in its energies into organizing and supporting regional and international meetings such as the International Co-ordination Meeting in Hong Kong, the Asia strategy meeting in Colombo, the Migrants strategy meeting and various activities and mobilizations in Geneva. In all this, the consensus was clear; the call was "No deal is better than a bad deal."

Lessons learned

Some of the insights learned from organizing these activities are, first, that there is always a need for education and popularizing the analysis and information. This is the major stumbling block for national campaigns as they try to get more people and groups interested and involved in the campaign. Second is that the priority is supporting national campaigns, linking them to one another and providing real time analysis from Geneva to the capitals. Third is that there really are tangible results and outcomes in bringing together, facilitating and coordinating regional strategies and coalitions. The first of the regional meetings though was quite small but as it progressed, more and more groups from across the region got involved and now it has become an informal network working together on various issues.

This informal network worked closely with a number of international groups to organize a week of events from workshops to concerts to street painting to rallies in Hong Kong before and during the Hong Kong Ministerial. It also continued with vigils and rallies after the Hong Kong Ministerial to demand the release of the hundreds of political prisoners detained by the Hong Kong police.

Focus counts as a major accomplishment the role it has been able to play in national, regional and international campaigns. We have played a unique role in bringing together various sectors and movements from across the region but without the burdens of a formal network structure. Focus prides itself in having kept this process open and, as a result, have brought together a very broad set of groups together, improving the analysis and strategies. Focus can play this role because it has built a reputation of solid analysis on the WTO and facilitates and supports campaigns and mobilizations.

Timely and Innovative Materials

In the lead up to Hong Kong Focus again produced timely and innovative campaign materials for popular education and mobilization. Focus produced a sequel to its first successful video, "WTO: Why is it BAD for you?" entitled WTO: Why is it REALLY BAD for you?" Like the first video, it was short, easy to understand and was widely disseminated. It was immediately translated by national campaigns into several languages including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Spanish and Bahasa. Thousands of copies were made and the English and Chinese versions could be (and can still be) downloaded and viewed on the web.

Focus also produced a handy booklet called "The Derailer's Guide to the WTO" which was widely used in the run up to Hong Kong. It not only detailed in simple language the current agreements and issues at stake but it also gave ideas on strategies and possible actions.



Photo by Dorothy Guerrero

The Philippine fisherfolk movement, Kilusang Mangingisda, Launched a "Fluvial Parade" on the Hong Kong Harbour during the WTO Ministerial



Korean farmers and supporters stage a sit-in during the Hong Kong ministerial

Major Events in 2005

Focus organized, co-organized, participated in and supported a wide range of activities in 2005. Focus counts as achievements the following activities as they have contributed greatly to the strengthening of the national, regional and international movements and to the overall campaign to derail the 6th Ministerial of the WTO in Hong Kong. (This is a partial list, a full report of the trade campaign activities of 2005 is available upon request)

Supporting the Hong Kong Process and other initiatives

The International Coordinating Meeting, 26-27 February 2005, Hong Kong

The Hong Kong People's Alliance on the WTO (HKPA) organized the International Coordinating Network Meeting 26-27 February, 2005 in Hong Kong, to kick off preparations and planning for the 6th Ministerial of the WTO. This was the first international meeting on the WTO in Hong Kong. The meeting had 250 participants from 110 organizations, movements and NGOs from 23 countries around the world, with most participants coming from Asia.

Although new to the international scene of organizing, the HKPA organized a very successful meeting. The meeting ended with the agreement not to form a formal network but instead have an open process and form working groups that would draw international and local groups into the planning process towards the Ministerial. It was also agreed on that the working groups would be coordinated by the HKPA.

Focus actively participated in this process and helped mobilize movements from Thailand and the Philippines to the meeting. Members of the Focus trade team were

very active in the launching of these working groups, working both as members of the working groups and through the international network OWINFS.

Focus also supported the HKPA by helping with their teach-ins and presswork. Focus was also part of an advance team of international groups to help in the groundwork and preparations in Hong Kong.

The Colombo Meeting: "Towards A Strategy For WTO Ministerial In Hong Kong: Asia Meeting In Colombo" 6-7 June, 2005, Sri Lanka

The Colombo meeting brought together more than 150 participants from all over Asia representing social movements, different sectors from fishers to farmers to women's groups, NGO's, academics and trade activists.

The Colombo meeting took advantage of the Asian consultation meeting on the World Social Forum (WSF) taking place in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 4-5 June. It brought South Asian movements into the Hong Kong process, as there were only few representatives from South Asia in the February international coordinating meeting in Hong Kong.

Focus not only co-organized the meeting but mobilized representatives of various Asian movements to come and participate in the meeting. There were interesting discussions which deepened the analysis of movements on the impact of the different WTO agreements, especially the July framework, on the various sectors around the region.

The final declaration highlighted the importance of both a regional strategy and strengthening national campaigns. It also laid out a clear analysis and strategy for the road to Hong Kong.

Peoples General Council, Geneva General Council, 25-29 July, Geneva

If the last July 2004 General Council meeting in Geneva has taught us anything, it is that the big trading powers have found an easy way to produce deals in quiet, secluded Geneva, away from civil society and movements. In line with this, Focus joined forces with organizations, mass movements and civil society in Switzerland to organize activities and mobilizations in Geneva during crucial meetings. As part of this strategy, Jacques-chai Chomthongdi relocated to Geneva in early 2005 with the brief to work with local organizations, as well as with Geneva based international NGOs.

Focus supported representatives from movements and national coalitions from key countries – India, Indonesia and the Philippines -- to participate in the actions and activities in Geneva during the WTO General Council. Representatives from these coalitions met with their national delegations to the WTO to dialogue and pressure them into taking the people's positions on the various negotiations. They also participated in the press conferences, workshops and international meetings organized by different sectors and movements such as workshops on NAMA, Agriculture and Services.

Focus also provided daily updates on the negotiations and actions happening inside and outside the General Council that were sent out in three languages: English, Spanish and French. These were widely distributed and used by national campaigns such as the Stop the New Round Coalition in the Philippines in their mobilizations and press briefings in the capital.

This was very useful because it was not as easy for the trade negotiators to come to more agreements in secret as civil society came by the hundreds to the quiet city of Geneva. There were press conferences, workshops, strategy meetings and actions. Representatives of various national coalitions also met with their national trade delegations to the WTO and dialogued and kept up the pressure. And the clear statement from almost all of civil society was that of "no deal is better than a bad deal" making it clear to negotiators that the people were closely watching and following the negotiations.

Peoples Action Week, 6th Ministerial of the WTO, Hong Kong, 11-18 December 2005

In preparation for the Peoples Action Week during the 6th Ministerial of the WTO in Hong Kong, Focus' trade campaign coordinator and press officer went to Hong Kong weeks before the Ministerial together with an advance team of representatives of international movements and organizations in Hong Kong to do ground work, coordinate with the HKPA and do preparatory work for OWINFS activities. Focus staff worked out of the office of the Asian Migrant Center, a steering committee member of the HKPA and worked closely with an informal network of movements and organizations including La Via Campesina, Kilusang Mangingisda

(Fisherfolk Movement), Transnational Institute (TNI), Institute for Global Justice, Migrant Forum in Asia, Jubilee South, SNR!!, Hemispheric Social Alliance, Real World Radio, Alliance of Progressive Labour and Indonesian Migrant Labour Union (SBMI).

This informal network co-organized several activities including teach-ins, press conferences, workshops, debates, daily briefings, rallies, street painting, marches, media tour and concerts. It also coordinated with OWINFS and participated in the daily inside-outside briefings, inside actions and exerted efforts in keeping the movements outside updated of the status of negotiations inside. It also coordinated with the HKPA and actively participated in the HKPA organised rallies and marches.

The well-coordinated Focus trade team worked closely with national campaigns, giving regular briefings and participating in meetings with negotiators to maintain and mount the pressure. The Focus team also played an active role in OWINFS activities, taking the lead in some of them and helping coordinate some network meetings. Focus staff also worked closely with movements, supporting them in their media work, actions and briefings.

Focus organized a media tour called "The Real Hong Kong" to show the press the people in Hong Kong suffering the effects of trade liberalisation such as the migrant workers, "caged people" and mainland Chinese contract workers. Focus also produced daily reports from Hong Kong called "Focus: On the Road to Hong Kong" covering not only the status of negotiations but also of the protests and the actions both inside and outside the convention center. Together with migrant and international groups, Focus co-organized a mobilization and solidarity concert for migrant workers in Hong Kong against the WTO Round. It was also a celebration of International Migrants Day.

When the Hong Kong police arrested hundreds of fellow anti-WTO protesters, Focus joined vigils outside the prison. In coordination with the HKPA and Via Campesina, Focus staff actively participated in efforts to demand the prisoners' release, from meeting with the police to staging protests even after the WTO Ministerial had ended.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

The external review of Focus' major achievements in the trade campaign from 2003-2005 shows that most of the objectives set out had been met, especially in the area of the WTO and FTAs.

Although the big trading powers were still able to pull out a Ministerial declaration out of the hat in Hong Kong, Focus counts as an achievement the fact that the

resistance to this Ministerial was the most impressive yet. Focus is proud to have been able to contribute to this mobilization and the raised consciousness of the grassroots. In addition, the improved coordination between the “inside” and the “outside” during the Ministerial can be counted as an achievement evidenced by the fact that some onerous proposals were removed from the declaration. And finally, because the un-transparent process of deal-making was made public, the deal that came out of Hong Kong carries no legitimacy for the people.

However, because most of the energies and resources of the trade team went into the work on the WTO and FTA, other key campaigns of the trade programme were not as fully developed.

Key Activities in 2005

January:

- “Other Davos”, Bern – Focus participated as resource person; Various strategy meetings on the WTO at the World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil

February:

- Focus co-organised with various Swiss groups a press conference on GATS at the UN; Mobilisation in front of the WTO denouncing the GATS negotiation (taking place during that week)
- Updates on the WTO, Manila – Focus co-organized with SNR an evening of discussion on the latest developments in the WTO. Focus staff from Geneva came as resource person
- Roundtable discussion on JPEPA and FTAs – Focus co-organized with SNR and Focus staff also participated as resource person
- The International Coordination Meeting in Hong Kong

March:

- Peoples Agenda on G20, Delhi – Focus co-organized and participated; Meeting with Indian and Brazilian Trade Ambassadors on Agricultural Issues, Delhi – Focus co-organized; Farmer’s Rally against G20 Ministerial Meeting, Delhi
- G20 Ministerial Meeting, Delhi; Pune- Agriculture in Maharashtra: Relevance of G20 & WTO
- Panel co-organised by 3D and Forum Asia at the UN “International Trade: How Does It Affect Human Rights? Why Should We Be Interested? What Can We Do? - Focus participated as resource person on using human rights tools in trade campaigns

April:

- Confronting Empire & WTO- A Public Meeting, Mumbai - Focus India Team took the lead
- Global Week of Action: Re-claiming Mumbai for its Peoples: “Campaign for Access to Public Spaces, Livelihood, Housing and Basic Services”, Mumbai



In Manila, protestors rally outside the Chinese embassy in support of the Koreans detained in Hong Kong

- “Free trade and Agriculture” Focus co-organized with IATP, ATTAC and Uniterre during the week of action, Geneva – Focus staff also participated as resource person
- Launch of SNR!! in Cebu, Manila and Mindanao in the Philippines
- Public Debate and press conference: “Voices of the People on WTO’s 10th Anniversary” parallel event to the WTO Annual Symposium, Geneva. - Focus co-organized with Forum Social Lemanique (FSL) and Focus staff also participated as resource person.

May:

- Preparatory Meetings for WTO Strategy and WSF, Colombo
- Training for Activists on Demystifying WTO, Mumbai; “Trade, the WTO and Human Rights.” in Geneva organised by FIDH – Focus staff participated and contributed as resource person

June:

- Towards a Strategy for WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong: Asia Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka
- UNCTAD Consultation on NAMA, Delhi

July:

- Regional Conference on WTO, Development and Migration: Building Migrant and People’s Solidarity in Challenging Neo-liberal Development and WTO, Hong Kong
- Peoples General Council, Geneva

August:

- UNCTAD Consultation on GATS, Delhi; Meeting of the Indian Peoples Campaign against WTO, Delhi
- National Convention of Farmers & Agricultural Workers, Delhi; UNCTAD Consultation on TRIPS & CBD, Delhi

September:

- OWINFs Asia Regional Exchange, Manila and Jakarta; Human Rights, Trade and the WTO, Cambodia – Focus staff participated as participant and resource person on trade and the WTO. The pro-

gramme was organized by the Oxfam International Youth Parliament (OIYP) and Womyn's Agenda for Change in Cambodia

- Maharashtra Strategy Meeting on Agriculture and WTO, Mumbai; Planning Meeting on Privatisation of Service and WTO-GATS, Mumbai
- LDC's Peoples Forum, Phnom Penh, Cambodia – Focus staff participated as resource persons
- Public Meeting against WTO and GATS, Chennai
- Conférence/débat sur les 10 ans d'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce en vue de la semaine de mobilisations du 15-21 octobre 2005, Geneva – Focus co-organized and also participated as resource person.

October:

- Mass Rally by the All India Farmers Movements Against WTO and Cheap Subsidised Agricultural Imports, Mumbai
- Meeting of the Service Sectors on GATS, Mumbai; Peoples General Council, Geneva
- Meeting on the Services Sector and WTO GATS Negotiations, Mumbai
- Meeting on Agriculture, Pune
- Meeting on Campaign to Defend the Services Sector, Mumbai

November:

- Meeting of the Indian Peoples Campaign against WTO, Delhi
- Asian Movements Strategy Meeting against WTO HK Ministerial Meeting, Busan International Peoples Forum, Busan, Korea
- Maharashtra Convention against WTO-GATS - Defend the Services Sector, Mumbai
- UNCTAD Stakeholder meeting on Agriculture and WTO, Delhi

December :

- Protest outside the WTO during the WTO General Council, Geneva
- Joint Press Conference of Focus, Via Campesina, Asian Migrant Center (AMC) and Kilusang Mangingisda (KM) on the draft Ministerial text, Hong Kong
- Send-off press conference co-organized together with SNR, Manila
- Convention on the Indian Peoples Campaign against the WTO, Delhi
- Indonesian Migrants Resistance to WTO, Wage and Underpayment Campaign, HK
- Agriculture Convention on WTO and Agriculture, Pune
- Migrants against WTO rally and Opening march of Peoples Action Week spearheaded by HKPA, Hong Kong
- "Militarism and Neo-liberalism: a two-headed monster?", Hong Kong - Focus one of co-organizers
- "The G20's HK Challenge: stand for farmers or for agribusiness" Hong Kong – Focus co-organized with Via Campesina, FSPI and Hemispheric Social Alliance
- Anti WTO Demonstration, Mumbai

- Fluvial Parade of KM (Fisherfolk Movement) around Victoria Harbor, Hong Kong – Focus participated and assisted with media work
- Public debate between WTO Deputy Director General Alejandro Jara and Focus Executive Director Walden Bello, moderated by Financial Times editor Victor Mallet
- Joint Press Conference co-organized with OWINFS, Hong Kong
- Opening rally and march spearheaded by HKPA; Day of protest against GATS and privatization, rally, march and protests at consulates, Hong Kong – spearheaded by Jubilee South, Focus one of co-organizers
- Another Future: Alternatives to the WTO and Bretton Woods Institutions, Hong Kong – Focus one of co-organizers and Focus staff contributed as resource persons
- "WTO and FTA's: Complementary Agents of Neo-liberalism", Hong Kong – Focus one of co-organizers
- "China and Globalisation", Hong Kong – Focus one of co-organizers
- The "Real Hong Kong" Tour – a media tour organized by Focus together with AMC, HKCTU and OWINFS
- Farmers march to the HK Convention Center
- Rock Against the Round Concert, Hong Kong – Focus co-organized together with migrant groups and international organizations a mobilization and solidarity concert for migrant workers in Hong Kong against the WTO Round. It was also to celebrate International Migrants Day
- Press conference on post-HK assessment – co-organized with SNR, Manila
- Press Conference on the Implications of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, Mumbai

Publications and Videos

Geneva updates during July and October General Council meetings

November 15, 2005: Letter from 142 civil society organizations to Financial Times, 'Global Trade: look at the facts rather than heed corporate lobbying'

November-December 2005: Focus On the Road to Hong Kong No. 1-10 (See details in the Communications report.)

"Derailers Guide to the WTO", December 2005

"WTO: Why is it REALLY bad for you", December 2005

PEACE BUILDING AND PEOPLES' SECURITY

Major Accomplishments for the Past Three Years

After having launched a “global war against terror” and invading Afghanistan in 2001, the United States took the world further down the path of war, militarization, and insecurity by invading Iraq in March 2003. Focus’ major achievement for the past three years has been to play a key role within the global movement that has emerged to challenge the United States’ and its allies’ actions in order to steer the world towards a more peaceful future.

In May 2003, just two months after the invasion, Focus, along with other groups quickly convened an international conference of anti-war campaigners from around the world, many of them directly involved in the massive and historic demonstrations against the war that swept the world in February 2003. That meeting produced the Jakarta Peace Consensus, a landmark document which articulated key demands and positions on the US’ occupation of Iraq. More importantly, the Consensus charted a common agenda of projects and actions that became a road map for global anti-war campaigning for the following years.

Almost all of the Consensus’ plans have either been successfully implemented or have taken off. Among the most noteworthy is the World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) which culminated in Istanbul, Turkey in June 2005. The Tribunal turned out to be a truly global endeavor. With sessions held in over 15 cities, the Tribunal sought to achieve what existing international institutions could not: uphold international law and justice by holding the US and its allies accountable for their war crimes. (The WTI website is <http://www.worldtribunal.org/main/>)

Apart from the WTI, another project which has shown immense potential is the effort to form an international network of anti-military bases activists. For the first time, anti-bases campaigners from around the world

have come together in a sustained and consistent effort to launch a major international campaign for the abolition of foreign military bases globally. An international conference scheduled for March 2007 in Ecuador is envisioned to further expand and strengthen the movement.

Following the Jakarta meeting, Focus continued to play an active role in building up international coordination for the global anti-war movement. Focus helped organize or participated in various anti-war gatherings and initiatives, such as the Anti-War Assembly at the World Social Forums in Mumbai, Porto Alegre, and Caracas, regional Social Forums, the Cairo Conferences; the London International Peace Conference, preparations for the World Peace Forum planned for 2006, and many more.

Another important event in which Focus played a key role was the International Conference of Anti-War and Anti-Globalisation Movements held in Beirut, Lebanon in September 2004. The conference proved to be a milestone in building better links between the peace and global justice movements – an objective which Focus



Anti-war demonstration in Manila, Philippines



Buddhists and Muslims joined to protest the war on Iraq. 15th February 2003, Bangkok, Thailand

has successfully pursued through various projects. It was also a decisive step in initiating links with movements working for peace, democracy, and justice in the Middle East. With the Middle East seen as the target of US intervention for years to come, the Beirut Conference is just the beginning of deeper relations with the movements in the region.

While Focus played an active role in international anti-war coordination, Focus contributed to building and strengthening anti-war movements at the local level. In the Philippines, Focus was instrumental in initiating the formation of the Iraq Solidarity Campaign, a broad coalition of groups which has used the Philippines' participation in the US-led coalition to question the government's long-standing and deeply rooted military alliance with the United States. For the past two years, the ISC has been organizing mobilizations against the occupation and against Philippine foreign policy. At the same time, it has organised discussions, public forums, film-showings, exhibits, and other educational events. Through the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS), Focus has also begun helping articulate and push for alternatives to the current Philippines' foreign policy.

In India, Focus took a leading role in initiating a broad national anti-war formation. Along with other groups, Focus successfully organized a major anti-war conference in Hyderabad in December 2004, followed by one in Mumbai in February 2006. In India, Focus has been mobilizing against the Indian government's abandonment of its non-aligned posture in favor of a deepening alliance with the United States. Perhaps an indicator of how successfully the anti-war movement in India has helped shape public opinion were the massive protests that greeted President George Bush's visit to the country in March 2006.

In terms of research and analysis, the articles and publications, talks and presentations, produced and given by Focus staff on the issue of peace and security were critical interventions in discussions and debates at the global and local levels. For example, Focus' analy-

sis of the global conjuncture has helped movements understand the direction of US foreign policy. With its articles on the reconstruction of Iraq, Focus alerted many to the wholesale imposition of neo-liberal economic policies on the country. At the regional level, Focus continued to monitor the US-led "global war against terror" in Southeast Asia and kept an eye on the continuing deployment of US troops to the Philippines and the escalation of violence in Southeast Asia. Apart from this, Focus produced articles on the spread of "anti-terror" legislation in the region, the adoption locally of the global surveillance system, the occupation of Palestine, etc.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

A review of the work plan for the years 2003-2005 shows how the March 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States catalyzed Focus' security programme. Recognizing the implications of the invasion on global peace and security, Focus has accordingly mobilized its attention and resources to responding to developments in Iraq.

On the one hand, this has brought increased clarity and sharpness to Focus' peace and security programme. By grounding the organisation more deeply in a dynamic global movement, the post-invasion developments have also ensured that Focus' work is more responsive to the needs and priorities of this movement, as evidenced by its involvement in the Jakarta Peace Consensus projects.

On the other hand, turning attention and resources to Iraq has also meant that – given its limitations in staff and finances – Focus has not been able follow closely and act on other areas and issues of concern. Comparing the pre-invasion and post-invasion workplans, for example, it is clear that priorities have shifted. For example, while Focus identified Afghanistan and Korea as key areas prior to the invasion, Focus has not been able to achieve much in terms of research or campaigning on these places for the past three years.

Even on those issues still deemed important despite the priority given to Iraq and the Middle East, Focus has not been able to work on them with the same vigor and depth. For example, Focus' work on Southeast Asia has not been as systematic and as in-depth as it should ideally have been. Focus' aim of building a regional peace formation has also taken a backseat to its work helping sustain international coordination of the global anti-war movement.

Moreover, Focus' security work being more campaign-driven has meant that its research output has also been campaign-oriented. "Big-picture" or more theoretical research has given way to more short-term outputs necessary for campaigns. For example, initial plans to elaborate on the so-called "over-extension" paradigm (notwithstanding the publication of Walden Bello's book "Dilemmas of Domination"), to explore the links between global capitalist and US military inter-

ests, to understand “fundamentalisms” in the region, and so on have been relegated as secondary priorities. This is both good and bad. On the one hand, this may mean that Focus has not been able to provide critical and valuable input on larger questions and issues beyond those raised in short-term campaigns. On the other hand, this proves that Focus provides concrete and relevant contributions to on-going campaigns and debates.

On balance, an assessment of achievements vis-a-vis its shortfalls for the past three years shows that Focus’ security programme has become more focused in its interventions for the past three years. That Focus has made the question of Iraq a priority demonstrates its capacity to respond to fast-changing global developments; as always, the challenge is to ensure that decisions with regard to setting short-term priorities and casting aside plans correspond to the longer-term strategy for achieving global peace and justice.

Key Activities in 2005

January: Anti-War Assembly and Anti-Bases Workshops at the World Social Forum in Brazil

February: 22-27: anti-war speaking tour of Italy (Rome, Pisa, and Florence) coinciding with George Bush’s visit to Europe

March: Forum on the Anti-Terror Bill, Manila; Speaking tour of Iraqi oil worker in Manila and Seoul; Forum on the Anniversary of the Invasion of Iraq, Manila; Global Day of Action against War; 3rd Cairo Conference, Egypt; Peace in Palestine Conference, Malaysia

April: Campaign against National ID System and the Anti-Terror Bill; Forum on International Relations with Phyllis Bennis, Manila; System and the Anti-Terror Bill; Anti-bases speaking tour of Italy (Pisa, Milan, Como, and Sardinia)

May: Talks before Greek peace movements, Athens, Greece

June: World Tribunal on Iraq, Turkey

July: People’s March against Poverty in Edinburgh, Scotland; Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict Conference in New York at the United Nations General Assembly

September: Panel on “Secretary General Kofi Annan’s Vision of Freedom from Fear” sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the New World Hotel in Makati on Sept. 6, 2005; Conference on the Violence in Southern Thailand, Bangkok

October: Development Roundtable Series on Foreign Policy meeting, Manila; Talks at Dalhousie University, St. Mary’s University, and St. Francis Xavier University in Halifax, Canada, and at York University in Toronto

November: International Conference against Foreign Military Bases, Cuba

December: Week of Solidarity with Palestine, Manila; London International Peace Conference, United Kingdom; Anti-war workshops at the World Trade Organi-

sation mobilizations, Hong Kong

Publications

Dilemmas of Domination (New York: Henry Holt and Co), US edition appeared in March 2005. “Desperate Martians now Wooing Venusians,” <http://commondreams.org>

“Wolfowitz in the Philippines: A Historical Footnote,” Focus on Trade, No. 109 (April 2005)

“The Iraqi Resistance is a Popular Resistance,” Focus on Trade #108, 7 April 2005

“Under the Watchful Eye: The Philippines’ proposed National ID system, the Anti-Terror Bill, and the Global Project to Keep an Eye on Everyone,” A Special Report for Focus on the Global South, 20 April 200

“Inside the MATRIX: The Philippines’ National ID System,” Focus on Trade #109, 25 April 2005; Asia Rights (Australia National University) Issue 4 2005 <http://rspas.anu.edu.au/asiarightsjournal/>

“National ID System: A Clear and Present Multi-Purpose Danger,” Focus on the Philippines #11, 3 May 2005.”

“US Military Assistance: Big Brothers’ Bounty,” Focus on the Philippines, Focus on the Philippines #15, 11 May 2005

“Shock and Awe Therapy: How the US is attempting to control Iraq’s oil and pry open its economy,” Focus on Trade #110 June 2005 (presentation at the World Tribunal on Iraq, Istanbul, Turkey, June 24-27, 2005)

“The Role of the Coalition in the Violation of International Law and Universal Human Rights,” Testimony delivered at the World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI),” June 24, 2005

“The World Tribunal on Iraq,” Frontline, Vol. 22, No. 15 (July 16-29, 2005)

“What are Filipino soldiers doing in Haiti?” The Manila Standard Today, July 22, 2005.

“Retribution in Kind,” Frontline, Vol 22, No 16 (July 30-Aug 12, 2005)

“Iraq’s Neoliberal Constitution” Asia Times/ Foreign Policy in Focus/ Red Pepper “On General Secretary Kofi Annan’s “In Larger Freedom,” Speech at panel sponsored by UNDP, New World Hotel, Makati, Sept. 6, 2005



ALTERNATIVES

The overarching objectives of Focus' work in the Alternatives programme from 2003-2005 were to understand, elaborate and articulate progressive alternatives to the current economic, financial and political models and regimes, as advocated and practiced by communities, social movements, peoples' organizations and other civil society organizations engaged in these issues. Activities in the Alternatives programme were directed towards supporting efforts by communities, social movements and peoples' organisations to challenge the dominant global economic and political orders, and to show through actual practice that alternatives to these orders exist and can form the foundation of new orders and new ways of approaching society, economics and politics. While maintaining this orientation, Focus also sought to integrate theory and practice, and produce research and documentation on alternatives in close collaboration with other Focus programmes, as well as with key allies and partners in civil society.

The Alternatives programme was a central component of Focus' work over the past three years, and contributed to the "reconstruction" dimension of Focus' overall approach of "deconstruction" (dismantling the global hegemonic economic, political and governance regimes currently in place) and "reconstruction" (creating political, economic and social spaces for new thinking and practice about development, security, politics, society and the economy). Much of Focus' work on Alternatives was in three broad areas: land and agrarian reform, the World Social Forum processes and food sovereignty. Each of these areas of work was designed to respond to specific objectives and outcomes, which are discussed below. Activities in these areas were also linked with activities in Focus' Trade, Finance and Development, and Peace Building and Peoples' Security programmes.

For the most part, Focus achieved its objectives of linking and advancing thinking, practice and support for alternatives through a variety of activities. At the

same time, however, Focus was not able to elaborate a unified coherent paradigm for alternatives based on actual practice. One reason for this is that Focus was not able to comprehensively map the range of alternatives being advocated and practiced by diverse actors. Alternatives advocated by social movements and local/national organizations are usually in response to specific contexts and conditions and as these change, so also do proposals for alternatives. Further, it is often difficult to think about macro level alternatives when immediate struggles and issues demand urgent attention and action. Some important lessons that Focus learned in its work on alternatives are:

- Alternatives are 'dynamic' spaces. That is to say that, while we may have an all-encompassing vision for an alternative paradigm of development, economy, society and peoples' security, the nuts and bolts of operationalising this vision are likely to change over time, and differ in varying circumstances and conditions. Work on alternatives, thus, requires dedicated and regular monitoring, documentation, research and analysis, especially with the movements and organizations that are engaged in these issues.
- Building alternatives and even creating spaces for 'alternatives-type thinking' are slow processes. The current development model, its support structures and its governance regimes have become dominant and entrenched over several decades. Imagining different worlds, and working out how to translate these worlds into reality in antagonistic economic, social and political climates takes time. We need to set more practical and realistic targets on our work in these areas.
- We need to learn much better than we have been able to do in the past from the ideas and practices of social movements, community based struggles, researchers and thinkers. One way of doing this is to direct greater efforts towards documentation and research on alternatives in all our programme areas, especially those actually being practiced by

communities, organizations and movements.

The main outcomes and challenges in specific areas of work are described below.

Land and Agrarian Reform

Focus' work on land and agrarian reform has been primarily through the Land Research Action Network (LRAN). Focus has also collaborated with movements and organisations that are not LRAN members on activities related to land, natural resource issues and agrarian reform struggles.

LRAN is an international network of 'activist-researchers' committed to doing research on land and agrarian reform issues to serve the needs of social movements and local communities engaged in struggles for access to land and security of land tenure. Focus is a founding member of LRAN and coordinates LRAN activities in Asia. The main objectives of LRAN have been to:

- Monitor and analyse the land and land-related policies of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other multilateral agencies, make these analyses available to social movements, local communities and other organizations engaged in land struggles.
- Through writings, advocacy and collaborative public meetings and actions with social movements and affected communities, draw attention to the urgency of progressive, redistributive land and agrarian reform as a long term solution to problems of poverty, hunger, poor health and unemployment in rural areas.
- Support communities, social movements and related organizations to be able to elaborate their approaches and strategies for progressive land and agrarian reform, and peoples' food sovereignty.
- Highlight the linkages between land rights and human rights, and take solidarity and other actions as required to support community and movement leaders who are subjected to repression, intimidation and violence as a result of their struggles.

LRAN has moved into a more dynamic phase over the past three years. In 2004, LRAN was invited by La Via Campesina and FIAN International to join the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform (GCAR). LRAN's roles in the GCAR are to develop collaborative action research activities on land and agrarian reform issues with Via Campesina members, assist in strengthening their knowledge base about the institutions and initiatives that negatively affect their access to land and security of tenure, and assist in building an Asia-wide campaign for agrarian reform. Below are some of the major activities of LRAN from 2003-2005.

The Asia Land Meeting: The Asia Land Meeting (ALM) was held in Chiangmai, Thailand, from December 13-16, 2003, and was jointly organized by the Thailand

Land Reform Network and LRAN. It was upheld by participants as one of its kind in that it brought together activists, researchers and representatives from land and agrarian reform movements from Asia, South Africa, Brazil and Columbia. The ALM focused on land struggles and agrarian reform issues primarily in Asia, but also in South Africa and Latin America. Through a combination of workshops and field visits, participants discussed the major threats to access to land and security of tenure among small-scale farming and indigenous communities, and the main factors inhibiting progressive land and agrarian reform. Participants shared experiences of successful strategies to achieve progressive agrarian reforms, and planned collaborations among their respective movements and campaigns. No statement was issued from the meeting, although presentations made at the meeting were collated and distributed to participants at the end of the meeting. The proceedings of the meeting were collated in a report titled "The Struggle for Land," which is still being used by many movements in Asia as a useful document that presents the main challenges faced by communities in their struggle to secure land access and tenure. Plans are now afoot to organize a second ALM in the later part of 2006.

The World Forum on Agrarian Reform: In 2004, LRAN was invited to join the International Steering Committee organising the World Forum on Agrarian Reform that was held in Valencia, Spain, 4-8 December, 2004. Focus was nominated by LRAN as the Steering Committee member from Asia. LRAN and Focus were active in shaping the Forum programme, as well as in supporting the participation of movements and organisations from the Asia region in the Forum. The WFAR was attended by more than 200 representatives from farmers', agricultural workers' and indigenous peoples' movements, dalit organisations, women's organisations, NGOs, independent activists, academics and researchers. Focus staff spoke in plenary sessions at the Forum and, along with other LRAN members, conducted workshops on the World Bank's Market Assisted Land Reform, peoples' rights to land, water, and human rights violations perpetrated against peasants, women and children by State and non-state actors. Focus also played a critical role in drafting the final sign-on statement that emerged from the WFAR.

The World Social Forum: In the World Social Forums (WSF) in 2004 and 2005, LRAN organized several workshops on land and agrarian reform, and also participated in events organized by other organizations and networks on land and natural resource struggles. In the 2005 WSF, LRAN joined La Via Campesina, the MST (the Brazilian landless workers' movement) and FIAN International in organizing three full days of workshops and events on land and agrarian reform. These events were attended by representatives from farmers', workers' and indigenous peoples' organizations from all over the world, as well as by people engaged in related issues and struggles. Mary Ann Manahan from Focus was a key organizer of many events on behalf of LRAN. Focus staff and LRAN members made presentations on

LRAN's research and on the factors/institutions inhibiting progressive agrarian reform, in a number of workshops. LRAN also joined hands with Via Campesina and FIAN in launching a new phase of GCAR in Porto Alegre.

Regional and Country Level Activities: Through LRAN, Focus participated in, and also organized numerous seminars, workshops and meetings in Thailand, Philippines, India and Indonesia on land and natural resource issues. Focus provided movements and organizations with analyses of the trade and privatization policies of International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Focus also helped to strengthen political linkages among agrarian reform movements and groups in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, and assisted them to link with various regional and global movements engaged in similar struggles. Focus supported a regional meeting on land reform and natural resource rights organized LRAN members from Thailand and Indonesia in South Korea in June 2004, during the peoples' counter summit to the World Economic Forum.

In September 2005, Focus staff participated in events organized by the Federation of Indonesian Peasants (FSPI) on the island of Lombok in Indonesia. One of these events—a meeting of local communities evicted by the provincial government for the construction of an airport—was disrupted by police violence against the displaced communities, accompanied by intimidation of community members by privately hired militia. AT FSPI's request, Focus and other LRAN members present in Lombok wrote investigative news reports about the incident to bring national and international public attention to the issue. On their part, FSPI used this and other documentation to push Indonesian National Assembly members in Jakarta to take action against the perpetrators of the violence.

In the Philippines, Focus worked with national and local farmers groups campaigning against the Farmland as Collateral Bill in 2003-2004, a home-grown version of the World Bank's credit enhancement and extension programme to farmers. Focus also started educational activities with farmers and women's groups in the Luzon region on land issues. Land and natural resources were central issues in the roundtable Focus organized in Mindanao on hunger and poverty, and one of the conclusions from the roundtable was that lack of a comprehensive agrarian and agricultural policy in the region and country has exacerbated the problems of hunger and poverty. The roundtable was also an initial step to strengthen the links between trade and agrarian reform.

In Thailand, the LRAN project focused on strengthening Thailand's Land Reform Network at national and sub-national levels, and assisted it to make linkages with movements in other countries and regions. The Network is comprised of various farmers' groups, slum dwellers' networks, local NGOs and women's groups. In 2004, the Network concentrated on a national campaign for a genuine Land Reform Bill. A draft Bill has

already been drawn up by a legal support team based on analyses of the problems and demands of the communities represented by the various networks. The People's Land Reform Bill helped to link movements and organizations in different areas in Thailand to work together on a common platform. In 2005, Focus supported a volunteer researcher to work with the Network to document land occupations in Northern Thailand.

Also in 2005, along with LRAN members in Indonesia and Thailand, Focus started to monitor the impact of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts following the 2004 tsunami on the access of affected communities to land. In September 2005, Focus staff visited several communities affected by the tsunami in Aceh and also interviewed local FSPI members and agencies working in post disaster relief. A paper will be prepared about this issue in 2006.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Focus was able to assist LRAN to meet most of its objectives. However, since the work that needs to be done on agrarian reform is vast and LRAN Asia's members are few, the work on land and agrarian reform did not achieve the depth that Focus desired. Some important studies—for example, the impacts of plantations in Indonesia and the Philippines on peasants' access to land, and the impacts of infrastructure projects in India on peasants' access to land—were left undone simply because of a shortage of researchers to do the work. Further, too little work was done in India, where there are active land struggles that have requested information and advocacy support. Focus and LRAN will need to evaluate and strengthen their respective capacities in order to fulfill the commitments they have already made, and to be able to meet future commitments.

The World Social Forum

Focus's involvement in the World Social Forum (WSF) intensified over the past three years in terms of actual participation in the Forums, as well as in the international commissions set up by the Forum to expand and refine WSF processes.

In January 2003, a number of Indian civil society organisations, unions and peoples' movements came together to organise an Asia Social Forum (ASF) in Hyderabad, India. The ASF was, in a sense, a "dry run" to provide Indian organisations first hand experience of the kinds of challenges they might meet in organizing the WSF in India in 2004. Organised according to the principles and charter of the WSF, the ASF sought to bring together movements, organisations, networks and activists from across Asia who were engaged in struggles and actions against neo-liberal globalisation, war, patriarchy, caste-based discrimination and communalism. Approximately 25,000 people participated in the ASF, the majority of them from India. The ASF was a landmark event in India as it brought together



Women delegates at the World Social Forum, Mumbai 2004

peoples' movements, mass organisations and other civil society organisations for the first time in several years to share strategies for building alternatives to corporate led globalisation, neoliberalism, militarisation and religious sectarianism.

Focus was deeply involved in the process of organising the ASF and also in mobilising national and regional participation to the ASF. Focus India staff were members of the ASF Secretariat and in the central organising committee. Focus mobilised funds for a delegation of 20 people from six Southeast Asia countries to attend the ASF and for five speakers/resource persons from Argentina, Bolivia, South Africa and Cuba to come to the ASF and share their ideas and experience with their Asian counterparts. In collaboration with national and regional movements and networks, Focus organised a number of events at the ASF. Notable among these were the conferences on Alternatives and Debt, both of which was extremely well attended and provided important platforms for discussion about peoples' alternatives to neo-liberal and corporate led globalisation, and the debt financed developed model that is destroying livelihoods of already vulnerable populations and creating new poverty and vulnerabilities.

In January 2004, the WSF was held for the first time outside Porto Alegre, in the city of Mumbai, India. Focus played active and important roles in organising this Forum. Focus staff based in India served on the Programme and Mobilising Committees, and also on the overall Organising Committee. In addition, Focus organised several large events in the Mumbai WSF on issues such as trade, peace and security, land and natural resource rights, food sovereignty and post war reconstruction. Focus staff also participated in events organised by other groups, and deepened their ties with social movements and local organisations in India and the Asia region.

By most accounts, the WSF 2004 was a tremendous success. Almost 100,000 people participated in the WSF. Although majority of them were from India, there

were sizeable delegations from other regions also. The main themes of the WSF 04 were: Militarism, War and Peace; Media, Information, Knowledge and Culture; Democracy, Ecological and Economic Security; and Exclusions, Discrimination, Dignity, Rights and Equality. Over 30 large events and hundreds of smaller events were organised over a four day period, accompanied by a variety of cultural events such as theatrical and musical performances and film festivals. These events catalysed the coming together of a number of diverse movements and actors on issues such as war and militarization, trade liberalisation and the WTO, patriarchy and violence against women, privatisation, and land and agrarian reform. Many of the alliances formed and/or strengthened in the WSF continue to be active in implementing the joint programme of actions they developed during the WSF.

Focus continues to play an active role in the WSF International Committee, and Focus staff have participated in these meetings, as well as in other regional fora to advocate for the WSF. Over the past three years, Focus staff have been invited as speakers in the European Social Forum and also to speak on the WSF at other events. In 2005, Focus was one of the organizers of two regional meetings to advance the WSF in Asia: the first in Colombo in June, and the second in Hong Kong in December. Focus is also a leading supporter of the Asia Social Movements (ASM) space that was established in 2002 in preparation for the Asia Social Forum. Like the WSF, the ASM is a large and open space, without fixed membership, and serves as a space for social movements and civil society organizations in Asia to meet, discuss issues and build solidarity. Over the past three years, Focus has co-organised ASM meetings in all the Forums and also in other events, such as the peoples' counter summit to the World Economic Forum in South Korea in June, 2004.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Social Forum processes have evolved tremendously since the first WSF and have broadened to include the

organisation of regional, national, local and thematic social forums by organizations, networks and movements committed to building spaces for alternatives. These, in turn, have catalysed the mobilization of local, national and regional groups and movements to form alliances to strengthen the global movement against corporate-led globalisation, neo-liberalism, militarism and war, racism, sexism and religious, ethnic and cultural intolerance. Participating in and strengthening these processes and spaces have been extremely important to Focus' twin goals of "deconstruction and "reconstruction" because of their proven potential for building solidarity among diverse groups/movements towards common visions and enhancing learning about principles, strategies and actions in the search for alternatives to the current world order.

For Focus, the WSF has provided much needed space to develop and take forward a number of its core activities such as the anti-war assembly, mobilising against the WTO, trade liberalisation, privatisation, debt, and the IFIs, monitoring post-war/conflict reconstruction, peoples' food sovereignty, land and agrarian reform, and expanding and strengthening spaces for social movements. By being centrally involved in organising and mobilizing for the ASF in Hyderabad and the WSFs, Focus has been able to build new alliances and deepen existing ones, regionally and internationally. Focus has gained a deeper understanding of struggles and movements against corporate led globalisation, militarization and war in Asia and other regions, and has learned how to better contribute towards building a strong movement for building and supporting alternatives. Focus' involvement in the Social Forum processes has also strengthened its linkages and collaborative relationships with numerous organisations and networks working on land and agrarian reform, water, food sovereignty, farmers' and workers' rights, post-war reconstruction, peace and peoples' security, IFIs, trade, finance and development. The alliances developed and deepened through the WSF will continue to strengthen the effectiveness of Focus' work in the future.

Peoples' Food Sovereignty

Started in 2003, Focus' work on peoples' food sovereignty has been oriented towards exploring how the concept can be operationalised at multiple levels through policy and practice, and how it can form the foundation of building a world without the WTO. While some of Focus' work in this area has been independent, much has been through the agri-trade and food sovereignty networks.

Initiated by La Via Campesina, peoples' food sovereignty starts with the concept of economic and social human rights which include the right to food for all peoples, and extends these to the right to land and the right to produce for rural peoples. Food sovereignty

argues that feeding a nations' people is an issue of national security and sovereignty, and the population of any country must not depend on the vagaries and high costs of the global economy for meeting their food needs. The most secure and sustainable way of meeting a society's or country's needs is through food production, distribution and consumption at the most local level possible. Food sovereignty also has positive implications for rural employment, environmental protection and crisis management since it advocates revitalizing rural economies, ecologically sustainable agriculture and local/traditional knowledge of agriculture, climatic changes and the environment.

Peoples' food sovereignty has become a rallying call for an increasing number of social movements and civil society organizations as the most viable and desirable alternative to the current, export driven model of agricultural production and development. However, what the concept encompasses in terms of concrete policies, practices and institutions is still debated and has at times resulted in sharp differences among peasant, middle-income farmers and agriculture workers groups. Focus' view is that food sovereignty is too important a concept to be allowed to dissipate because of diverging perspectives among constituencies that are bound to think differently. Therefore, Focus decided that from 2003-2005, Focus should seek to understand and clarify the proposals for food sovereignty being promoted and practiced by various groups already engaged in these issues.

Focus' approach here has been to bring together farmers', workers' and consumers organizations, and other movements engaged in these issues to discuss the kind of food policies that they want to see in place locally, nationally and internationally. An exploratory round table was organized at the WSF in Mumbai in January 2004, titled: "Building Food Sovereignty in a World Without the WTO; Workers, Farmers, Urban Poor: Do we have any common interests?" Speakers at the round table included representatives from the Italian Federation of Food Workers, the Brazilian Movimento Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST), the Hawkers' Union in Calcutta (India), the Workers Solidarity of Northern Sumatra in Indonesia, the Fair Trade Alliance in the Philippines, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied worker's Association (IUF) and Focus staff. The roundtable drew a lot of interest and was attended by representatives from farmers' movements, land struggles, trade unions, workers' organisations, water campaigns, and civil society organisations involved in agriculture, labour and natural resource rights. The round table helped Focus to identify the main issues for future work and brought out the importance of building alliances at national levels in order to create space for alternatives.

In 2004, Focus organized similar round tables/meetings at the national level in 2004 in Thailand, the Philippines and India in order to gain and build better understanding of what food sovereignty means in terms of alternative food and agriculture systems to local/national

farmers' and workers' movements. In the Philippines, the round table was integrated into a series of round table meetings on development, land and agrarian reform, and peoples' security. (See Philippines country programme report.) In Thailand, it was integrated with Focus' work with the Sustainable Agriculture Network. In India, the round table focused on the increasing incidences of suicides by farmers in economic distress and the types of policies and societal supports needed to alleviate these economic crises and to strengthen the rights of farmers to produce. Parallel to the round table process, Focus also started mapping and documentation of alternative food and agriculture models being promoted in India, Thailand and the Philippines.

At the international level, Focus continued its active participation in the agri-trade network, a network of civil society organisations and movements committed to developing and promoting peoples' food sovereignty and disempowering the WTO particularly in the food and agriculture sectors. In an agri-trade network strategy meeting in November 2004, participants decided to form a sub-group or sub-network of organisations that support the call for the WTO to get out of food and agriculture. This sub-group-- called the Food Sovereignty Network (FSN) -- is now the more proactive and strategic arm of the agri-trade network, while the agri-trade network serves more as an information sharing space. From 2003-2005, the agri-trade network and, subsequently, the FSN prepared several position statements and press releases on WTO negotiations, UNCTAD and world commodity prices. Focus played a central role in preparing many of these statements, which can be viewed at the agri-trade website: www.peoplesfoodsovereignty.org/statements.

In November 2004, Focus was involved in planning and organising the conference, Sustaining a Future for Agriculture, in Geneva. The conference was attended by almost 200 participants from movements and civil society organisations across the world and focused on strategies to build a just and sustainable food system, while at the same time challenging the WTO. Led by the US based Institute for Trade and Agriculture Policy (IATP), the conference was put together by a steering committee comprised of La Via Campesina, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam International, the IUF, SEATINI, CI-DSE, Consumers International and Focus. Focus staff organised and facilitated workshop sessions on fair trade and market access, The Market Myth and TNCs, the Asia Pacific caucus, and other strategy and alliance-building sessions. The conference proceedings can be viewed at the website: www.tradeobservatory.org/sustainingag.cfm.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Although Focus was able to advance the concept of peoples' food sovereignty at multiple levels, Focus did not achieve its intended outcomes of being able to articulate the policies, institutions and societal supports required to operationalise food sovereignty. Also, the

mapping and documentation initiated in 2004 was not completed, and there was little follow-up on some of the activities that emerged from the round tables. One reason for this is that our work on food sovereignty is in collaboration with movements and networks, and the pace of work is thus dependant on the abilities of a diverse group of actors. Another reason is that Focus itself was not able to devote the staff time required to fulfill its commitments. A particularly visible shortfall here is the lack of follow up on the activities designed to explore the concept of a "poor people's economy" through systematic research and documentation of existing micro-level initiatives in Asia. This is an important research area into which Focus must direct future efforts.

Focus' work in the FSN and agri-trade did meet its objectives, although here too, activities proceed extremely slowly since FSN members are generally busy with other organizational commitments. A significant challenge for Focus and FSN remains how to bring together the key principles and elements of progressive alternatives practiced and promoted by diverse groups and constituencies (such as farmers, workers, fishers, women, indigenous peoples, economists, etc.) into a cohesive paradigm of peoples' food sovereignty. This challenge needs to be addressed in through more practical, action oriented research, and study and dialogues with various constituencies.

Key Activities in 2005

January: The WSF in Porto Alegre.

February: Participation in meeting on a peoples' approach to post tsunami rehabilitation in Medan, North Sumatra, organized by the Federation of Indonesian Peasants (FSPI) and La Via Campesina.

March: Rallies and meetings by Indian farmers' movements and La Via Campesina against the WTO.

April: International meeting of FSN in the Basque country, Spain; public meetings by Indian members of La Via Campesina to commemorate International Farmers' Day on April 17.

June: WSF Asia meeting in Colombo.

August: Regional assembly and strategy meeting of La Via Campesina South Asia.

September: National meeting on land and agrarian reform in Indonesia; visit to Aceh to gather information on land issues in the post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction phase.

December: WSF Asia meeting in Hong Kong.



TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

The Trends and Analysis programme was a new addition to the 2003-2005 work-plan. In the first year, 2003, we started with a very ambitious research and monitoring agenda which aimed to both complement and set directions for existing campaigns and new areas of work. This included using a political economy framework for country analyses, intensive research on China, labour, migration, democratisation, global political economy, developing the paradigm of over-extension and the imperial crisis of legitimacy, as well as finalising ongoing research on political Islam, trade, finance and the multilateral system. In 2003 alone 10 priority areas were identified.

It became clear well before the year was out that this "wish list" of research activities was beyond the resources of Focus and we found that our work automatically gravitated towards the areas where we had staff capacity linked to a strong campaigning agenda. Therefore the research and writing on trade, finance, multilateral development banks, militarism and imperial over-extension continued apace, while some new areas -- such as labour, migration and China -- languished.

In reviewing the T&A programme at the end of 2003, our assessment was that the "work plan was too ambitious and broad... we noted that it was difficult to balance the deadline driven rhythm of campaign work with the longer horizons of research." However we also reaffirmed that one of Focus' key functions is to provide new policy analysis and research, therefore it would be necessary to free up and to create new research capacities within the organisation. In addition, we decided in 2004 to narrow the programme to a more realistic set of projects more closely linked to the campaign areas.

In 2004, we hired two part time staff to join the T&A team: one to work on regional economic integration in agriculture and the auto sector, and the other to work on issues such as industrial agriculture, avian flu, and contract farming. This second position was also linked to the alternatives work on food sovereignty and alter-

native agriculture. Several reports were produced during the year on these issues and in particular the work on market access and the political economy of avian flu in Thailand were important pieces of research and analysis that helped advance campaigns. The 2004 work plan also included research on China, the rise of right wing politics in Asia, Vietnam's accession to the WTO, South-South trade and the economy of Burma. Again, lack of staff and the demands of campaigns meant that not all these areas were picked up immediately, however a great deal of research was done under the auspices of the campaigns; especially notable was the work on the "economic reconstruction" of Iraq which made a very important contribution to the debates on militarism and globalisation.

In 2004, the two research staff finished their contracts and our research capacity was again reduced.

In 2005 we attempted to set out a realistic agenda for the T&A programme, and identified just five areas of work: China, agribusiness in Asia, contract farming, South-South trade and Burma. In mid-2005, a senior researcher joined Focus to take the lead on our China work and since then the programme has developed in leaps and bounds: the lesson from this is the importance of having staff dedicated to one area of work, but with the capacity to link the research with on-going campaigns and priorities. The research on contract farming was completed and we collaborated with colleagues in Brazil to produce an extensive report on the ALBA, and Bolivarian alternative model of South-South cooperation. Although the Burma work did not get off the ground in 2005, in early 2006 we were approached by a student interested in doing "volunteer" research on economic conditions in Burma now and in the future. This work is progressing well.

The external review of Focus did not mention the T&A programme specifically, however the quality of Focus research and analysis was rated very highly:

"Focus is widely respected by those it interacts with for its timely and relevant policy research and analysis. The analysis and publications produced by the organisation are seen as helpful and accessible to those already engaged with the issues." (Review of Focus on the Global South, 1995 – 2005, Overview Report, page 4)

Much of this work is not strictly in the confines of the T&A programme but is produced by the campaign teams in trade, finance and peace and security, in addition to various books, articles and reports published by Focus, or written by Focus staff and published by others.

Focus response to the evaluation, as evident in our design of the 2006-2008 work plan, does not include

a "stand alone" trends and analysis programme, but rather assumes that research and campaigning and building alternatives go hand in hand. In addition, our experience of the past three years' shows that initiating new programmes (such as China and Burma) requires dedicated staff who have the time to focus on initial research to identify key issues and linking these to campaigns and activities.

Focus remains committed to producing high quality, timely and progressive research and policy analysis on key issues. This work will be integrated into our five programme areas as far as possible however it is expected that from time to time we will need additional research and policy analysis capacity in which case we will engage contract researchers and/or re-deploy capacities within our existing resources.



Photo by Anoop Sukumaran

A poster depicting private capitalists gorging on public utilities at a demonstration against the privatisation of the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT), March 2004



THAILAND COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The past three years saw various civil society groups in Thailand come alive and taking actions in scrutinizing the government and its policies like never before. With Focus shifting into a campaign mode at the same time, the Thailand programme was able to capitalize on this phenomenon. Based on our earlier work of micro-macro issues linking and capacity building carried out with the NGO-Coordinating Committee's (NGO-COD) Globalisation Working Group, the Thai Action on Globalisation was formulated and became our main partners in the anti-neoliberalism campaign.

Major Achievements 2003-2005

Rising public awareness, level of debate on, and resistance to trade liberalisation policies in the WTO and FTAs

The intensive pre Cancun (2003) national level campaign led by Focus, in conjunction with Thai Action on Globalisation Network, was the most successful in mobilizing the broadest range people's organizations and trade unions to take up the issues of trade liberalisation and place them under public scrutiny in Thailand. This has led to a formulation of an FTA Watch coalition of Thai activists to scrutinize and advocate on the government's ambitious scheme of securing bilateral free trade agreements (FTA) deals with a dozen countries at the same time. From the beginning of 2004 and throughout 2005, the issues involving trade liberalisation, particularly agriculture market access, investment and services liberalisation, and the accompanying intellectual property rights protection regime have been constantly placed in the public limelight through the effort of FTA Watch as they scrutinize the various FTA negotiations that were going on.

As a member of FTA Watch, Focus Thailand Programme has been successful in filling in the gap in FTA Watch work. Focus Thailand staff played a significant role in

researching and providing information to the public through public forums and other mass media including newspapers, radio and television programme. Focus's main contribution to FTA Watch is in the area of investment. Complemented by its expertise on the WTO and global political economy dynamics, Focus also provides a macro picture of the trade liberalisation regime for the public complementing other FTA Watch members' who are specialized in specific issues such as drugs patenting, biodiversity, public health and agriculture. In addition, Focus Thailand staff contributed some monitoring work on the Thailand-Japan and Thailand-EFTA (European Free Trade Association) FTA negotiations.

Focus Thailand and Thai Action on Globalisation, were able to diversify the issues into investment and services liberalisation and provide on-going links with the WTO issues and with groups and networks outside the country that are active on the WTO campaign. Focus also played a key role in coordinating with foreign national and regional organizations working on FTAs, organizing conferences and workshops, preparing letters, press releases and statements in English and editing FTA Watch publications in English.

Propelled by the urgency of the Government's fast track deal-making policy, FTA Watch has been stepping up its advocacy activities. In comparison with two years ago when FTA Watch started, a vast number of the Thai public have gained a better understanding of FTAs and their impacts and this has gradually changed their attitudes towards the negotiations. With public pressures growing, the Thai government was forced to slow down and negotiations have been delayed. It was definitely a victory for FTA Watch, albeit a temporary one. The latest direct action mobilization in Chiang Mai during the 7th round of Thailand-US FTA, in January 2006, attracted the largest number of participants so far.

Increasing civil society's credibility and strength for national policy advocacy

While earlier Focus was in the driving seat for education and mobilization of the Globalisation Working Group of NGOs and their affiliated people's organizations (POs), namely the Assembly of the Poor, the Alternative Agriculture Network, the Network of People living with HIV-AIDS, the Northern Peasants Federation, the last two years saw the evolvement of civic groups like FTA Watch, which has a more diverse membership, including not just NGOs, POs but also academics and officials affiliated with independent organizations established under the new 1997 constitution, such as the Human Rights Commission, the National Economic and Social Advisory Council, and the Senate.

With FTA Watch's rich resources packed with research and writing capacity, the movement has been praised as a knowledge-oriented opposition, a new phenomenon in the sparse landscape of Thailand's civil society. It has been able to make optimal use of all types of media, radio, television, newspaper and printed materials to disseminate information and analysis and to attract increasing attention and interest of diverse sectors of the public. The momentum of the campaign has been greatly boosted by the continuing unequal negotiations with major economic powers such as the US and Japan.

While Focus' earlier educational input was more general on the different impacts of global economic integration or globalisation, coupled with mobilization on the WTO's agriculture market access and services, FTA Watch picked up the specific issues of trade liberalisation through FTAs negotiations, which have more direct impact on small businesses as well as small farmers and on public services in Thailand. This can clearly be seen as the localization of the global issues and struggles, a significant development and extension of Focus' earlier effort.

Moreover, FTA Watch made a conscious effort to link trade liberalisation with the issues of privatization of public utilities of which key mobilizers had been the state enterprises workers and the Federation of Consumers. This broader coalition, which include private sector trade unions, have started to monitor other government policies that will impact on community rights over natural resources, such as the special economic (deregulated) zones bill and the assets capitalization scheme. This coalition has the potential to be the key mobilizing unit for Focus' future programme of defending and reclaiming the commons.

Stronger links with international global justice and alternatives movements

Thai civil society joined the global march against the

invasion of Iraq in February 2003 in unprecedented numbers.

The 2004 World Social Forum in Mumbai attracted the participation of a large number of self-organized Thai participants from the NGOs, academic, youth, farmers, workers, and other progressive sectors. We believe this was in no small part due to Focus' earlier effort in mobilizing Thai groups to join in the international WSF process of shaping "another world" together, particularly in the 2003 Asian Social Forum and forums in Porto Alegre. Focus Thailand staff was asked to chair a Southeast Asian caucus meeting in Mumbai where the idea of Southeast Asian Forum was proposed, while the participants were of the opinion that a national level forum may be the first step of consolidating the ideas for alternatives.

Later in 2004-2005, there were new efforts by Focus partners in Thailand to explore more systemically different concepts of alternative society and ways and means of institutionalizing social change. The Alternative Agriculture Network staged a fair with public forums to publicize their points of views of alternative food systems. Friends of the People organized a forum on peoples movements' challenges against capitalism for members of the Assembly of the Poor and their NGO allies. The NGO-COD constituted a think-tank to plan a series of roundtables on alternative society. Focus Thailand staff have been involved in the planning of all these events and provided support in terms of human and material resources from outside of the countries.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

According to the 2003-2005 work plan, Focus Thailand Programme's aim was to concentrate efforts on "translating the Focus deconstruction, deglobalisation and reconstruction strategies into relevant advocacy positions through the process of micro-macro issues linking and by joining forces with civil society groups to advocate on equitable and sustainable policy alternatives within the deglobalisation paradigm."

While the deconstruction part of the programme seemed to have produced some success as described above, the reconstruction part has yet to produce substantive results.

In the Alternatives programme particularly, Focus Thailand had planned to document micro level initiatives which can help us define a desirable people-oriented or community-oriented economy as opposed to free market economy, while following up on community level experiments on the use of community currencies that would, among other things, provide members with immunity from the influence of global finance. None of these plans has materialized.

On Peace Building and People's Security, the new eruption of violence in the three Southern-most prov-

inces with highest concentration of the Malay Muslim population in 2004 prompted Focus Thailand and other members of the Social Agenda Working Group to explore possible activities to promote better understanding of the conflicts in order to promote peaceful co-existence. The Social Agenda Working Group went on to raise public funds to implement action research and public dialogue on a number of issues. Apart from monitoring the situations, Focus has not yet been able to contribute much on this conflict.

The main reason for these shortfalls is that Focus Thailand programme, with only one full-time and one part-time staff, has been concentrating its effort in the role of a political economy analyst, catalyst and facilitator among a range of coalitions of Thai partner organizations. For them, immediate local issues and events often take precedence over longer-term substantive work, such as bottom-up alternatives building work. This was especially true in the past three years due to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's fast paced manoeuvres to promote entrepreneurship as a way out of poverty for both the rural and urban poor. Social movements and coalitions who are working for sustainable and equitable development policies, therefore, have been forced into a resistance mode of operation most of the time.

Key Activities in 2005

January: made a presentation entitled "Updates on Democracy and Civil Society in Thailand" to 30 Burmese civil society group leaders attending a training course organized by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEP).

February: co-organized with FTA Watch a one-day workshop on "Alternative Economics" for FTA Watch members.

March: gave a presentation on the WTO and FTAs to a group of US students attending an exchange programme at Khon Kaen University; made a presentation on "Global Economy and Human Rights" to a group of Asian human rights activists attending a training course organized by the Centre of Human Rights Studies, Mahidol University; gave a presentation on "WTO and NGOs" to 80 school teachers attending a training programme organized by WTO Watch Centre, Thammasat University; joined in FTA Watch marches in Bangkok against the third round of negotiations of Thailand-US FTA.

April: joined FTA Watch in organizing a two-day protest rally at the site of the third round of Thailand-US FTA negotiations in Pattaya, Chonburi Province; interviewed for a Human Rights Commission's TV programme on the topic of "FTAs and Human Rights"; co-organized with the Assembly of the Poor a 3-day seminar entitled "Peoples Movements Challenging Global Capitalism" attended by 200 members of the AoP, featuring presen-

tations by representatives of KRRS, KCTU, NPA and Peter Rosset, a Focus Board member working with the Centre for the Americas in Mexico.

May: gave a presentation on "Globalisation and its Impact on Poverty in Asia" at a training workshop of regional Buddhist spiritual leaders organized by INEP; co-organized with FTA Watch a consultation meeting with experts on investment liberalisation and arbitration; co-organized with Forum Asia a public dialogue with Chico Whittaker, a Brazilian WSF founding member, on his views of WSF 2001-2005, at Chulalongkorn University; made a presentation on free trade areas negotiations at a seminar in Trang Province of 200 Southern Thailand community leaders organized by a number of Southern NGOs and people's movements; coordinated the drafting of a parallel report on "Thailand's Free Trade Agreements and Human Rights Obligations", submitted to the UN Human Rights Committees as a part of the country's review process under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

June: coordinated a preparation and submission of a letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Health; supported two Thai delegates to attend the Colombo Asia regional trade and WSF meetings; gave a briefing on WTO's state of play for Thai activists; organized a one-day lecture for FTA Watch members on the background and implications of investment liberalisation and arbitration measures proposed by the US in the Thailand-US FTA text, given by an international economic law professor; co-organized with FTA Watch, WTO Watch, and other organizations a conference on "Investment Liberalisation and Arbitration: Impacts on Thai Legal System and Sovereignty" at Thammasat University; panelist in a discussion on the impact of globalisation at a seminar on the occasion of an anniversary of the Pridi Panomyong Institute.

July: presented a paper on the role of TNCs in the globalized food system in a seminar on Natural Resource Base and Food Sovereignty organized by BioThai and the Human Rights Commission Sub-committee on Natural Resource Base; attended a one-day roundtable on Micro Finance organized by UN-ESCAP; gave presentations on corporate globalisation, implications and alternatives at a one-day workshop of activists in the upper Northeastern Region in Khon Kaen Province; participated in a workshop on "The Settlement of Investment Disputes", co-organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Bangkok; observed the Thailand's review process of the UN Human Rights Committees under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in Geneva, Switzerland; participated in a two-day Think Tank on NGOs and the quest for alternative society organized by the NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD); represented FTA Watch in a panel discussion on Free Trade and the Environment organized by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment for its staff.

August: gave interviews to a morning radio programme and a television programme on Thailand-Japan FTA; presented the outcome of the research on contract farming in Thailand in a seminar on free trade and agricultural trends organized by the Alternative Agriculture Network and Rural Alumni and Friends Association (RRAFA); made a presentation on globalisation and consumers at the annual general meeting of the Confederation of Consumers of Thailand; participated as a representative of FTA Watch in a Asian regional workshop on bilateral and regional FTAs, organised by Third World Network (TWN) in Malaysia; made a presentation at a brainstorming meeting of members of the Association of Farmers Federations for Development on the topic of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture; Focus Thailand commissioned a researcher to carry out an impact study on Thailand-Australia FTA.

September: co-organized with FTA Watch a two-day public forum at Kasetsart University on FTAs: Recommendations to Avoid Disaster; facilitated interviews of Thai allies and partners by Boying Bautista, member of the independent review team, who was on a one-week visit as part of the Focus programme and organisation review; participated in a 2-day international conference on post tsunami rehabilitation to identify challenges, strategies and policy recommendations for Thailand and other governments, organized by NGO-COD and the Save the Andaman Network, in Krabi Province.

October: together with RRAFA, Sustainable Development Foundation, Alternative Agriculture Network and BioThai, organized a 3-day workshop of 100 women community leaders from all regions of the country featuring the issues of globalisation and food security.

November: gave a lecture on impacts of FTAs on labour as a part of a labour leaders training programme, organized by the American Center for International Labor Solidarity; gave a public lecture on "From Geneva to Hong Kong: Civil Society's Perspectives on the Direction of Trade Negotiations in Doha Round," co-organized by Focus and WTO Watch; involved in an anti-privatization campaign on Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT); conducted 2-day lectures and discussion on globalisation and free trade negotiations for Lao Buddhist monks and nuns as part of a training course organized by Sem Sikkhalai at a temple outside Vientiane, Lao PDR.

December: co-organized with the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs a conference on Thailand's position in the WTO; participated in the mobilizations against the WTO 6th Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong; participated in a Thai TV programme on the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial along with members of the Assembly of the Poor who was arrested in Hong Kong; gave a presentation on "The Quest for Alternatives: A global survey" at a workshop of the Northern Region NGOs and people's organizations held in Phayao Province; gave a lecture to workers in the informal sector on the impacts of FTAs.

Photo by Anoop Sukumaran



Protestors marching in Bangkok against the the WTO, March 9, 2004

INDIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME

Over the last three years Focus in India has established a presence in the very diverse political community in the country. The World Social Forum process, which started in 2002 in India, provided us with an opportunity to build links with new partners and forge new alliances. We deepened our work on Trade and Peace and Security, and developed work on International Financial Institutions. We also took the first steps towards developing an Alternatives programme area.

The process of setting up Focus India as an independent entity with its own registration and government clearance for funding was also initiated. Regular publication of material and distribution of Focus research, including a monthly e-newsletter was another achievement during this period. We have also built closer links with other organisations working in Mumbai and Maharashtra state in almost all the programme areas, particularly Peace and Human Security, WTO related issues, services, agriculture, urban development and the WSF process. We also started an internship programme.

Trade

The work plan for 2005 focused on the 6th WTO ministerial, giving priority to agriculture in the negotiations. This meant an intensive campaign with farmers and agricultural labour organizations and movements. The second priority was services, mainly privatisation and also the GATS (services) negotiations. Our strategy was to work with partners, mainly facilitating and helping to set up networks to campaign on these issues, in Mumbai and Maharashtra as well as at the national level. We have achieved some degree of success in all of the above.

In agriculture the focus is broader than just WTO, taking into consideration the deep agrarian crisis in the country and the fact that it is still an agrarian economy with the great majority of people dependent on agri-

culture for their livelihood. Focus initiated a process of discussion and strategizing with major political parties and peoples' movements on India's role in the WTO negotiating group G20 and the WTO negotiations, and helped to revive the Indian Peoples Campaign against the WTO, all of which helped to exert some pressure on the Indian government and the negotiating team prior to the Hong Kong Ministerial.

On services, Focus engaged with services unions based in Mumbai. We were instrumental in bringing local groups together to participate in the April 2005 Global Week of Action on issues related to Mumbai's neo-liberal development model.

Focus had hoped to extend the scope of its work to other countries in the South Asia region however apart from organising a meeting in Sri Lanka, we were unable to do much else.

Together with a local Mumbai organisation, Young Professionals Collective, Focus produced a study of the impacts of call centres, a key part of the business processing outsourcing (BPO) industry in India, with special reference to Mumbai.

Peace Building and Peoples Security

Focus' priorities for 2005 were the continuing crisis in the Middle East, the India-Pakistan peace talks and increasing US intervention in South Asia. Accordingly we initiated the building of a national anti-war network starting with an assembly in Hyderabad in December 2004. We created a dossier for this event focusing on the Iraq war and issues arising from the occupation, its implications for the world and India. This process contributed to the countrywide response to the 18 March mobilizations against the war in Iraq. Focus also activated Mumbai based NGOs by organising a cultural evening in August to commemorate the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and later this group also consti-

tuted itself in the name of "Peace Mumbai" to develop a sustained programme around peace and human security issues. The last quarter of 2005 was spent in preparing for a very successful conference/strategy meeting on Peace and Justice in South Asia held in February 2006, linking issues of economic justice with those of war and militarism.

International Financial Institutions

The focus in 2005 was on water sector reforms, ADB funded projects in Karnataka, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh, mobilising for actions at the ADB Annual Meeting in Hyderabad in May 2006, World Bank plans for India especially implementation of the India Country Assistance strategy and the urban renewal project in Mumbai inspired by the World Bank, the consultancy firm McKinsey and Bombay First, a corporate NGO.

Focus was instrumental in getting various groups together to work on ADB issues in preparation for the ADB AGM to be held in May 2006 in Hyderabad. We have been coordinating with groups working and campaigning on the impact of ADB funded projects in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh as well as bringing together groups working on water sector reforms in India. Focus also drafted the critique of the World Bank country assistance strategy for India, in consultation with other groups, and will soon start working on World Bank projects in Mumbai city.

Alternatives

The major part of our work in this area has been the WSF process. Focus India plays an important role in the organising committee of the WSF India and is also associated with the preparations for the event in Karachi in 2006.

Another task we had set ourselves for 2005 was mapping of Alternatives in India. A rough draft is done.

Focus is part of the movement for an alternative development plan for Mumbai. However we have not been able to devote time and energy to this project.

Outcomes and Shortfalls

Although we accomplished most of what we set out to do in 2005, there are some areas in which we are lacking.

1. Our media work is still weak at national and Mumbai level.

2. The team is small and overstretched having taken on a lot of work in the programs at various levels: regional, global, local.

Key Activities in 2005

January: Delhi- Meeting of the India Working Committee of WSF India; Pune- Workshop on Neglected Areas in Electricity Sector Reforms; Mumbai- Presentation on Mumbai's Development at SP Jain College of Management; Sirsi- Experience Sharing and Strategy Meeting on the Impact of ADB loans to 14 towns in Karnataka; Porto Alegre - World Social Forum.

February: Mumbai- Meeting of India Pakistan Youth Forum; Delhi- Anti War Meeting and CNDP (Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace); Mumbai- Meeting organised by YPC (Young Professionals Collective) on BPO professionals

March: Mumbai- Meeting on West Asia; Delhi- South Asia meeting on ADB; Delhi- Peoples Agenda on G20; Delhi- Meeting with Indian and Brazilian Trade Ambassadors on Agricultural Issues; Delhi- Farmer's Rally against G20 Ministerial Meeting; Delhi- G20 Ministerial Meeting; Mumbai- Anti War Press Conference and Rally; Pune- Agriculture in Maharashtra: Relevance of G20 & WTO

April: Mumbai- Confronting Empire & WTO, a Public Meeting; Mumbai- Meeting on Livelihoods in Mill Mazdoor Sabha Union Office; Mumbai- Global Week of Action: Re-claiming Mumbai for its Peoples: "Campaign for Access to Public Spaces, Livelihood, Housing and Basic Services"

May: Colombo- Preparatory Meetings for WTO Strategy and WSF; Mumbai- Training for Activists on Demystifying WTO; Mumbai- WSF India Working Committee Meeting; Mumbai- International Conference on Urban Renewal: Learnings for Mumbai; Mumbai- Meeting of the Mumbai Peoples Action Committee (on Mill land and other urban issues)

June: WSF meeting in Negombo, Sri Lanka; WTO Strategy meeting for Asia in Negombo; Pune- National Convention of Pakistan India Peoples Forum for Peace and Democracy; Barcelona- WSF International Council Meeting; Goa- Meeting of the National Coordination Committee of CNDP; Delhi- UNCTAD Consultation on NAMA

July: Delhi- Strategy Meeting on Water Sector Reform; Coimbatore- Farmers Rally and Conference on WTO and Globalisation; Khandwa- Field visit & solidarity support to the Anti Dam Movement in Narmada Valley; Mumbai- Meeting on FDI in Retail Sector; Hong Kong- Regional Conference on WTO, Development & Migration; Delhi- UNCTAD Consultation on Agriculture;



Photo by Benny Kuruvilla

Shalmali Guttal submitting the Open letter, on rejecting Annex C on GATS, signed by over 100 Indian groups to the Indian Minister, Kamal Nath. WTO Convention Centre, Hong Kong. 15 December 2005

Delhi- CENTAD Meeting on WTO; Geneva- Geneva Peoples' Forum on July WTO General Council

August: Mumbai- Mumbai Peoples Action Committee Meeting; Mumbai- Rally on the Anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki Bombings; Mumbai- Campaign in Colleges on Nuclear Disarmament; Delhi- UNCTAD Consultation on GATS; Mumbai- Peace Concert - 60th Anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki Bombings; Delhi- Meeting of the Indian Peoples Campaign against WTO; Mumbai- Farmers Meeting for the "March to Mumbai Port"; Delhi- National Convention of Farmers & Agricultural Workers; Delhi- UNCTAD Consultation on TRIPS & CBD; Kurukshetra- South Asian meeting of the Via Campensina

September: Nagpur- National Conference on Bt. Cotton & GMOs; Hyderabad- Planning and Strategy Meeting on ADB AGM in India; Mumbai- Demonstration against Tony Blair visit to India; Milan- Meeting of European Socialists: The Global Progressive Forum; Mumbai- Hearing before Peoples Commission on Banking and Finance; Mumbai- Maharashtra Strategy Meeting on Agriculture and WTO; Mumbai- Planning Meeting on Privatisation of Service and WTO-GATS; Bhopal- Meeting against ADB policies in Madhya Pradesh organised by Jan Sangharsh Morcha; Chennai- Public Meeting against WTO and GATS

October: Mumbai- Press Conference by the Indian Co-ordination Committee of Farmers Movements; Mumbai- Mass Rally by the All India Farmers Movements

Against WTO and Cheap Subsidised Agricultural Imports; Mumbai- Meeting of the Service Sectors on GATS; Nagpur- Creative Writers Workshop on WTO & Globalisation; Delhi- Consultation on ADB and Privatisation in India; Chennai - WSF India meeting; Geneva- Focus India supported Suresh Gawali and Vidya Rangan for WTO General Council meeting; Mumbai- Meeting on the Services Sector and WTO GATS Negotiations; Mumbai- Seminar on Livelihoods along with local activists; Pune- Meeting on Agriculture; Bangkok- Staff Meeting in Bangkok; Mumbai- Meeting on Campaign to Defend the Services Sector

November: Delhi- Meeting of the Indian Peoples Campaign against WTO; Pune- Farmers meeting on WTO; Mumbai- Preparatory meeting of core group of Peace Mumbai; Mumbai- Workshop on Agriculture organised by MPJ; Mumbai- Maharashtra Convention against WTO-GATS - Defend the Services Sector; Pune- Press Conference on WTO and Peoples Campaign; Hyderabad- Seminar on Agriculture, World Bank Directives & Deteriorating Living Conditions of the People; Narmada Valley- 20 Years of Resistance and Reconstruction; Delhi- Meeting of Farmer Unions on WTO and preparation for UNCTAD Consultation; Delhi- UNCTAD Stakeholder meeting on Agriculture and WTO

December: Hyderabad- State Level strategy meeting on ADB AGM; Delhi- Convention on the Indian Peoples Campaign against the WTO; Pune- Agriculture Convention on WTO and Agriculture; Pune- Workshop for the Media on WTO; Hong Kong- 6th WTO Ministerial Meeting; Mumbai- Anti WTO Demonstration; Delhi- 6th

Ministerial of the WTO and Media Campaign; Mumbai-Press Conference on the Implications of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration; Mumbai- Meeting in Economics Department of Mumbai University

Publications

"GATS in the run-up to the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial: The political challenge for activists" Focus India, Benny Kuruvilla

"Tourism: sunset for sustainable policy?" Financial Express, Benny Kuruvilla

"Global Movement of Labour under WTO-GATS: Who'll Move and Who Won't?" Labour File, Benny Kuruvilla

"Privatisation of Services and WTO-GATS: Campaign Note" Trade Union Campaign, Mumbai, Benny Kuruvilla

"GATS: In the Service of MNCs" The Movement of India, Benny Kuruvilla

"GATS Subversion of Democratic Policy Space" Combat Law, Benny Kuruvilla

"Rejecting the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (2005-2008) for India: A Civil Society Critique" Shalmali Guttal & Benny Kuruvilla

"WTO: Agriculture at the Mercy of Rich Nations" UNCTAD, Afsar Jafri

"Crop the Crisis" Hindustan Times, Afsar Jafri

"Revisiting Cancun?" Combat Law, Afsar Jafri

"WTO: Agriculture at Peril" The Movement of India, Afsar Jafri

"Say NO to Further Liberalisation of Trade in Agriculture" Towards Socialism, Afsar Jafri

"Farmer Organisations' Response to the G-20 'Delhi Declaration'" Focus India, Afsar Jafri

"G20: Not representing farmer's interests" Focus India, Afsar Jafri

"Farmers and other civil society groups give a wake-up call to the G20 - But are they listening?" Benny Kuruvilla

"Bombay through Mumbai" DNA, Meena Menon

"The Mumbai Mill Lands Debate: Civil Society, Meena Menon

"Of Mills And Malls: Hindustan Times, Meena Menon

"Where the Wind Blows: a study of Business Process Outsourcing in India" Birjinder Anant, Benny Kuruvilla, Meena Menon

"Landing a Victory" Hindustan Times, Meena Menon

"The Endless India-Pakistan-USA Triangle, Focus India" Varsha Berry

Dateline WTO: weekly update during the HK Ministerial,

Dateline Hong Kong: daily update during the WTO Ministerial for Indian Peoples Campaign against the WTO, Meena Menon

Focus on India: e newsletter, monthly, India Team

Flyers, pamphlets etc for trade campaign on WTO issues, India Trade Team

Contributed to the Indian Peoples Campaign against WTO documents, towards mobilizing for Hong Kong Ministerial, India Trade Team

Contributed to the Indian Coordination Committee of Farmers Movements, towards mobilizing for the Hong Kong Ministerial, India Trade Team

Initiated sign-ons on G-20 Declaration, GATS, Agriculture Note to Indian PM



PHILIPPINES COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The 2003-2005 work plan was a big turning point for the Philippines Programme. While continuing the analytical, resourcing and support roles it was known for in previous years, the Philippines Programme took the bold step of direct campaigning via more active engagement in networks and coalition work. Focus Philippines took leadership roles in major campaigns, particularly in trade and security, but it is its way of working (transparent, accountable and inclusive), its willingness to take on difficult tasks, its conscious effort to highlight others' contributions, and its consistency that earned the trust and confidence of a wide range of social movements and activists. A much appreciated function Focus Philippines played is the linking of local and national issues to what is happening regionally and globally, and in the process assisting the interaction between and among local/national and regional/global movements.

In the last three years, Focus Philippines was also able to:

- increase its capacity to use different media to reach various constituencies;
- increase its capacity to tap new constituencies and reach new audiences;
- finalise registration in the Philippines, develop internal office policies and institute staff development mechanisms; and,
- increase the capacity to supplement limited resources with the hiring of interns/volunteers and independent fund-raising.

Trade

Focus' biggest success on the trade front was its active involvement in and steering of the Stop the New Round!! campaign. The SNR!! was the biggest trade campaign in the country in 2003. It brought the issue of the WTO to the national arena and assisted in making the technical and difficult issue of trade a matter of everyday concern. Focus' input and intervention

was sought-after by the media, local groups and social movements, and was presented in Congressional inquiries and dialogues/consultations with Executive agencies. Its success in 2003 inspired similar initiatives in the following years, and SNR!! continued to work in 2004 and relaunched itself as a campaign in 2005.

The SNR!! was successful in gathering together a wide spectrum of groups and constituencies, no small feat given the political climate in the Philippines. Through the SNR!! Focus was able to give local groups/campaigns regional and/or international exposure.

The campaign on the WTO led to increased interest in other trade issues, particularly bilateral trade arrangements, such as the Japan Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement, indicating increasing facility in and confidence to handle trade and trade-related issues, and the capacity to make the connections between and among various trading arrangements.

Finance and Development

Focus' work on finance and development in the Philippines was focused on privatization and the role of the IFIs. Focus Philippines remains a major member of the Bantay Tubig Water Vigilance Network contributing to its water privatization and water policy work. Through Bantay Tubig, Focus had been involved in a range of activities from analysing developments in the privatized water utility to intervening in the Maynilad Rehabilitation case. Through its work in Bantay Tubig and the monitoring of IFIs involvement in water, Focus has helped develop a critique of the IFIs' water sector and private sector participation policies and strategies. Focus' contribution to the network is not limited to analysis but also spans media and some practical organizing work.

Focus' analysis has been quoted in major review documents by the Asian Development Bank. An article co-

authored by Focus on the Philippines' power sector was used and quoted in two review documents of the Bank, the Sector Assistance Programme Evaluation of ADB Assistance to Philippines Power Sector (SAP: PHI 2005-09) published in September and the 2005 Annual Evaluation Review (RPE: OTH 2005-10) published in July.

Focus works with networks, particularly with the Philippine Working Group on IFIs and the NGO Forum on the ADB. Focus' critical view of the IFIs is a benchmark in "IFI watching" in the Philippines as well as regionally.

Peace Building and Peoples' Security

Following the deconstruction/reconstruction approach, Focus' contribution to peace and security building involves the study and analysis of the Philippines' national security and foreign policies and the articulation and building of alternatives to them.

Sustaining its movement-building work, Focus was instrumental in the formation of the Iraq Solidarity Campaign (ISC), a broad coalition of social movements, NGOs, political groups, and other civil society organizations. Focus continues to be active in this coalition, which has been the major vehicle for responding locally to the global problems engendered by the occupation of Iraq, as well as a way to draw the links between the country's long-running military alliance with the United States and the local conflicts in the country. As part of ISC, Focus was able to popularize the opposition to the occupation of Iraq, by linking it to issues close to Filipinos (e.g. the Angelo dela Cruz kidnapping), by making it a platform for broader education work (via film showings, forums, exhibits, and mobilizations), and facilitating interaction between local activists, students and civil society with foreign scholars and activists.

In relation to this, Focus Philippines was also active in the urgent campaign against repressive legislation and policies justified as part of the "war against terror." This includes the anti-terror bill and the implementation of the National ID system, two measures which would severely curtail civil liberties, increase surveillance, and lead to more human rights abuses in the country. Focus contributed to this campaign by working with other concerned organizations in preparing statements, holding forums, press events, and publishing educational materials. Focus' research on the emerging global surveillance system being constructed post-September11 was widely cited in the public debate and proved to be compelling in mounting opposition to the anti-terror bill and the proposed ID system.

The United States' continuing deployment of troops to the Philippines throughout the year continued to be the subject of close monitoring and research. A number of articles questioning this deployment, US military aid to the Philippines, and Philippine government support for US intervention in Haiti were published.

Even as Focus continued to critique and help build opposition to current national security and foreign policies, it also spearheaded efforts to discuss and articulate alternatives to them under the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) on Foreign Policy. Towards the latter part of the year, Focus began building the foundation for a sustained and successful process for proposing a democratic, principled, and strategic foreign policy by bringing together organizations and individuals interested in this goal and developing the framework by which to move the process forward. The project continues to be a work in progress.

Alternatives

Through the Land Research Action Network Project, Focus has been working with local and national agrarian



Photo by Mike Alquinto

SNR, 8,000 Filipinos join international global day of action against the WTO. September 2003

reform groups to monitor IFI-sponsored land programs and to apprise them of global initiatives on agrarian reform. Aside from valuable contribution in analysis and providing the venues for discussion, Focus also helped linked these groups to regional and global groups and networks working on the same issues. In the last three years, Focus has made conscious efforts to send local and national groups and networks to regional and international meetings on land, agrarian reform and alternatives. Focus also linked local groups to the World Social Forum process by helping some of them attend WSF events.

Taking inspiration from the World Social Forum process, the Philippines Programme decided to use the roundtable process as its basic research and campaigning methodology, and a major vehicle to explore alternatives. A Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) proposal was developed and consulted with key groups in 2004 and by 2005 the DRTS was developed into a programme of basic research, political negotiation, public education and alternatives building. Focus sees the DRTS as a logical progression in its campaign work. The broader DRTS process involves many groups committed to the search for alternatives in the areas of trade and industrial policy, water services and utilities, foreign policy, food and agriculture, land reform, and Mindanao.

As part of its commitment to see the process through, Focus remains the interim secretariat of the DRTS. Focus has likewise committed its staff and resources to ensure that the process is moving forward. Focus has begun to embark on the more difficult but exciting part of the process; launching the series of roundtables, political mapping of issues and formal and informal negotiations which are all necessary ingredients towards building alternatives, and which sit well in the 2006-2008 work plan.

Special Projects

Focus had been a source of cutting-edge analysis on the Philippines, making it a preferred resource for political-economic analysis. In 2004, it published with the University of the Philippines' Department of Sociology the book *The Anti-Developmental State: The Political Economy of Permanent Crisis in the Philippines*, authored by members of the Philippines staff. The book was a best seller and a reprint was done in 2005.

Focus is recognized as an activist political organisation but with no formal ties to any major political bloc, party or formation. Still, its cutting-edge analysis, activist strategy and consistency in campaign work have all earned respect and credibility for Focus. Focus' occasional analysis (such as statements during the President's State of the Nation Address, analysis of the political crisis) are anticipated and widely read.

Though without any formal political affiliations, the

Philippines Programme has nevertheless developed a keen political sense and has ventured into some very political projects. In 2004, the Philippines Programme started a video documentary project on the EDSA phenomenon (named after Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, a major highway in Metro Manila and the main site of the 1986 uprising and many subsequent pro-democracy demonstrations). The video documentary is an attempt to explain the phenomenon that is EDSA, symbolic of the many uprisings, hopes and failed ideals held by the people who have participated in them. It is conceived as a popular tool for political education, the aim being to pose a challenge to Filipinos, especially the youth, to make hard decisions and take actions on the broad socio-political issues confronting the country. The project is taking longer than originally expected, but this is in part due to the volatility in the political situation in the country, and the difficulty in obtaining the last of the interviews. It will be completed in 2006 to mark the 20th anniversary of EDSA I.

Communications and Staff Development

An important component of Focus' advocacy work is ensuring that its messages are effectively sent across or conveyed to its targeted audience. In 2003-2005, Focus met relative success in the use of various media to disseminate its analysis. This included maintaining its electronic news bulletin, publication of dossiers and researches, and tapping print and broadcast media. Focus' media exposure has gone up, thanks mainly to the trade and security campaigns.

To address the wide gaps in experiences, to ensure that skills and expertise are shared, and to promote a more collegial working environment among the staff, the Philippines Programme tried to experiment on a collective process of planning and editing of content of major articles and reports. Such a process has been appreciated especially by the newer members of the staff.

Outcomes, Shortfalls and Challenges Ahead

Focus' work and its contribution to the campaigns (aside from steering work) has been heavily focused on the analysis of regional and international trends. This is a strength that we recognize and a skill required by our allies. Still, the Philippines Programme has to develop more Philippine-specific research and monitoring to support its regional and international work. It will also help us gain more credibility in doing national level advocacy.

Focus' credibility and strengths hinge on its strong research and analytical work. The campaign orientation of 2003-2005 used up a lot of energies of Philippines

staff for basic organizing and coordination work, constituency building, media work and direct action, and resulted in limited time for basic Philippine-specific research. In the next work plan period, Focus commits to do more of the analytical and research work to back up existing and new campaigns. Focus also commits to pass on some secretariat functions it now holds, but will remain actively involved in the coalitions. This is to give other groups the chance to manage the coalitions, and to afford the staff more time to do research and analysis. The slight change in emphasis in Focus' work is needed if the Philippines Programme is to pursue work on alternatives.

Publications and media

Focus on the Philippines (FOP), 25 issues

- FOP #1: Can the Philippines Handle Globalisation? By Walden Bello (February 14)
- FOP #2: Academics, Power and the Crisis of the University By Walden Bello (March 3)
- FOP #3: Chronicles of Kyoto By Renato Redentor Constantino (March 4)
- FOP #4: Desperate Martians Now Wooing Venusians By Walden Bello (March 7)
- FOP #5: Debt and Denial: Or how to make sure that the Philippines will end By Walden Bello (April 6)
- FOP # 6: The End of an Illusion: WTO Reform, Global Civil Society and the Road to Hong Kong By Focus on the Global South (April 7)
- FOP # 7: Of Rehabilitation, Bail Out and the Defense of Public Interest: A Short Update on the Failed Water Privatization in the Philippines By Jenina Joy Chavez and Nepomuceno Malaluan (April 8)
- FOP # 8: Inside the MATRIX: The Philippines' national ID system and how we're all seen as 'potential terrorists' By Herbert Docena (April 12)
- FOP # 9: Uniting against the Assassinations By Walden Bello (April 15)
- FOP #10: Wolfowitz in the Philippines: A Historical

- Footnote By Walden Bello (April 29)
- FOP # 11: The National ID System: A Clear and Present Multi-purpose Danger By Herbert Docena (May 3)
- FOP #12: Failure to Deliver? The ADB's Policies, Projects and Governance By Shalmali Guttal (May 4)
- FOP #13: Private Power Failure by Nepomuceno Malaluan and Joy Chavez (May 6)
- FOP #14: An Ominous Alliance: The ADB-Philippines Development Partnership by Mary Ann Manahan and Jenina Joy Chavez (May 10)
- FOP #15: US military aid to the Philippines: Big Brother's Bounty By Herbert Docena (May 11)
- FOP #16: The Theocratic Temptation By Walden Bello (July 15)
- FOP #17: What are Filipino Soldiers doing in Haiti? By Herbert Docena (July 21)
- FOP #18: Reclaiming Revolution By Walden Bello, Jenina Joy Chavez, Julie delos Reyes, Herbert Docena, Mary Lou Malig, Mary Ann Manahan, Joseph Puruganan and Lourdes Torres (July 26)
- FOP #19: The War and Peace Equation Today: Global Trends Threaten Local Initiatives By Walden Bello (August 2)
- FOP #20: The US and the Coming Constitutional Coup: Is the US angling to take advantage of Charter Change to finally scrap national patrimony provisions in the constitution? By Herbert Docena (August 2)
- FOP #21: First part of the series of a debate between Walden Bello and Philippe Legrain on "Do corporations rule? - sponsored by BBC's Who Runs Your World? Series (September 28)
- FOP #22: Second part of 'Do Corporations Rule' (September 29)
- FOP #23: The End of People Power?: The Philippines' New Left in a Race against Time (October 22)
- FOP #24: Nothing to Gain, Everything to Lose: Developing Country Prospects at the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial and Beyond (November 28)
- FOP #25: The Real Meaning of Hong Kong (December 27)



Photo by Mike Alquinto

V sign. Trade activists in the Philippines flash the V-sign claiming the collapse of the WTO talks in Cancun as a 'Peoples' Victory'. September 2003

Papers, Reports and Articles

Report of the Luzon Farmer-Fisher Political Economic Summit: "Advancing a Farmer and Fisherfolk Agenda amidst a Globalised Trade Regime and Political Economic Crisis - proceedings of the rural and political economic summit." The report is published in English and Tagalog (available in electronic version). (Mary Ann Manahan, with Carmina Flores-Obanil of Philippine Peasant Institute and Agnes Balota of Tambuyog Development Center)

"Under the Watchful Eye: The Philippines' proposed National ID system, the Anti-Terror Bill, and the Global Project to Keep an Eye on Everyone", A Special Report for Focus on the Global South, 20 April 2005 (Herbert Docena)

"Of Rehabilitation, Bail Out and the Defense of Public Interest: A Short Update on the Failed Water Privatization in the Philippines", April 2005 (Jenina Joy Chavez and Nepomuceno Malaluan)

Dossiers and Popular Education Materials

"ADB and Policy (Mis)Governance in Asia", released in time for the 38th Annual Governors Meeting of the Asian Development Bank in Istanbul, Turkey.

SNR! Komiks Magasin

Rock against the Round CD: a compilation of songs reflecting various perspectives on globalisation, from the personal to the political. The CD features songs from a diverse mix of 12 artists representing different musical genres from folk to punk. The songs touch on themes of poverty and inequality, erosion of local culture, dislocation, hunger and food insecurity, commodification of natural resources, global hegemony and domination. The CD is free and can be downloaded from MP3pilipinas.com. Songs from the album have also enjoyed airplay on local radio and artist have been invited to guest on a number of radio shows. Album reviews will also be coming out in a number of broadsheets and magazines. Music videos for selected songs are also in the pipeline.

Key Activities in 2005

January: Protest against US foreign policy in light of President George W. Bush's inauguration (Iraq Solidarity Campaign); Organized conferences, strategy sessions, workshops and participated in the 5th World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Focus-Philippines also supported and facilitated the participation of grassroots leaders in the WSF. Issues: trade, peace and security, land reform, livelihood, new politics, etc.

February: Input/Presentation on Global Agrarian Reform Situation at the AMA National Assembly, Balagtas, Bulacan (North Luzon); A letter campaign and call to Action to Stop the Violence Against the Farmers, Women and Children of Egypt (Solidarity Message to the Land Center for Human Rights); Actively participated and organized an SNR! delegation to the International Coordinating Network (ICN) Meeting in Hong Kong

March: Arranged/facilitated the documentary of Mikel Ardanaz on the indigenous peoples and the impact of mining to the environment and their culture. The documentary, which is part of a six-series film documentary, was released in the Basque Country during the second half of the year; Presentation/Training on national and global water issues with cooperative/local group in Sariaya, Quezon - organized by FIAN Philippines; Forum on the Anti-Terror Bill and the National ID System (with more than 15 other sponsoring organizations); Week of Action against the War in Iraq (forums, film-showing, mobilization), with guest from the Iraq General Union of Oil Employees (Iraq Solidarity Campaign); Facilitated/ Moderated/ Follow up Consultation on the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) with Mindanao Groups, MTRC, Bajada, Davao City, Mindanao (Southern Philippines), that resulted in the creation of the Mindanao Working Group; Support/Solidarity with the Farmers and Peasants Organizations at a Mobilization assailing the Philippine/Arroyo government for nailing farmers on the cross of poverty and failing to distribute contentious landholdings to farmer beneficiaries. This was staged in front of the office of the Department of Land Reform in Quezon City, Philippines; SNR! presentation at the Campaigns Coordinators Meeting of the Southeast Asia Fisheries for Justice network (SEAFISH-J) in Hong Kong; NGO Forum Annual Strategy Meeting

April: National Forum on NAMA: a joint activity with the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA); Forum on US Foreign Policy, the Middle East, and Implications on the Philippines, with Phyllis Bennis (Iraq Solidarity Campaign); Peace Cycle and SNR! joint mobilization vs. JPEPA at the Japanese Embassy in Manila; SNR! internal discussion on the proposed JPEPA; SNR! Launch in Cebu- Forum and mobilization which was participated by 300 activists; SNR! Launch in Manila—March to Mendiola of over 1000 activists; Press statement on the International Day of Peasant Struggles, highlighting the failure of Philippine government to address the increase of land-related human rights violations in the countryside. This was jointly organized by AR! Coalition and Focus on the Global South in Quezon City, Philippines; Launch of SNR! Mindanao with a Mindanao trade forum and press conference

May: Active Participation in the parallel events of the ADB Annual Governors Meeting, Istanbul, Turkey; Public Forum entitled, "Demystifying de Soto" organised by Focus on the Global South, Kilos AR!, Philippine



DRTS Water working group expansion workshop, June 2005

Peasant Institute and Philippine Network of Rural Development Institutes on understanding the essence of de Soto's model of development and its implications on government policies and programs, in particular land reform; SNR! presentation on the WTO and trade at the Indigenous Peoples Forum in Siargao Island, Mindanao; SNR! internal forum on GATS

June: DRTS Briefing for the Lobby and Policy Advocacy arm of the Iraq Solidarity Campaign and Core Group Meeting; Briefing on the Global Agrarian Situation for Focus on the Global South Interns-Volunteers in Batangas City, Philippines; SNR! sent a delegation to the Asian trade strategy meeting in Negombo Sri Lanka; Support/Solidarity with farmers, peasants and land reform advocates at a protest rally/mobilization during the 18th Anniversary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme (CARP) held in Quezon City, Philippines; Oxfam Regional Workshop on Monitoring Advocacy Impacts; SNR! internal forum on the agriculture negotiations; SNR! meeting with Elizabeth Tang of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) and the HK Peoples Alliance on preparations for the Sixth WTO Ministerial and latest developments on the work of the HKPA; DRTS Water Working Group Expansion Workshop, Alumni Hostel, UP Diliman.

July: Letter Campaign on the Violent Attack on Farmer Beneficiaries in the Philippines- addressed and submitted to the Office of the President and Secretary of the Department of Land Reform; SNR! members' participation in the General Council Of The Peoples in Geneva. The SNR! delegates also met and discussed the demands of the coalition with Ambassador Manuel Antonio Teehankee and Philippine Trade Mission in Geneva.

August: Solidarity and Support to the farmers of UN-ORKA who were affected by land-related violence in Iloilo, in the Visayas region; SNR! presentation made at the Debt and Trade Conference organized by Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development; Initial consultation with agrarian reform advocates on the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS), a platform or venue for different agrarian and land reform stakeholders to come together to discuss the direc-

tions and various issues on the future of agrarian reform in the country, in Quezon City, Philippines; SNR!'s presentation of its comment to House Resolution 668 for an assessment of WTO's impact on agriculture at the hearing of the Special Committee on Globalisation and participated in successive meetings of the special committee

September: Filipino Peasant Interaction with La Via Campesina in Munoz, Nueva Ecija. The interaction provided a venue for different peasant groups including Via Campesina to share their campaigns and plans in the lead up to the Sixth WTO Ministerial, updates on their advocacies on land reform, the state of Philippine agriculture and identify ways of collaboration and working together (especially for the campaign on the WTO). Organized by SNR! and Our World is Not For Sale (with support from LRAM); Second event was the SNR!-OWINFS trade activists' in Quezon City. The forum/meeting featured presentations from Jane Kelsey on OWINFS and the GATS Campaign and P. Chennaiah on Agriculture, FSPI on Via Campesina plans; "Kalakal, Industriya, at Kinabukasan ng Bansa": A DRTS Roundtable on Trade and Industrial Policy; SNR! picket in front of the Department of Agriculture on September 9, 2005 in commemoration of the anniversary of the self-immolation of Korean farmer, Lee Kyung Hae; ECAs and Human Rights Accountability Conference, Brussels; SNR! Speakers training for Mindanao, Davao City; SNR! meeting/informal dialogue with Gonzalo Berron of Hemispheric Social Alliance to discuss the issue of alternatives and the Latin American experience on campaigning against the FTAA; Protest at Korean Embassy to demand Pull-out of Korean Troops from Iraq (Iraq Solidarity Campaign); SNR! Provincial forum in Lucena City; Developed a grant proposal for the Alliance of Small Farmers, Farm Workers and Fisherfolks (AMMM), which organized the Luzon Farmer-Fisher Political Economic Summit in October. This was a meeting to facilitate the strengthening and consolidation of the peasant and fisherfolk movements based in Luzon, the biggest island of the country, to discuss the deepening agrarian and economic crisis amidst a globalised trade regime and identify strategies and ways of working together; LDCs People's Forum, Phnom Penh; SNR! Provincial forum in Pampanga

October: SNR! was part of the Fisherfolk Caravan initiated by Kilusang Mangingisda (Fisherfolk Movement). The Caravan dubbed "'Lakbayan para Ipagtanggol ang Pangisdaan' (Fisherfolk Caravan to Defend Philippine Fisheries), in La Union and ended in Marinduque province. Simultaneous caravans were also held in Bacolod, Bohol, Cebu, Lanao and Davao provinces; Request for dialogue with Secretary Peter Favila of the Trade and Industry department which he never granted; DRTS Foreign Policy, Organizing Committee Meeting, Balay Kalinaw, UP Diliman; SNR! Participation in the DTI-sponsored Industry consultation on NAMA; Luzon Farmer-Fisher Political Economic Summit: Advancing a Farmer and Fisherfolk Agenda amidst a Globalised Trade Regime and Political Economic Crisis, Quezon City, Philippines. This was a meeting of producers and stakeholders which aimed to deepen collective understanding and analysis about the current rural trade situation, worsening political and economic crises in the country, and other broader rural development concerns, and to strengthen collaborative strategies among various rural movements and groups. It brought together 30 organizations from 11 provinces in Luzon; SNR! (with Welga ng Kababaihan) Luzon wide speakers training for women; Participation in the PARRDS-DAR Hacienda Luisita/Stock Distribution Option Forum in Sulo Hotel, Quezon City; Participation in the National Consultative Workshop on Post-LAD Scenario conducted by the Department of Agrarian Reform and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Pasig City, Philippines; SNR! Provincial forum in Infanta, Quezon; SNR! participation in the second General Council of the Peoples conference in Geneva. SNR! delegates actively took part in meetings with the Chairs of the agriculture, NAMA, and GATS committees. They also participated in the successful mobilizations spearheaded by the Geneva Peoples Alliance; Documentation/technical support and Participation to the Second Rural Women's Congress, San Mateo, Rizal, Philippines; Discussion group/ workshop with rural women on the Lran and Via Campesina gender and land project; SNR! participation (120 activists) in the World Food Day mobilization spearheaded by the Philippine NGO Liaison Committee on Fair Trade and Food Security (PNLC); SNR! mobilization of around 400 activists for the internationally coordinated day of action vs. WTO and GATS; SNR! forum was held in Cebu City. The forum also doubled up as the Speakers Training for members of SNR!-Cebu.

October-December: SNR!! Mindanao conducted community education workshops and provincial and city-wide forums in 16 municipalities and cities across Regions 9-12 in Mindanao.

November: SNR! presentation before Muslim leaders in a forum organized by Assalam and GCAP-Philippines; SNR! Provincial forum in Laguna; Organized a meeting and presented at the Consultation/ meeting with agrarian reform groups on the upcoming FAO International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development; DRTS Core Group Meeting, Sulo Hotel, Quezon City; SNR! Provincial forum in Bataan; SNR!

Provincial forum in Baler, Aurora; Globalisation and Dislocation - an exhibition of graphic designs, digital imaging and installations from 9 visual artists of the social realists tradition, at the Gallery, UP Main Library, Gonzales Hall; Participation in the Kilos AR! Forum and strategy session on land reform; Assistance to the Filipino Farmers' delegation to Hong Kong.

December: Educational Discussion on agrarian reform landscape of small farmers and fisherfolks with Prof. Germelino Bautista of the Ateneo De Manila University School of Economics in Quezon City, Philippines; SNR! successive pickets in front of the offices of the National Economic Development Authority or NEDA and the Department of Trade and Industry to deliver demand letters to Deputy Director General Marge Songco, chief negotiator on services, and Secretary Peter Favila, chief negotiator; Week of Solidarity with Palestine (forums, exhibit, film-showing), with guest from the Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (Iraq Solidarity Campaign); SNR! Central Luzon wide forum in San Fernando, Pampanga; SNR! briefing with environmental groups sponsored by the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center - Friends of the Earth Philippines; Album launching of the Rock against the Round Concerts at Freedom Bar, Quezon City; Send-off concert in Marikina; Farmers and Fishers and Migrant Workers concerts in Hong Kong; Strategy session for the FAO ICARRD and intervention at the national and regional level; National Mobilization against the new round of trade talks and send-off to country negotiators to Hong Kong, Plaza Miranda, Manila; SNR! official delegation to the 6th WTO Ministerial, Peter Laviña from SNR! Mindanao, Jean Enriquez from the Coalition against Trafficking of Women (CATW), and Gina dela Cruz of Alab Katipunan, participated in several discussions including meetings with the Philippine negotiators and press conferences. SNR! took the lead in drafting a letter addressed to Secretary Peter Favila demanding that the Philippines reject Annex C as the basis for the services negotiations; SNR! actions and events in Hong Kong in close coordination with the Hong Kong People's Alliance during the People's Week of Action against the WTO, including the Fishers Fluvial Parade (December 13), GATS mobilization (December 14), and the Peasants Rally (December 17) which was violently dispersed by the Hong Kong Police. SNR! also co-organized a big rally/concert on December 18 which drew a crowd of over 1,000 people mostly Filipino migrant workers in Hong Kong; SNR! participation in the dialogue with civil society organisations by the Philippine Consulate office in Hong Kong; SNR! with Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development and the Freedom from Debt Coalition mobilization on the GATS and the privatization of services as part of the international day of protest against GATS. The mobilization in front of the NEDA office coincided with similar actions in Hong Kong; SNR!! post-HK assessment press conference at GreenHouse, Diliman, Quezon City; Focus 10th year anniversary, Conspiracy Garden Café, Quezon City- a gathering of Focus' friends, allies and partners to celebrate its decade-long struggle.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Website

Beginning from 2002, Focus shifted from a static html based website to a dynamic database driven site. We adopted a policy of using open source products as the mainstay of our web presence. We began with Mambo open source content management system and then shifting to Post Nuke, and now to Joomla! Open source. All of these are open source based on PHP and Mysql. The shifts in the content management systems were to facilitate the harnessing of latest developments in internet technology and improve the user's experience of the Focus website. We have consistently adopted technologies that are easily accessible by users from the Global South, therefore, a prime consideration was fast loading over slow internet connections, user friendly interfaces and higher level of user inter activity.

Web Statistics for 2005

Number of pages viewed: 2,812,140
Number of unique visitors: 483,504
Total bandwidth transferred: 1771.68 GB
External links to Focus website: 7540

These are average statistics for the year, there are some monthly changes, with some months having higher rates of hits and traffic, especially in December 2005 during the Hong Kong ministerial.

Publications

Focus is known for its incisive analysis on a range of issues, many of which have been published as articles on the website, collated into our dossier series and books. The listing below does not represent the articles and analytical pieces which have been posted on the website, but refers to the printed material we have produced. All of them, except for the books, are cov-

ered under a creative commons license, and available on the website with full access to everyone.

Books 2003 - 2005

Dilemmas of Domination: The unmaking of the American Empire

By Walden Bello, Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, New York (2005)

Deglobalisation: Ideas for new world economy

By Walden Bello, Zed Books, London New York. (2004)

Anti-Development State: The Political Economy of Permanent Crisis in the Philippines by Walden Bello, co-authored

By Mary Lou Malig, Herbert Docena and Marissa de Guzman, Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines. (2004)

Behind the Scenes at the WTO: the Real World of International Trade Negotiations

By Fatoumata Jawara and Aileen Kwa, Zed Books, London New York (2003)

The Struggle for Land: A summary of discussions and Strategies at the Asia Land Meeting, focus on the Global South (2003)

Power Politics in the WTO

By Aileen Kwa, Focus on the Global South (2003)

Dossiers 2003-2005

Anti Poverty or Anti Poor?:The Millennium Development Goals and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (October 2003, reprinted again in 2005)

The ADB and policy (mis) governance in Asia (May 2005)

Silent War: The US' Economic and Ideological Occupation of Iraq (March 2005)

Anti Poverty or Anti Poor?:The Millennium Development Goals and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (October 2003)

Campaign Material

The Derailer's Guide to the WTO: The answers to your questions on the WTO and how we can together DERAIL the WTO! (December 2005)

Multimedia

WTO: why is it Bad for You (2003)
WTO: why is it REALLY BAD for you (2005)
Both are streamed online and can be ordered and downloaded online.

Focus on Trade 2005

Focus on Trade is a regular electronic bulletin providing updates and analysis of trends in regional and world trade and finance, the political economy of globalisation and peoples resistance, and alternatives to global capitalism.

Focus on Trade is translated into Spanish and Bahasa Indonesia. Some articles are translated into French, Portugese and Arabic. From 2003 to 2005 there have been 36 issues, all of which are available online and printable in the pdf format. See: <http://www.focusweb.org/content/blogsection/9/60/>

Issues in 2005: Numbers 107 to 114 Plus Focus: On the road to Hong Kong

Number 107, February 2005

Food Aid and Local Production: Who Will Feed Aceh?
Indra Lubis and Isabelle Delforge
East Timor: A Tiny Half-Island Of Surplus Humanity
Ben Moxham
Reconstruction: An Emerging Paradigm
Shalmali Guttal

Number 108, April 2005

The End of an Illusion: WTO Reform, Global Civil Society and The Road To Hong Kong
By Focus on The Global South
'The Iraqi Resistance Is A Popular Resistance', An Interview With Sheik Jawad Khalisi Of The Iraqi National Foundation Congress
Herbert Docena
The Wolf Is Dead, Long Live The Wolf
Raj Patel

Number 109, April 2005

The Wolfensohn Era at The World Bank: A Decade Of Contradictions
Walden Bello & Shalmali Guttal
Wolfowitz In The Philippines : A Historical Footnote
Walden Bello
Thailand-Us Free Trade Agreement: "Whatever We Have To Sacrifice Must Be Sacrificed, If That Helps Get A Better Deal."

Sajin Prachason
Inside The Matrix: The Philippines ' National Id System
Herbert Docena

Number 110, June 2005

A Message to Everyone Going to Edinburgh on 2 July
Nicola Bullard
Inside the Murky World Of The UK 'S Make Poverty History Campaign
Stuart Hodgkinson
The Role of the 'Coalition Of The Willing' In The Violation Of International Law and Universal Human Rights
Walden Bello
'Shock And Awe' Therapy: How The United States Is Attempting To Control Iraq 'S Oil and Pry Open Its Economy
Herbert Docena

Number 111, August 2005

Are the WTO Talks In Trouble? Don't Bet On It
Walden Bello
Keeping the Spotlight On Geneva
Jacques-chai Chomthongdi
Lamy's Mission Impossible?
Nicola Bullard
The "G-Guide" to Groupings in the WTO Agriculture Negotiations
Jacques-chai Chomthongdi
Empire and After
Jayati Ghosh

Number 112, September 2005

On Secretary General Annan's Vision Of "Freedom From Fear"
Walden Bello
Why Un Reform Is Not A Priority
Nicola Bullard
Iraq's Neo-Liberal Constitution
Herbert Docena
The Tragedy Of Contemporary Democracy In The South
Walden Bello
Us-Venezuela Confrontation Rips Through Democracy Meet
Josua Mata

Number 113, September 2005

A Suitable Boy: Paul Wolfowitz And The World Bank
Shalmali Guttal
Assessing The G8 Debt Proposal & Its Implications
Soren Ambrose
War, The 21st Century & America's Future: From 9/11 To Hurricane Katrina
Tom Reifer

Number 114, November 2005

The Great Gats Scandal
Aileen Kwa
The Global Crisis Of Legitimacy Of Liberal Democracy
Walden Bello

Focus: On The Road to Hong Kong, Number 1
24 November 2005

New Video: WTO: Why Is It Really Bad For You?
From Finish Line To Pit Stop: Why The WTO is Now Changing Gears
Mary Lou Malig
Letter To The Editor: Civil Society Replies To The CEOs
"Global Trade: Look At The Facts Rather Than Heed Corporate Lobbying"

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 2
28 November 2005

The Derailer's Guide to the WTO
Focus on the Global South
WTO Draft Ministerial Text An "Empty Package"
Aileen Kwa, Jacques-chai Chomthongdi and Joseph Purugganan
Nothing to Gain, Everything to Lose: Developing Country Prospects at The Hong Kong WTO Ministerial and Beyond
Walden Bello

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 3
11 December 2005

Disneyland, Doha and the WTO in Hong Kong: The Spectacle Of Corporate Fear, Absurdity and the New Universalism
Hidayat Greenfield
In Geneva: GATS Draft Points in Dangerous Direction
Aileen Kwa

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 4
12 December 2005

Lamy: Dishonest Broker In Trade Talks, Disappearance Of Cover Note
Aileen Kwa
Lamy Plans To Hoodwink Africans With Empty "Development" And Aid Promises
Aileen Kwa
WTO Falling Out of Favor With The Caribbean
Hon. Charles Savarin, Minister Of Foreign Affairs, Trade And Labour, Commonwealth Of Dominica
Why South Africa Needs To Oppose Gats
Dot Keet

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 5
13 December 2005

WTO Ministerial Begins Amid Protests Inside And Outside The HK Convention Centre .
Walden Bello Debates Deputy Director General
Negotiation Update
War By Several Means - Bombs And The WTO
Kong Ye Sai Mau
Fluvial Parade

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong, Number 6
14 December 2005

Negotiations Update
Aid For Trade - Another Empty Promise
International Day Of Protest Against Gats And Privatization
The G20 Challenge

Protest At Opening Ceremony Reported Across The World

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 7
15 December 2005

Negotiation Update
Focus on NAMA - Positions Remain Entrenched
Agriculture - Discussions Begin
Petition Handed To Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath
Services
Ten Reasons Why No Deal Is Better Than A Bad Deal
Development Package: Confirmed Totally Empty!

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 8
16 December 2005

Services Text Blows Up In The Face Of The Hong Kong Ministerial
Analysis Of Just Released Agriculture Text (Aileen Kwa)
Civil Society Calls On Rich Countries To Stop Imposing Extreme Demands On Developing Countries
Hong Kong Locals On Hunger Strike
Pascal Lamy and The Sorcerer's Box

Focus: On The Road To Hong Kong Number 9
17 December 2005

Draft WTO Text A Slap In The Face For The Developing World
Social Movements Storm Hong Kong Streets In Protest Over Negotiations
Highly Flawed Process In Services Talks Continues In Hong Kong
A Comma, The Punctuation And The Re-Hashed 'Annex C' - Why It Is Still A Problem
China, The WTO, And The Anti-Globalisation Movement

Focus: Off The Hong Kong Road And Back On The Streets Number 10
19 December 2005

Quick Guide: The Disaster that is The HK Ministerial Declaration
Protesters Remain in Prison with Little Contact, Food or Health Care - A Violation Of Rights
WTO Fiasco
Deception - EU to Provide \$55 Billion even if Export Subsidies were to be Cut
Journalists Discover The Real Hong Kong

Apart from Focus on Trade, the other e-bulletins produced are Focus on the Philippines and Focus on India, produced and mailed from Manila and Mumbai respectively. The electronic versions of both are available online at the country programme pages. See <http://www.focusweb.org/philippines> and <http://www.focusweb.org/india/>

Occasional Papers

In 2005 we decided to launch a new publications series entitled "Occasional Papers". These papers will be longer than those published in the Dossiers, and will be read and reviewed by non-Focus staff before publication. While it is expected that the majority of papers will be written by Focus staff, we are also open to publishing original research and policy analysis by visiting and volunteers researchers and researchers from partner organisations. The first two papers in this series are on globalisation in the Lao PDR and on contract farming in Thailand. Both will be published early 2006.

Media Work

Media Training 2004

Focus organised a one-day media training programme for all interested staff. This was held in Bangkok. The media training was an effort to build the capacity of Focus staff members for effective media communications. The one-day training was well received.

Media coverage in 2005

The country programme reports contain detailed listings of Focus' media activities during 2005. In the lead up to and during the Hong Kong ministerial, we were lucky to have the talents of an experienced media and campaign activist who volunteered to work with Focus during this period. The experience of having a dedicated media officer to maximize Focus' impact and information dissemination was excellent and Focus will be assessing whether we should consider engaging a full time media person in future to complement and support our work.

Below is an (incomplete) list of the media reporting Focus' and our allies views during the ministerial:

Voice of America
Financial Times
South China Morning Post

The Zimbabwe Chronicle
Bangkok Post
The Nation, Thailand
Open democracy.net
International Herald Tribune
BBC World Service
BBC Television
CNBC
Times of India
The Indian Express
Financial Express, India
Mindanao Times
Business Mirror
Philippine Daily Inquirer
ABS-CBN News Channel
Manila Times

Shortfalls

Translation

We would like to acknowledge the terrific work of the translation team in Uruguay who faithfully translate Focus on Trade into Spanish, and to the team of volunteers at Corditrad who provide a great number of French translations.

While Focus has strived to make its material widely available, we have not had much success in translating our material into Asian languages. However, it is worth noting that some of our material, like the Focus video has been translated into nearly 16 languages, from Estonian to Turkish and Korean. Some specific pieces have been translated in many languages, but in general there is still a lot more that could be done. We are constrained by both financial resources and the lack of capacity to fulfill this crucial aspect, and have relied on volunteered efforts for much of the translation.

Better media outreach

The lessons from the Hong Kong Ministerial work, where a dedicated media person had managed to catapult Focus into the media limelight, provides us with an example to follow. It will be necessary to look into the need to have similar positions for specific campaign purposes or possibly a permanent position.

ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Staff Updates

Due to the wider scope of the India trade work, Af-sar Jafri joined as a research associate in July. Aileen Kwa finished her one year's leave of absence and is now back on board starting from September 2005. Ben Moxham completed his contract as a research assistant in February and moved back to Australia. Jacques-chai Chomthongdi was based in Geneva for a year starting January doing campaign work on WTO. Dorothy Guerrero joined as a senior research associate in June 2005 to head up the China programme and Frederico Almeida from Finland joined Focus doing an internship from June to December working on the land reform project. Brett Solomon was our volunteer media officer during the Hong Kong ministerial and we would like to acknowledge his efforts, which went above and beyond reasonable (or even unreasonable!) expectations!

Staff Retreat and Programme Review

On June 15-18 Focus held a staff retreat in Jomtien, Pattaya. There was a discussion on our six programs and another discussion on country programme. We also started the programme and organization review/evaluation process following the instructions sent by email from the evaluators. We had expected this to be difficult but in fact it was fun, really interesting and successful, thanks to our own ad hoc facilitation team of Benny, Marylou, Joseph and Jacques-chai.

Later in the year, there was a Focus review and planning workshop on 24-28 October. The three external evaluators -- Hilary Coulby, Smitu Kothari and Germelino (Boying) Bautista -- facilitated the workshop. We started with a discussion on the re-

view documents then continued with the presentation of major findings, with observations and clarifications on each document, followed by group work on scenario building, strategies and planning. On the last day, we discussed who is our constituency, mapped and prioritized objectives and identified primary and secondary targets for campaigning. We also outlined the timetable of key activities and plans for next steps. The workshop was very fruitful in providing the content for the 2006-2008 work plan.

Focus Board

There was a Board meeting in June 14-15, right before the staff retreat to discuss the campaign and programme updates. The second day the Board did an evaluation exercise in preparation for the external evaluation. There was also a discussion of funding and financial reports. Eight board members and one advisor attended.

There are no changes in the Board status with all 13 members and 3 advisors continuing.

Board Members

Walden Bello
Focus on the Global South
Bangkok, Thailand

Alejandro Bendaña
Centro de Estudios Internacionales
Managua City, Nicaragua

Boua Chanthou
Padek
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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

Somchai Homlaor
Internet Law Consultants Limited
Bangkok, Thailand

Kamal Malhotra
United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)
New York, NY USA

Abdul Hameed Nayyar
Sustainable Development Policy Institute
Islamabad, Pakistan

Peter Rosset
Oaxaca
Mexico

Dita Sari
FNPBI
Jakarta, Indonesia

Suwattana Thadaniti
CUSRI, Chulalongkorn University
Bangkok, Thailand

Nguyen Van Thanh
Center for Development Study and Outreach
Vietnam Peace and Development Foundation, Vietnam

Surichai Wun'Gaeo (Chair)
Center for Social Development Studies
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

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

Advisers

Victor P. Karunan
UNICEF Headquarter
New York, USA

Martin Khor
Third World Network (TWN)
Penang, Malaysia

Amara Pongsapich
Chulalongkorn University
Bangkok, Thailand

Staff 2005

Afsar Jafri (from July)
Aileen Kwa (from September)
Anoop Sukumaran
Ben Moxham (to February)
Benny Kuruvilla
Brett Solomon (volunteer November-December)
Chanida Bamford
Dorothy Guerrero (from June)
Frederico Almeida (intern July to December)

Herbert Docena
Jacques-chai Chomthongdi
Joseph Purugganan
Jenina Joy Chavez
Julie Anne delos Reyes
Lou Torres
Mary Ann Manahan
Mary Lou Malig
Mayuree Ruechakiattikul
Meena Mennon
Neelam Dhanawade
Nicola Bullard
Praphai Jundee
Sajin Prachason
Shalmali Guttal
Sonila Shetty
Soontaree Nakaviroj
Varsha Berry
Walden Bello

Core Funders 2005

11.11.11 Belgium
ActionAid International Asia
Christian Aid, UK
CORDAID, the Netherlands
Development and Peace, Canada
Ford Foundation, USA
HIVOS, the Netherlands
Inter Pares, Canada
NOVIB, the Netherlands
Oxfam Australia
Oxfam GB, East Asia Regional Management Centre, Thailand
Oxfam HK, Hong Kong
Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), USA
Trocaire, Ireland
Mr. Boyd Reimer, Canada (individual funder)

We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organizations/individuals towards conferences and specific projects.

11.11.11- Belgium
Evaluation process and additional position in Geneva

ActionAid Asia
Additional position in Geneva

Christian Aid
WSF Porto Alegre 2005, Anti War Assembly in Hyderabad and Trade campaign - From Cancun to Hong Kong

Earl R. Murphy
Beirut International Assembly (2004)

EED / Rede Sociale de Justise
LRAN Project

Food First/Ford Foundation
LRAN Project

Gund Foundation / IFG
Alternatives - Food Sovereignty

Heinrich Boell Foundation
OWINFS Events (2004)

ICCO – Netherlands
WSF Porto Alegre 2005

INTER PARES
Trade Campaign - From Cancun to Hong Kong

JMG Foundation
Trade Campaign - From Cancun to Hong Kong

Novib
WSF Porto Alegre 2005

Oxfam Australia
Publications

Oxfam GB
Trade Campaign - From Cancun to Hong Kong

PARC – Japan
Preparation of research papers for Forum on International Regulation, Hong Kong.

Womyn's Agenda for Change
WTO Conference in Hong Kong

In addition, the following organizations supported for staff or delegates travel costs for various events.

Crisis Management Initiatives, DTP, e4Globe, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung -Thailand, Jubilee South, MSF-Belgium, RBF and University of Warwick



Some Focus Staff members at the office in Bangkok

Comparison of Budget, Income and Expenditure December 31, 2005

Amount in USD

	Budget (1)	Income (2)	Act.Expenditure (3)	Variance Budget-Act.Exp. (1)-(3)	Variance Income-Act.Exp. (2)-(3)
Alternatives Program	95,800.00	69,476.28	62,863.95	32,936.05	6,612.33
Trends&Analysis	84,600.00	48,115.32	43,046.83	41,553.17	5,068.49
Peace & Security Campaign	118,300.00	89,873.18	89,961.02	28,338.98	-87.84
Trade Campaign	187,300.00	197,717.69	158,681.03	28,618.97	39,036.66
Financial & Development Campaign	105,400.00	93,499.61	66,267.45	39,132.55	27,232.16
Communication	84,200.00	76,637.07	71,335.84	12,864.16	5,301.23
Admin. & Organisation Development	119,400.00	138,053.67	132,146.90	-12,746.90	5,906.77
ASF/WSF	51,000.00	54,898.24	51,625.75	-625.75	3,272.49
<i>Conference:</i>					
<i>Jakarta conference (Deficit Cost support by Focus)-Peace&Sec.</i>					
WTO Meeting -Cancun, Mexico - Trade campaign					
ASF/WSF - (Deficit cost support by Focus)ASF Hyderabad &WSF III conf.					
Geneva conference			20,194.35	-20,194.35	-20,194.35
WTO Strategy meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka			15,032.88	-15,032.88	-15,032.88
WTO ministerial Meeting -HK (Dec.05)			44,134.33	-44,134.33	-44,134.33
Special Project		79,406.01			79,406.01
Professional fee		5,862.35			5,862.35
Bank interest income		5,263.44			5,263.44
Other income		3,076.31			3,076.31
Gain or Loss on Exchange		3,162.53			3,162.53
Total	846,000.00	865,041.70	755,290.33	90,709.67	109,751.37

NOTE:

* 1 USD.= 40.00 BHT (same rate as we used in Work Plan'2005)

** Does not include India & Philippines funds direct through their country

Comparison of Budget, Income and ExpenditureAs at December 31, 2004

Amount in USD

	Budget (1)	Income (2)	Act.Expense (3)	Variance Budget- Act.Exp. (1)-(3)	Variance Income-Act. Exp. (2)-(3)
Alternatives Program	76,700.00	85,758.70	80,215.08	-3,515.08	5,543.62
Trends&Analysis	49,700.00	47,950.11	41,232.28	8,467.72	6,717.83
Peace &Security Campaign	112,000.00	113,418.31	105,995.00	6,005.00	7,423.31
Trade Campaign	147,300.00	209,265.04	174,720.31	-27,420.31	34,544.73
Financial & Development Campaign	73,700.00	69,174.04	64,393.89	9,306.11	4,780.15
Communication	86,300.00	76,909.19	73,033.39	13,266.61	3,875.80
Admin. & Organisation Development	117,300.00	108,151.54	104,049.23	13,250.77	4,102.31
ASF/WSF	59,200.00	61,011.69	57,603.41	1,596.59	3,408.28
<i>Conference:</i>					
<i>Jakarta conference (Deficit Cost support by Focus)-Peace&Sec.</i>					
<i>WTO Meeting -Cancun, Mexico - Trade campaign</i>					
<i>ASF/WSF - (Deficit cost support by Focus)ASF Hyderabad &WSF III conf.</i>					
<i>Geneva conference</i>					
<i>WTO Strategy meeting in Colombo,Sri Lanka</i>					
<i>WTO ministerial Meeting -HK (Dec.05)</i>					
Special Project					
Professional fee		3,939.22			3,939.22
Bank Interest income		2,751.09			2,751.09
Other income		5,915.74			5,915.74
Gain or Loss on Exchange		-11,656.12			-11,656.12
Total	722,200.00	772,588.55	701,242.59	20,957.41	71,345.96

NOTE:

* 1 USD.= 40.00 BHT (same rate as we used in Work Plan'2004)

** Does not include India & Philippines funds direct through their country

Comparison of Budget, Income and Expenditure As at December 31, 2003

Amount in USD

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Act. Expense</u>	<u>Variance Budget-Act. Exp.</u>	<u>Variance Income-Act. Exp.</u>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)-(3)	(2)-(3)
Alternatives Program	91,000.00	71,626.58	79,443.24	11,556.76	-7,816.66
Trends&Analysis	86,600.00	55,776.40	63,094.29	23,505.71	-7,317.89
Peace & Security Campaign	99,700.00	89,823.62	98,311.82	1,388.18	-8,488.20
Trade Campaign	130,400.00	129,015.62	137,036.66	-6,636.66	-8,021.04
Financial & Development Campaign	80,800.00	56,592.36	65,557.66	15,242.34	-8,965.30
Communication	112,900.00	64,508.49	69,672.88	43,227.12	-5,164.39
Admin. & Organisation Development	121,900.00	86,573.73	94,378.05	27,521.95	-7,804.32
ASF/WSF	80,700.00	63,080.51	68,787.18	11,912.82	-5,706.67
Conference:					
Jakarta conference (Deficit Cost support by Focus)-Peace&Sec.			12,287.87	-12,287.87	-12,287.87
WTO Meeting -Cancun, Mexico - Trade campaign	35,000.00	6,522.67	24,370.00	10,630.00	-17,847.33
ASF/WSF - (Deficit cost support by Focus)ASF Hyderabad &WSF Ill conf.	35,000.00		35,889.98	-889.98	-35,889.98
Geneva conference					
WTO Strategy meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka					
WTO ministerial Meeting -HK (Dec.05)					
Special Project					
Professional fee		322.55			322.55
Bank interest income		1,954.78			1,954.78
Other income		3,770.48			3,770.48
Gain or Loss on Exchange		-22,255.72			-22,255.72
Total	874,000.00	607,312.07	748,829.63	125,170.37	-141,517.56

NOTE:

* 1 USD.= 43.00 BHT (same rate as we used in Work Plan'2003)

** Does not include India & Philippines funds direct through their country

ANNEX

REVIEW OF FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH 1995 - 2005 OVERVIEW REPORT

*By Hilary Coulby, Germelino M Bautista
and Smitu Kothari*
December 2005

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1995, Focus on the Global South (Focus) is a non-governmental organisation that employs 20 staff in offices in India, the Philippines and in Thailand, where it has its head office. Ten years have passed since Focus was founded and during that time the size, scope and complexity of its work has grown significantly. At the same time, there have been many changes in the external environment.

This review was commissioned by Focus in order to explore the role it has played in promoting and supporting positive change and to discover what others see as its strengths and weaknesses. The information obtained through the review is being used as a foundation for developing directions and strategies for the future. This work has already begun and is due to be completed by April 2006.

The review does not attempt to provide a history of Focus nor examine the entirety of Focus's work over the past ten years. Instead, its investigations have been guided by questions raised by the Focus Board of Trustees and by Focus staff during an internal assessment of the issues and challenges facing the organisation.

The review team¹ began work in September and conducted a total of 39 semi-structured interviews. These took place face to face with respondents in India, the Philippines, Thailand and the UK and by telephone with respondents in Canada, Europe, East and Southern Africa, Latin and Central America, South East Asia and the USA. In addition, questionnaires were sent to

110 contacts, of which 41 replied. While the review is mainly qualitative, statistical analysis of the questionnaire responses has been carried out and is presented in Appendix Six.

Respondent organisations included those identifying themselves as allies, social movements, development policy NGOs, trade analysts, funding partners, peace and security workers, World Social Forum (WSF) activists and groups seeking alternatives.

UNDERSTANDING OF FOCUS' VISION AND AGENDA

All those interviewed had some understanding of the Focus agenda, but no one mentioned the concept of deglobalisation as such. In some Southern countries, respondents have a weak knowledge of Focus as an institution and are familiar with only one or two individuals and a single area of work. Not surprisingly, those who have known Focus the longest have the most comprehensive view of the organisation's agenda but most respondents understand that Focus is seeking fundamental changes. This was expressed, for example, as "*deconstructing dominant development paradigms and the powers that drive them*" or "*achieving a fundamental change away from neoliberal policies*". About half the respondents linked this work to strengthening social movements.

OVERALL STRENGTHS

Focus is regarded as a valuable presence amongst civil

1 Hilary Coulby, Germelino M Bautista and Smitu Kothari

groups and admired for being an effective, independent Southern NGO with a radical global perspective that can relate on equal terms with groups in the North.

Review respondents admire Focus' policy work and, even when they do not agree with positions it takes, recognise the radical intellectual stimulus it gives to debates in civil society.

Focus' role as a convenor and networker, its ability to link individuals and groups across countries and regions and create strategic networks is seen as a significant contribution to strengthening movements for change. *"For the last 10 years there have been two major global movements, one against globalisation and the other for peace, that have brought people together. Focus has been central to, and a huge influence on both."*

The work of Focus with people's and social movements is also highly appreciated with both international and local movements reporting their respect for its contributions as a facilitator, capacity builder and networker. *"Focus is a leading light in social movements and in building and supporting movements and bringing people together."* It is also seen to play a key role in the World Social Forum.

Almost all respondents view Focus as a reliable partner with many very competent staff. It has a greater outreach than similar organisations because it makes its staff available to speak at conferences, the World Social Forum and directly to individual groups.

Other aspects of its work that are appreciated include its well maintained website and useful publications; the open and transparent manner in which it operates; its ability to act as a bridge between different NGOs on trade issues; the attempt to bring together an analysis that encompasses trade, war and militarisation; and the fact that it has maintained a radical position on the WTO.

Focus' work on the WTO was singled out for particular praise by a number of respondents. Alongside producing good technical proposals, the organisation is believed to have strengthened the confidence of developing country delegations to the WTO and played a great insider-outsider role in Cancun.

OVERALL WEAKNESSES

Both peace and security commentators and those from other groups share the view that Focus' current work on peace and security is of an uneven standard. There is concern that some of its analysis is poorly informed and overly ideological and could be better characterised as being anti-war rather than peace building.

Focus staff are seen as over-stretched by almost all the groups they work with. This sometimes results in poor follow up and can mean that Focus is more reactive

than strategic. Greater discipline in prioritising work based on a shared strategy is thought to be the solution to this problem. A number of respondents commented that Focus staff have forceful personalities and strong convictions and can be perceived to be intimidating where there are differences of opinion. More gentle forms of persuasion might be more effective.

Having a staff dispersed across a number of locations is seen as a strength but one that brings difficulties in terms of communications, limits the organisation's ability to bring its staff together and sometimes leads to problems in establishing organisational wide consensus on analysis and strategy.

A number of groups share concerns about Focus' dependence on Walden Bello as a high profile leader and the negative consequences for the organisation should he decide to leave it. While it is recognised that Focus has a strong cadre of staff, more work is required to develop their capacities and give them a higher profile on regional and international platforms.

POLICY RESEARCH, ANALYSIS AND ADVOCACY

Focus is widely respected by those it interacts with for its timely and relevant policy research and analysis. The analysis and publications produced by the organisation are seen as helpful and accessible to those already engaged with the issues. However, they do not meet the needs of other groups, including grassroots groups. If it wishes to have a wider reach, Focus would benefit from tailoring its materials so that they are appropriate for the audiences it wants to address.

Almost all respondents agreed that Focus' policy advocacy has had an impact on movements, networks and other civil groups. One respondent said that Focus *"ranks number one in effectiveness through increasing the effectiveness of citizens groups."* Close allies see its work as part of a larger movement for change that together is making a difference.

A second set of respondents think that Focus' influence on institutions is indirect and happens via its influence on movements and civil groups: *"Focus does not change government or institutional policies and change does not depend only on what Focus does. But it has contributed to organising civil groups worldwide that do have the potential to change governments, that is, Focus has an indirect impact."*

A third set believe that Focus has little impact on governments and institutions. For some of these, this is a result of Focus' analysis being too radical, or too ideological, or couched in alienating language. For them: *"the fact that it has succeeded in making the move-*

ment stronger does not mean that it is changing the system.”

There is general agreement that Focus' impact on the wider public and mainstream media has been minimal.

Except in relation to its WTO work which has a clear empirical basis, commentators were divided on whether Focus' analysis is sufficiently rooted in evidence. Social movements and others think that its analysis would be improved if it represented more fully the specifics of local contexts. Closer links to intellectuals in academic research institutions, think tanks, parliamentarians and even some government officials could also give greater depth to research and analysis. Critics believe that analysis is weakened by the fact that Focus plays an “outsider” role and (with exception to its WTO work) lacks the in depth understanding of institutions and policies that comes from combining this with an “insider” role.

Groups working with Focus are also split regarding whether the positions it takes are plausible. For social movements and their close allies, taking audacious positions is a good thing, regardless of whether these are plausible. Others are more cautious but believe that working with larger global coalitions that share common positions provides credibility. Some critics believe that less ideology and more empirical evidence is the key to plausibility while others note that: *“Positions become feasible when there is a clear set of steps for how you will get there and some idea of what the alternative is to the status quo.”*

ALTERNATIVES PROGRAMME

While Focus' policy work provides an analysis of what is wrong it says less about desired alternatives to the status quo. Southern organisations and those whose work with Focus centres on trade issues rated Focus's success in providing alternatives higher than northern and non-trade organisations, but many respondents were unaware that Focus has an alternatives programme.

Respondents believe that work on alternatives is of critical importance and that Focus should devote more time and resources to this programme. Some feel that this could help Focus to be more strategic and less reactive. All agree that developing alternatives would be best undertaken with others and suggest that collaborators could include movements and grassroots groups, NGOs, think tanks, academics, government and even the private sector: *“Alternatives are complicated and NGOs should not try to write blueprints by themselves. Instead they should bring experts and interested parties together for structured discussions to develop a few simple coherent ideas.”*

STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING THE FOCUS VISION

Achieving Focus' vision will require fundamental changes in the way the world operates, yet Focus lacks a clear model for how this can be brought about. Respondents believe that Focus would attract more support for its positions if its strategy was transparent, coherent and set out the steps required to achieve its vision.

Having no explicit strategy means Focus has no obvious foundation for choosing how and where to intervene. According to both staff and respondents, this results in a reactive approach with staff continually over-loaded with work and unable to provide follow up on initiatives. Lack of an overall strategy and programme of work also makes it difficult to prioritise between, for example, direct versus indirect influencing, support to social movements versus research and policy analysis. It also makes it difficult for outsiders to understand why one country is selected, or one thematic area is pursued, rather than another.

The challenge for Focus is to develop a plan of action that is sufficiently flexible to allow it to respond to important, unforeseen events and demands, but sufficiently firm to ensure that new work is only taken on if it can be seen to make a significant contribution to the overall agenda.

In order for Focus to bring about change, questionnaire respondents felt that continuing work with traditional allies should be combined with identifying and linking with new ones. They believe that change will require the support of new groups including, for example, metropolitan movements, environmentalists, migrants, the unemployed, young people and Muslim communities as well as policy makers and institutions of power. *“In order for change to happen, there needs to be a change in the power balance. This means identifying critical actors and finding ways to make them change their minds. Public opinion, the media, parliamentarians and intellectuals should all be targeted.”*

FOCUS' STATUS AS AN NGO

Almost all respondents either think that being an NGO is a good thing, or that the organisational form taken by Focus is unimportant. Of greater importance is the way Focus operates which most feel is about right: mixing global and local work; playing a strong facilitating role with movements; relating to others in a manner that is respectful, democratic and constructive; and maintaining links to the university in Bangkok that help to ground it in Thailand.

FOCUS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The response of social and people's movements to Focus varies according to country context and to the character of each individual movement. However, there is widespread appreciation of Focus policy work and the participation of Focus staff at movement events, where it plays an important educational role. *"Focus is a leading light in social movements and in building and supporting movements and bringing people together."* Some movements say they have been considerably strengthened by Focus' support and many say they have benefited tremendously from Focus' research and analysis.

Movement and non-movement respondents alike believe that it is very important for Focus to maintain links with local level movements and to continue to play a role in bringing their voices into national and global fora.

Both movements and other commentators note that movements move at a slower pace than NGOs because of the time it takes to ensure there is broad support amongst members for any positions adopted. Focus' ability to adapt to this pace will be central to building more constructive relationships.

FUTURE CHANGES IN THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT FOR FOCUS TO CONSIDER

There is wide agreement that the emergence of China and India² as major powers will change the global landscape over the next 10-20 years, making it more complex but not necessarily improving the overall situation. The implications for Focus's future work are that it will need to continue to develop contacts in, and understanding of, both countries.

Some respondents believe that the case for neoliberalism is collapsing under the weight of its failures and hostile public opinion. For these, the key question to be answered is what will replace neoliberal institutions, including the IFIs and the WTO, when they collapse. Other commentators were less optimistic: despite their failures the structures of power are proving to be very resilient.

A number of commentators share the belief that developing viable alternative will be important in preventing an increase in fundamentalism, xenophobia and conflict.

² Trade analysts also mentioned Brazil and South Africa as emerging powers

Some North American groups believe that there are real difficulties ahead for the USA. However, the US government might be as keen as some civil groups to undermine multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, WTO and UN.

Groups working on the International Financial Institutions see an increasing determination amongst the regional banks to play a more prominent role and disburse surplus funds by re-entering the arena of large infrastructure projects. This could have negative impacts for communities, labour and the environment and will require an enhanced capacity amongst civil groups to monitor projects and engage as necessary.

Trade analysts believe that, in the future, the WTO and the multilateral trading system will share importance with bilateral and regional trading systems. Understanding these systems as they develop and addressing their deficiencies will be a very important, but complex and difficult task.

A number of groups expect climate change to become increasingly important over the next ten years with its effects increasingly evident. This will have a particularly negative impact on the lives of poor people. Climate change will also intensify the debate around the public control of natural resources and conflict over basic resources like land and water. Responding to these changes in policy work will be a big issue for the future.

Key issues for Asia will include fragile democracies, environmental destruction, increased HIV/AIDS infection rates and increased levels of conflict over water and land and other resources. From India came the comment that while people are increasingly willing to move, at the same time they are looking for a direction. The growing realisation within social movements that nobody has a complete answer is complimented by a developing tendency for movements to want to come together.

CONCLUSION

It is a testament to the esteem in which Focus is held that respondents were prepared to give generous amounts of their scarce time to the review and to thinking so carefully about the organisation's strengths and weaknesses. Their relationship with Focus, in which personal contacts are stated to be critical in managing tensions and frustrations, is characterised by much warmth of feeling.

In reflecting the many suggestions made by respondents in the spirit of genuinely constructive criticism, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that overall their message to Focus is that they value and respect the work that it does.

