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FINDING FRAMES: NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE THE UK PUBLIC IN GLOBAL POVERTY

January 2011

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Finding Frames: New ways to engage the UK public in global poverty

Andrew Darnton
with Martin Kirk

January 2011

Background

This report is the product of a six-month study initiated by Oxfam, and supported by the Department for International Development (DFID). The aim of the study was to explore the potential for frames theory to be used as a practical tool to re-engage the UK public in global poverty – an objective not pursued in concert by the development sector since Make Poverty History in 2005.

In exploring the uses of frames theory, we have built on work by Tom Crompton at WWF-UK, who began the task of linking values to frames and thereby suggesting new ways forward for engaging the public in environmental issues and actions. An important finding from his *Common Cause* paper is that there is a common set of values that can motivate people to tackle a range of 'bigger than self' problems, including the environment and global poverty. The implication is that large coalitions can – and must – be built across third-sector organisations to bring about a values change in society. This report responds to that call.

Oxfam

UKaid from the Department for International Development

Methodology

The report is based on mixed methods: mainly secondary research (ie a literature review) with some important deliberative elements brought in. Early in the study we convened a group of senior NGO staff to talk about the common practices and working assumptions in the development sector. This staged conversation became a key input into our research method. It was observed by Joe Brewer, a cognitive policy expert, who identified some of the frames present in the conversation. This has provided the kernel of our analysis of current, and possible future, frames for the sector.

This study is envisaged as the first stage in a much longer, and more collaborative, programme of work. We would like to see further debate and deliberation around the frames we have begun to identify, followed by research to validate and refine these frames. There should also be further opportunities for the sector to develop frames-based approaches to public engagement, in close co-operation with one another.

Acknowledgements

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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

The basic argument of this paper is that there is a problem in terms of the UK public's levels of engagement with global poverty. Simply put, people in the UK understand and relate to global poverty no differently now than they did in the 1980s. This is the case despite massive campaigns such as the Jubilee 2000 debt initiative and Make Poverty History; the widespread adoption and mainstreaming of digital communication techniques and social networks; steady growth in NGO fundraising revenues; the entire Millennium Development Goal story; and the establishment of a Westminster consensus on core elements of development policy.

By many measures we have made amazing strides forward in recent years, but the public have largely been left behind. The result is that we operate within social and, by extension, political conditions that are precarious in the immediate term and incommensurate to the challenges of poverty and climate change in the medium and long term.

This study looks at what can be learned from values (the guiding principles that individuals use to judge situations and determine their courses of action) and frames (the chunks of factual and procedural knowledge in the mind with which we understand situations, ideas and discourses in everyday life). Values and frames offer ways to look at the problem of public engagement with global poverty and to identify possible solutions.

If we apply values and frames theory to the question of how to re-engage the public, we come up with some compelling insights into the impact of our existing practices and some striking solutions to the problems that these reveal. They may not be perfect solutions, and they bring with them significant challenges. But we believe they offer something valuable and timely: a fresh perspective. The persistent problem of public engagement suggests it is time for the development sector to transform its practices radically. Values and frames offer pathways to potential solutions that should be debated across the sector, and now.

The problem

• Public engagement matters because the UK public has a vital role to play in tackling global poverty. This role can be described as having three dimensions. First, the public provides a licence for NGOs and government to take immediate action on global poverty (in supporting public spending on development aid, for example). Second, individuals make a positive difference through the actions they take in their daily lives (eg giving money, buying ethical or fairtrade products, volunteering and lobbying). Third, public support opens up a space for debate in society, which in turn gives government the opportunity to make the systemic changes required to tackle the causes of global poverty.

• The UK public is stuck in terms of how it engages with global poverty. Since 1997 around 25% of the UK public have reported being 'very concerned' about global poverty. In 2005, as Make Poverty History built up, these levels reached 32%. But they have fallen ever since, and are now back at 24%. Meanwhile the segmentation model used by the Department for International Development (DFID) suggests that the proportion of the most engaged segment of the public has shrunk by a third since April 2008. It now stands at only 14%.

• The quality of public engagement is also low: *"the public as a whole remain uninterested and ill-informed".* Even engaged people can't sustain a conversation about debt, trade or aid for long.

• The causes of poverty are seen as internal to poor countries: famine, war, natural disasters, bad governance, over-population and so on. The dominant paradigm has been labelled the Live Aid Legacy, characterised by the relationship of 'Powerful Giver' and 'Grateful Receiver'. Public perceptions have been stuck in this frame for 25 years. As one respondent said in recent research: *"What's happened since Live Aid? I was at school then. Now I'm 36 and nothing has really changed."*

• The practices of the development sector are strongly implicated in the state of public engagement. Data on voluntary income suggest that increasing incomes have been gained by changing the nature of engagement: by turning members into supporters, and setting them at arm's length. In the social movement literature, today's NGOs are described as 'protest businesses', and their model of public engagement is called 'cheap participation' (characterised by low barriers to entry, engagement and exit – all of which generate high churn). The sector's engagement models have achieved big numbers and ever-increasing incomes, but with what impact on the quality of public engagement?

• Make Poverty History exemplifies these themes. On the one hand, it was a spectacular success: a mass mobilisation with near universal awareness. On the other hand, it changed nothing for the UK public. The transformative potential offered by the rallying cry of 'justice not charity' went unheard, in part because it was unfamiliar and hard to comprehend, and also because it was drowned out by the noise of celebrities, white wristbands and pop concerts.

• Our reading of the Make Poverty History campaign suggests that the prevailing 'transaction frame' (in which support for tackling poverty is understood simply as making donations to charities) proved too strong. Meanwhile all the things that made the campaign 'mass' reinforced the consumerist values that make the transaction frame so dominant. In the end, Live8 reminded everyone of 1985; in the public mind, Make Poverty History became the slogan for Live8, and the Live Aid Legacy was (inadvertently) reinforced.

• The Make Poverty History case study demonstrates that frames and values can be powerful theoretical lenses through which to see problems. The rest of this paper explores these theories further. It also investigates where some of the solutions might lie, if a values and frames approach is adopted.

Towards solutions

• Values are powerful guiding principles that are foundational to humans' motivational systems. Empirical research shows that they correlate strongly with patterns of behaviour. People who have stronger 'self-transcendent' values tend to engage in more pro-social behaviours, and sustain that engagement over time. This suggests that if the development sector wants to widen or extend public engagement, we should appeal primarily or even exclusively to people's self-transcendent motivations. If we appeal to their self-interest, they will only become more self-interested, and less likely to support pro-social campaigns in the longer term.

• A large body of cross-cultural research indicates that there are relatively few human values, and that these can be clustered into ten types. They are all inter-related, such that changes in one affect others. Values types can be plotted in a circle of compatible and conflicting values known as a circumplex. If you reinforce values on one side of this circumplex, you will suppress values on the other side. The values the NGO sector is interested in when it campaigns on 'bigger than self' problems (such as global poverty and environment issues) are primarily of the type called Universalism. This includes the values of Equality and Social Justice, as well as Unity with Nature. The antagonistic values to these on the circumplex are known collectively as the Power and Achievement values, including Wealth and Status.

• Frames offer one way of activating positive values. They have a rich academic heritage, having first come to prominence in the mid-1970s. Put simply, we understand things, mostly subconsciously, using frames. In language, for example, our 'frame' for a word is not just its dictionary meaning but also all the other things we know, feel or have experienced in relation to it. When we hear a particular word or encounter a specific situation, the dictionary meaning and all those other bits of knowledge and experience are activated in our brains. This is the 'frame' for a word or scene – and hence it is thought that frames can activate values.

• Since 2000, frames have begun to be used as practical tools, particularly by cognitive linguists such as George Lakoff. Lakoff's work on 'cognitive policy' in the US has applied frames theory to political problems. He split out the frames concept into 'deep frames' and 'surface frames', the distinction being that deep frames essentially represent whole worldviews. Deep frames connect to values systems and hence are more foundational and abstract than surface frames. Surface frames are closer to the 'simple' meanings of words – not just the dictionary definition, but the whole 'chunk' of related knowledge. This theory can teach us much about which frames we should use in our messages, but it can also help us to identify the deep frames around which we can organise our strategies and practices.

• The literature on cognitive frames does not directly connect with the concerns of campaigners on global poverty. The evidence base for how frames work is weak when compared to the weight of empirical data that lies behind values theory. There is still much to be done to develop the main measurement methodology (discourse analysis) into a campaign evaluation tool. Because of these limitations we employed an exploratory methodology in this study. We held a 'staged conversation' with senior development NGO campaigns staff, and had it observed by a cognitive frames analyst from the US. Working together, we have identified some positive and negative deep frames which seem to be at work in the practices and discourses of UK development NGOs.

• The negative deep frames we identified include the 'rational actor' frame, the 'elite governance' frame and the 'moral order' frame. These frames are defined in the paper below, but it is worth summarising one of them as an example. The 'moral order' frame holds that nature is moral and that natural hierarchies of power are, by extension, also moral. Power then becomes bound up with a very particular conception of morality: man above nature, Christians above non-Christians, whites above non-whites. Such a frame underpins notions of mission, and what it is to be a charity. By making inferences based on deep frames like the 'moral order' frame, we can suggest that alternative positive frames could include the 'embodied mind' frame, the 'participatory democracy' frame, and an emerging frame that relates to 'non-hierarchical networks'.

• Working from positive deep frames, we inferred some surface frames that could activate those deep frames in the context of global poverty. Applying frames theory, it is striking that some of the words that should be avoided are right at the heart of how the development sector describes itself – words such as 'development', 'aid' and 'charity'. To take just the first of these, 'development' is a problem because it activates the 'moral order' deep frame in which 'undeveloped' nations are like backward children who can only grow up (develop) by following the lessons given by 'adult' nations higher up the moral order. A variety of different frames for development are proposed in academic literature, including most famously 'development as freedom' (Amartya Sen) and AK Giri's challenging thesis of 'development as responsibility'. A frames approach has the potential to transform everything about an organisation and its practices. Getting the surface framing right is part of this transformational change process.

Implications

• The implications that we have drawn from our work so far will need to be refined and tested through further research. We should not assume that they will lead us to uncontested solutions; there are likely to be both theoretical and practical problems in adhering strictly to the values and frames prescriptions identified here. The development sector will need to come together if we are to find a way to break the current lock-in of public engagement.

• Rebalancing the dominant values in society is a potentially formidable task. It is likely to require more than the will of a single NGO or even the entire development sector. But it is not an insurmountable challenge. We are not proposing the creation and introduction of an entirely new set of values. Instead frames and values theory suggests that transformational change can be achieved simply by reinforcing the positive values which people already hold: by changing the level of importance accorded to particular values relative to others.

• Some of those who are resistant to the proposed programme of change may object to these ideas on the grounds of mind manipulation. We should counter any such charges upfront, by stating that there is no such thing as values-neutral communications, campaigns or policy. Every message and activity activates and strengthens values. Those values and frames that are dominant in society are so, in some considerable part, because of the activation and strengthening undertaken by other actors, most obviously companies and marketers. The evidence strongly suggests that if the self-enhancing values of achievement, power and hedonism are activated and strengthened – as they are by consumer marketing – then the positive vales of universalism and benevolence are actively suppressed. In other words, the social and political scales are tipped significantly against the emergence of the systemic changes NGOs are interested in. Meanwhile, the deep frames we discuss are already out there in society, and at work in how we think. We are not advocating the forcible replacement of frames, but instead drawing attention to the frames which are dominant in our culture, and showing how we, as practitioners, have choices about the frames we activate through our words and deeds.

• Most importantly, this paper does not provide answers. It is in keeping with the frames we advocate that no organisation or group of organisations should set themselves up as the authority on which frames others should use. It is for the sector to find ways to negotiate the tensions we identify. Ultimately, we see change as a process of reflective practice, pursued through deliberation and debate. The public themselves should also be involved in the collective task of finding new frames for development.

• The implications outlined in this report should serve as a starting point for the debate. They include the following:

- We need to shift the balance of NGO public engagement activities away from 'transactions' and towards 'transformations'. This means placing less emphasis on '£5 buys...' appeals and simple campaigning actions, and more emphasis on providing supporters with opportunities to engage increasingly deeply over time through a 'supporter journey'.

- In online campaigns and communications, similar principles apply. It is important to move to models where clictivism is a small and complementary tactic that supports in-depth engagement, and not the dominant model it is at the moment. In order to engage people with the complexities of global poverty, developing opportunities for more meaningful action over the longer term should be the focus.

- Models of communication should be based on genuine dialogue. There need to be opportunities for supporters and practitioners to deliberate together.

- There should be serious reflection about whether, when and how we use forms of words that have come to define and sometimes undermine the public perception of NGOs and their work – words such as 'aid', 'charity' and 'development'.

- Celebrities should be used with extreme care in campaigns, given the strong links between celebrity culture, consumer culture and the values of self-interest.

- Charity shops should also try to distance themselves from consumer culture. They should return to their roots by presenting themselves as places for giving more than buying, and emphasising their role in closing up loops of consumption.

- If, for short-term reasons, NGOs choose to trade on more self-interested motivations, for instance to earn revenue or engage new supporters, then they must do so. But all the time they should be mindful of the collateral damage these tactics will cause to the supporter base in the longer term. Such tactics should only be employed as part of a considered, longer-term strategy for building public engagement with development – a strategy founded on positive values.

- This agenda should also be pursued with others beyond the development sector – ideally including the Government, whose practices and policies are instrumental in determining the dominant values and frames in society. There is an opportunity in particular for DFID to play a key convening role that enables otherwise financially competitive NGOs to debate and plan together using values and frames perspectives. Tom Crompton's Common Cause paper, and working group, has already set in motion a process for wider debate across the third sector that DFID could respond to.

This paper is intended to spark and invigorate that debate. It provides a potential focal point around which to begin building informal networks and 'safe spaces for dialogue'. It also highlights the grave consequences if we do not act. Recent qualitative research conducted for the Independent Broadcasting Trust (IBT) has found that young people aged 14 to 20 are *"relatively informed but broadly disengaged"* on issues of global poverty, and have inherited a sense of 'development fatigue' from the media and their parents. We believe there is an urgent need for action if we are to break the cycle of disengagement that is already showing signs of engulfing the next generation.

Full Commentary

1.The state of public engagement in global poverty

This section...

- **Presents an overview of the evidence on public perceptions of global poverty. Levels of public engagement are static or falling, and the public remains stuck in a negative frame for poverty that dates back 25 years to Live Aid.**

- **Contrasts the data on public engagement with those on public donations to development NGOs, which have been steadily increasing across the same period. The disjuncture between the two sets of data sparks some serious questions about how long the prevailing business model for development NGOs can continue, and what the implications are for the quality of public engagement.**

- **Illustrates these tensions in a short account of Make Poverty History, which sets the findings from the Public Perceptions of Poverty research alongside other existing analyses of Make Poverty History.**

- **Finds that values and frames provide useful lenses through which to view the successes, shortcomings and long-term impact of the Make Poverty History campaign.**

Public engagement matters for international development. Several arguments can be made to support the case that the UK public can make an instrumental difference in how and when people in poor countries move out of poverty.

- The first and most longstanding argument is that the public provides the UK government with a mandate for public spending on overseas development aid (see eg McDonnell 2006). This argument has particular resonance during the current debate about whether the government can afford to ringfence the 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) committed to development aid spending, against a background of deep public sector cuts. At time of writing this debate seems critical, and finely balanced. According to the Institute of Development Studies' new public opinion tracker only 33% of the public supported the ringfencing of development aid spending in August 2010, while 57% opposed it (Henson & Lindstrom 2010).

- Second, the UK public can have an impact on international development directly through their actions. Donating to development NGOs is the most obvious means of intervening, but other forms of giving are also significant. Oxfam talks about public giving in terms of money, but also in terms of time, voice and product (Oxfam 2008). In the last category are included not only gifts of 'product' – ie giving unwanted items to charity shops – but also the purchase of ethical products, most notably fairtrade.

- Third, there is an impact associated with the public's actions and conversations in the public sphere (including those in the media, responding to public concerns). These interventions open up space for the kind of political, socio-economic and pro-environmental change that is necessary to tackle global poverty. The public's role here is more than pressuring the government to accede to campaigning demands; it is about opening up the political and wider societal space to the possibility of deeper change. It is only with deeper change that we can build new institutions and societal norms, which in turn will enable different models of development, and more effective results.

The whole spectrum of public engagement in global poverty matters. Aid alone cannot bring global poverty to an end. Securing 0.7% of GNI for aid spending is one objective, but we would contend that the other ends to which public engagement is the means are at least as important.

1.1 The evidence on public perceptions

Even a quick look at the data on public perceptions of global poverty tells us there is a problem. This is evident from the most reliable single source of such data, the Public Attitudes Towards Development surveys conducted by the Department for International Development (DFID). This series of annual studies has asked a more or less consistent set of questions that goes back to 1999, providing the only longitudinal set of data on UK public attitudes to global poverty that is publicly available.

Public Perceptions of Poverty research

DFID's data is supplemented by ad hoc surveys and qualitative studies commissioned both by government and the third sector. One of these supplementary sources is the Public Perceptions of Poverty (PPP) research programme, which tracked public attitudes to global poverty between 2004 and 2007. The PPP programme involved six waves of quantitative research and four waves of qualitative interviews. It was funded by DFID, and managed by Andrew Darnton for Comic Relief.

The research evidence on public engagement with global poverty has been reviewed by Andrew Darnton for DFID on three occasions since 2004. The most recent review was at the end of 2009, soon after the publication of two significant documents from Parliament and Government respectively. One of these was *Aid Under Pressure,* the product of an enquiry by the House of Commons International Development Committee (IDC). Some of its recommendations concerned how to re-engage the public, and how to measure their support. The other publication was an external review of the first ten years of DFID's 'Building Support for Development' strategy.

Time for a step change

Andrew Darnton's *Rapid Review* of late 2009 argued that it was time for DFID to make a step change in its approach, to prioritise public engagement over public support for development aid, and to aim for no less than a *"deep-cut values shift in society"* (Darnton 2009:32). The current study on finding new frames for development picks up where the *Rapid Review* left off.

We should start by recapping the current state of public engagement with global poverty. The *Rapid Review's* headline assessment was that: *"In terms of engagement with global poverty, the public is on a downward trajectory"* (ibid:3). No new evidence to contradict this finding has since come to light, and the latest wave of DFID's Public Attitudes Survey (February 2010) confirms a picture of steadily ebbing public support (TNS 2010). The trend of stagnation or gradual decline in levels of public engagement can be observed in a number of dimensions, as outlined below.

Low levels of concern

The 'concern' question has been asked using exactly the same wording since the start of the PPP project in 2004, and is taken as the headline measure of public engagement. Specifically, that headline measure has been set in relation to the proportion of the public who answer that they are 'very concerned' in response to the question 'how concerned would you say you are about levels of poverty in poor countries?'.

Over the past ten years, levels of the 'very concerned' among the public have fluctuated, but the long-term average is around 25% (see eg Darnton 2007). There have been higher peaks, however, in response to communications activity and anti-poverty campaigns (see Figure 1 on p15).

The Make Poverty History effect

Looking at the data going back to the first DFID Public Attitudes survey in 1999, for example, a 'Make Poverty History effect' is apparent. Levels of those 'very concerned' peaked at 32% in the run-up to the G8 meeting at Gleneagles, in April 2005. After that point Make Poverty History activity slowed, and levels of engagement dropped off.

Writing about the six waves of PPP data from December 2004 to April 2007, Darnton concluded that *"levels of public concern about global poverty appear to be static or actually falling"* (ibid). With three years more having elapsed, this trend has only become clearer. The September 2009 figure of 21% 'very concerned' respondents was the lowest level recorded since 2003.

The latest DFID data, from February 2010 (TNS 2010), show a slight improvement at 24%. But the trend since 2005 is still downward. This is what might be expected, with little new effort or strategy towards re-engaging the public having been adopted since Make Poverty History.

Figure 1: Levels of 'very concerned' reported by the UK public (%), 1999-2010

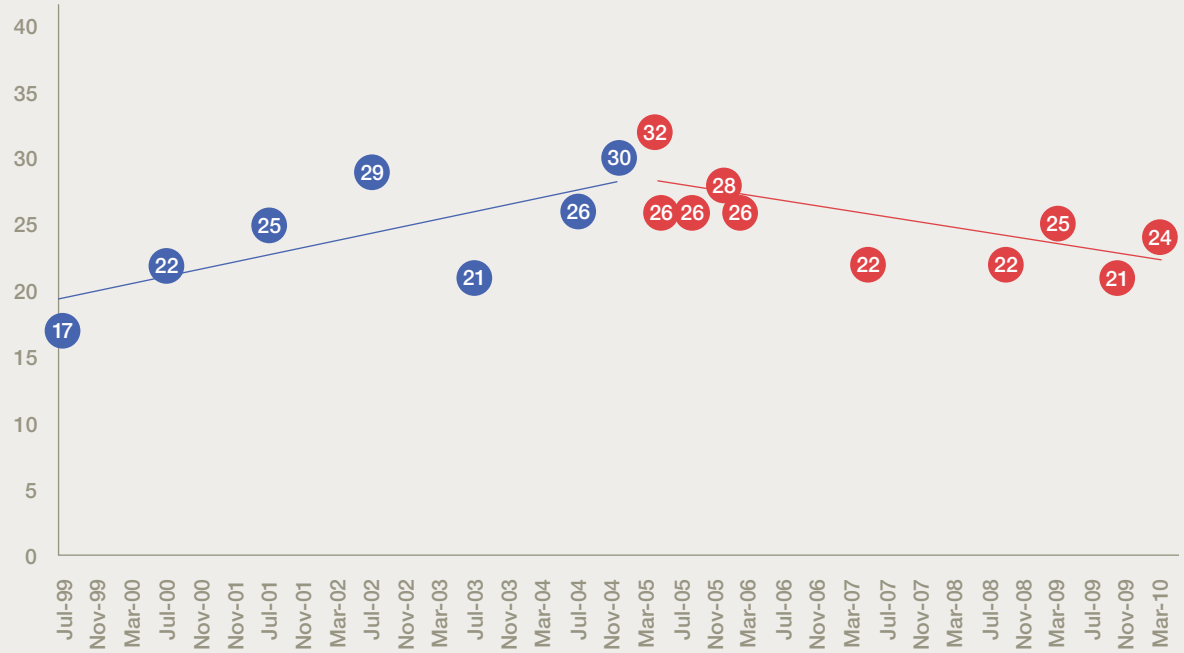


Figure 1 above shows all the available data on levels of those who are 'very concerned'. The data are divided into two series, partly to show the point at which the question wording was changed from asking about 'poverty in developing countries' to asking about 'poor countries', and partly to show the Make Poverty History effect most clearly.

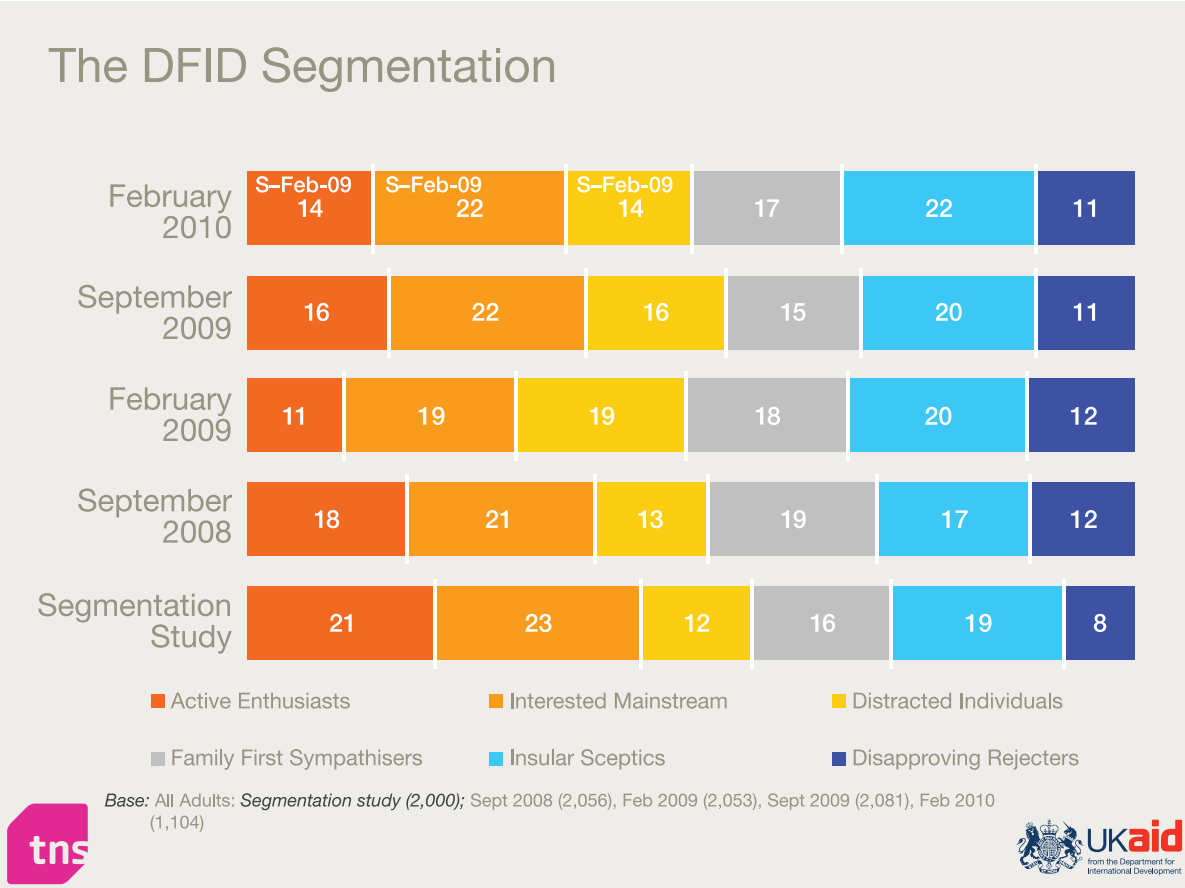
Q: 'How concerned would you say you are about levels of poverty in poor countries?' Sources: ONS 1999-2004; PPP 2007a; MORI 2008; COI 2009; TNS 2009a; TNS 2009b; TNS 2010

The 'concern' question has been criticised by observers such as the House of Commons International Development Committee (HoC IDC 2009), on the grounds that it offers a poor measure of support for development aid. This is certainly a fair criticism, as the question is a better measure of engagement with poverty in the round than of support for development aid.

As Dr David Hudson suggested when giving evidence to the IDC, different questions are needed to measure support for aid spending, and ideally questions that compare relative spending priorities. DFID has responded to that observation by including new questions of this kind in its annual tracker. Again the findings are not good, from the perspective of public support. Asked to rank six areas of government spending in terms of priority in 2010, respondents put 'support to poor countries' at the bottom of the list. It was ranked in first, second or third position by only 22% of respondents, compared to 31% in September 2009 (TNS 2010).

Given that the concern question is read as a measure of all-round engagement, it can also be argued to be the best quantitative measure of the level of salience of global poverty. Qualitative evidence is unambiguous here, showing global poverty to be a low-salience issue for the UK public. As the final wave of PPP qualitative research concluded: *"poverty is not an issue for most people"* (PPP 2007b).

Figure 2: Profile of the segments in the DFID Citizen Segmentation model, 2008-10 (TNS 2010)



The engaged core

However, 'most people' is not all people. It has been held as a truth by some of DFID's longest-serving staff (and ex-staff) that there is a core of around a quarter of the public who are committed to the anti-poverty agenda (Frances Burns, personal communication, c. 2002). As mentioned above, this pattern is borne out across the ten-year data series on levels of the 'very concerned'.

When Make Poverty History and the events of 2005 raised levels of the 'very concerned' to 32% this was regarded by the researchers as a breakthrough. However, as discussed, levels of 'very concerned' have slipped since then, and there is a sense that they are currently slipping further.

A newer, and more three-dimensional, indicator of all-round engagement is provided by DFID's Citizen Segmentation model, launched in 2008. This divides the public into six segments based on 29 survey items, which tap attitudes and beliefs relating to global poverty (MORI 2008).

"the public as a whole remains uninterested in and ill-informed about global poverty"

Active Enthusiasts fall, Disapproving Rejectors rise

When the model was generated in 2008, the most engaged segment – Active Enthusiasts – made up 21% of the UK public. This group roughly corresponds to the 'very concerned', although other segments also report above-average levels of 'very concerned' people. As with levels of the 'very concerned', it is notable that the proportion of Active Enthusiasts is not static; the distribution between segments in the model constantly shifts.

For the purposes of this quick summary of public perceptions, it is sufficient to note that since April 2008 the trend has been for a decline in the proportion of Active Enthusiasts. Their numbers have fallen by a third, from 21% to 14% of the public. Across the same period the bottom two segments, the aptly named Insular Sceptics and the vocal-minority Disapproving Rejectors, have grown from roughly a quarter (27%) to a third (33%) of the public.

A sense of powerlessness

'Agency' is also regarded as a key dimension of public engagement. In this context we can define it as a person's belief that they are able to undertake an action to tackle poverty, and that that action will have the desired effect. The PPP research tracked levels of agency across the Make Poverty History campaign, using the statement 'There is nothing I can personally do to tackle poverty in poor countries'.

Across the PPP surveys, levels of disagreement with this (negative) statement fell. While 40% of respondents agreed but 44% disagreed in Wave 1, by Wave 6 45% agreed and only 40% disagreed (PPP 2007a). Since the end of PPP, the DFID trackers showed that levels at first swung back, such that slightly more people disagreed than agreed with the statement. Since then they have remained static.

In the February 2010 wave, 36% agreed but 44% disagreed (TNS 2010). Across the period from 2004, agency has fluctuated somewhat but remains relatively static. The public are roughly evenly split between those who say they can and can't take action to tackle poverty.

A lack of understanding

The *Rapid Review* concluded that, looking across the available evidence, *"the public as a whole remains uninterested in and ill-informed about global poverty"* (Darnton 2009:10). Knowledge of global poverty can be assessed across a number of dimensions, and some of the more common of these are highlighted below.

We have not included awareness of key organisations and initiatives, partly because it could be deemed unreasonable to expect the public to know about (for example) the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when no information or education campaigns have been undertaken in the UK on this subject. For the record, in the Eurobarometer 2007 survey 14% of the UK public said they were aware of the MDGs, including 4% who said they knew something about them (see Darnton 2007).

Low levels of public understanding are apparent in relation to debt, trade, and aid — the three pillars of international action to tackle global poverty that underpinned the Make Poverty History campaign.

In the dark over debt

The PPP qualitative research found only a minority of more engaged people spontaneously thinking of debt as a cause of global poverty (PPP 2007b). These more engaged respondents found debt easy to discuss at the top level, but difficult to explain in terms of how it actually worked.

There was widespread uncertainty among respondents about whether the UK government had written off the debts of developing countries or not. This uncertainty has also been reported in more recent research (eg Creative 2008).

Four missing facts on trade

In 2004 Christian Aid undertook a research study in preparation for a campaign on trade justice (TRBI 2004, in Darnton 2007). This study found that the public knew almost nothing about systems of global trade. One typical respondent is quoted saying: *"I didn't know international trade rules were a factor in poverty in the Third World."*

The researchers concluded that there were four missing facts that the majority of the public would need to understand if they were to be able to sustain a discussion around trade justice. These four missing facts included simple but substantive points such as 'there are trade rules and regulations put in place by rich countries'.

The missing facts were carried forward into the PPP research. In the final qualitative wave in 2007 it was found that, for the majority of more engaged respondents, the four missing facts were *"still missing"* (PPP 2007b). The report concluded that among the general public *"There is no greater understanding of trade than before".* The same pattern of ignorance is apparent in more recent qualitative research (eg Creative 2008).

Fairtrade: well known but poorly understood

On the surface the concept of fairtrade has been a huge success with the public. In the last wave of PPP research awareness of fairtrade was described as "near universal", 93% of respondents having heard of it (PPP 2007a). In the most recent wave of tracking data for the Fairtrade Foundation, 74% of respondents recognised the Fairtrade Mark: an all-time high level of awareness (TNS/Kantar 2010).

But qualitative evidence suggests that the public's understanding of the mechanics and issues behind fairtrade is scarcely better than their understanding of trade justice. Asked to explain her motives for buying fairtrade, one woman in a research study for the Fairtrade Foundation (Research Works 2005 in Darnton 2007) memorably commented: *"You're doing something for somebody somewhere aren't you?"*

It is appropriate at this point to raise a caveat. How reasonable is it for the general public to know about complex issues relating to international development? Such a question has a bearing on whether 25% is a reasonable aspiration for the proportion of engaged members of the public.

In the context of fairtrade the fact that nearly all the UK public are aware of the concept, and that they should thus be able to infer that there is such a thing as unfair trade, may be deemed sufficient. In other contexts, however, low knowledge is more likely to be a barrier to change. Not knowing there is a G8 closes off that focus for political action, and not knowing there are Millennium Development Goals prevents the public from holding politicians to account on their commitments (see eg Darnton 2009).

A mile wide and an inch deep

Public support for development aid has been famously described by Ian Smillie as *"a mile wide and an inch deep"* (Smillie 1996). Across different donor countries (and by a variety of different measures) support for aid is traditionally thought to be strong and stable, running at around 70% (see eg Hudson and van Heerde 2010). But the 'inch deep' dimension of public awareness is captured in qualitative research; it transpires that the only form of aid that most of the public are aware of is humanitarian aid provided in response to disasters.

In research for DFID on aid effectiveness, Creative Research found that the public's default definition of aid was *"donations to charities in response to disasters"* (Creative 2006, in Darnton 2007). This echoes work by Ida McDonnell at the OECD Development Awareness Centre. McDonell found that, across donor nations, the prevailing understanding of aid was as *"short term charity for humanitarian relief"* (McDonnell et al 2003, in ibid). So wedded are people to the idea that all aid is provided by charities, that the only role they can imagine for the government in relation to aid is to encourage the public to give more money to those charities (Creative 2006, in ibid).

Given this lack of understanding of development aid, it is small wonder that few of the public know about DFID and what it does. In the February 2009 Public Attitudes survey 40% of the public reported having heard of DFID, including 22% who claimed to know something about it (TNS 2010). These levels have been static since 2007. In the 2010 Survey the question was rephrased to ask about knowledge of 'UKAid from DFID', and a similar result of 41% awareness was achieved (ibid).

An alternative measure was provided in a 2007 evidence review for DFID (Darnton 2007), based on data from a 2007 mini-wave of tracking by TNS. This review showed that only 20% of the 21% of respondents who reported awareness of DFID also knew that DFID supported development projects overseas. From this it could be said that only approximately 4% of the public understood what DFID does.

Corrosive views on corruption

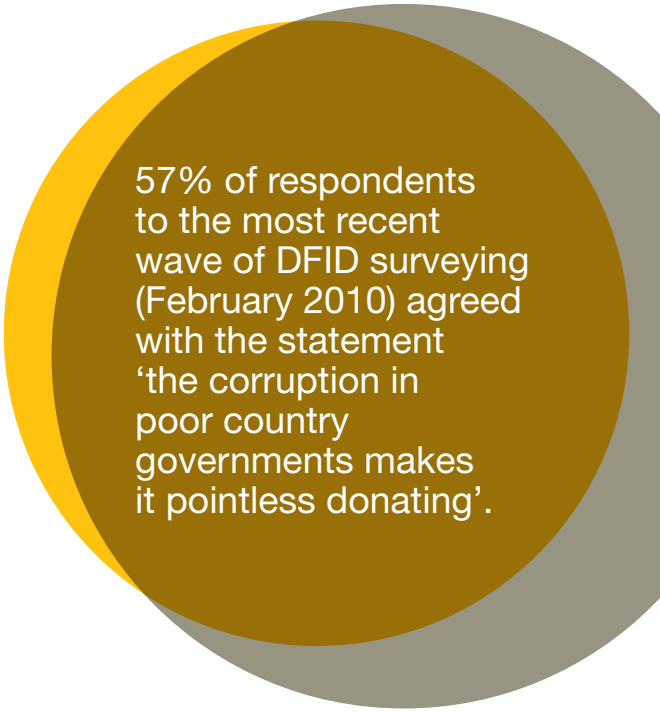
There is a fourth concept alongside debt, trade and aid that should be accounted for when assessing public perceptions of measures to tackle global poverty: corruption. While the PPP qualitative research consistently found that even the more engaged respondents were unable to sustain a conversation about trade (and somewhat less so debt and aid), corruption was found to be *"the only issue which people will happily talk about in relation to global poverty"* (PPP 2005, in Darnton 2007). This trait persists in subsequent studies. Work carried out by Creative for DFID in 2008 found that *"Everyone perceives that money is siphoned off by corrupt leaderships / further down the line or diverted to buying arms"* (Creative 2008).

In a recent study for Save the Children on its child survival initiative, the first 'barrier' reported by respondents to donating to the campaign was *"money not getting through to the end cause"* (Mango 2009). Quantitative data back this finding up, and even suggest that corruption is becoming more salient among the UK public. For instance, 57% of respondents to the most recent wave of DFID surveying (February 2010) agreed with the statement 'the corruption in poor country governments makes it pointless donating'. This figure rose by 13 percentage points in less than 18 months – from 44% in September 2008 (TNS 2010).

It was wisely observed in the PPP research that people often feel uncomfortable talking about global poverty and their role in it. It may be that some anticipate being asked a question at any moment about whether they would be prepared to make a donation, or take action in some other way. The researchers commented that *"the public is looking for an excuse to disengage from stories about poverty"* (PPP 2007), and added that corruption often provides that excuse.

Corruption and charitable giving

Among more engaged segments of the public, people are more likely to go on giving despite the widespread perception of corruption. Only 12% of those in the top segment of DFID's segmentation model – the Active Enthusiasts – agree with the statement about corruption making donating pointless (TNS 2010). Yet it is remarkable in the survey data that those in the most engaged subgroups report a stronger-than-average belief that aid is being wasted due to corruption (see eg Darnton 2007).



A similar pattern is apparent in the most recent wave of DFID surveying. When people were asked to identify spontaneously the causes of poverty in poor countries, the most popular answer by far was 'corrupt leaders/governments'. This was mentioned by 56% of respondents, compared to only 23% citing lack of education (TNS 2010). As with the question on corruption and donating, the levels of agreement are notably up in the recent wave – up four points on September 2009. Above all, the traditional variation by segments is still apparent: 64% of Active Enthusiasts cite corruption as the top cause of poverty, a proportion that is eight percentage points above the population average.

Given the high salience of corruption, and the tendency of the public to seize on it as an excuse to disengage from poverty, PPP researchers warned that tackling the issue of corruption directly through public communications could be counterproductive (PPP 2007). It should be mentioned that a number of other commentators, including the House of Commons IDC, have taken the opposite view: *"DFID needs to address this issue head on if it is to succeed in allaying taxpayers' concerns"* (HoC IDC 2009).

This is clearly an area where more discussion is needed – and one that we return to in the context of frames in Section 4 below. It is sufficient to note here that how we handle sensitive issues is key to how the public thinks about them.

Considering the causes of poverty

Exploring public perceptions of the causes of poverty is another area that is central to gauging levels of public understanding. Findings also provide insights into the underlying motivations of different groups, and possible strategies to re-engage them. It has been mentioned above that corruption is now the most spontaneously reported cause of poverty. This is in keeping with the longer-term data, which indicate that most people think the causes of poverty are internal to poor countries.

These findings can be traced back to the *Viewing the World* study for DFID in 1999. This found that the general public understood the developing world to mean Africa (DFID 2000, in Darnton 2007). The respondents then associated Africa with poverty, famine and drought. Only 'activist' respondents who were supporters of NGOs put forward a different view (incorporating debt or trade).

In work around the same time, Greg Philo of the Glasgow Media Group reported that the public saw African countries' problems as *"self-generated",* including war and poor governance (Philo 2002, in ibid). These findings were echoed in the qualitative research on PPP, which found that the causes of poverty were seen either as *"natural"* or *"man-made",* but that either way, they were deemed *"internal"* to poor countries (PPP 2005, in ibid). One respondent in that wave of the PPP research was typical in calling Africa a *"bottomless pit".*

Live Aid's long shadow

These kinds of views are exemplified in the influential study *The Live Aid Legacy* (VSO 2002). When respondents were asked to make spontaneous associations with the 'developing world' or 'third world', 80% of their answers related to war, famine, debt, starving people, natural disasters, poverty and corruption. Through holding these views that attribute poverty to internal causes, the majority of people are excluded from active engagement with global poverty. We could say that they effectively exclude themselves.

The resulting paradigm for relations between the UK public and those in the developing world is encapsulated in the concept of the 'Live Aid legacy', which casts the UK public in the role of *"powerful giver",* and the African public as *"grateful receiver".* This dynamic still prevails. The latest research study in the *Reflecting the Real World series* co-ordinated by IBT explicitly states that the Live Aid Legacy is still in effect. One respondent in that study described the developing world as *"malnutrition and pot-bellied young children desperate for help with flies on their faces"* (TW Research 2009).

In reading this body of research, one gets the overwhelming sense that nothing has changed in ten years. Three recent studies show that Live Aid continues to cast a long shadow. The PPP research found that Live8 in 2005 served only to reinforce the dominant paradigm set up in 1985. Thus in qualitative research undertaken for DFID in 2006 (Creative 2006, in Darnton 2007) one respondent commented:

"this Africa thing seems to be exactly the same now as it was when I was ten years old".

In 2008 the same researchers undertook further qualitative work, supporting the development of DFID's segmentation model. Their research revealed feelings of hopelessness among respondents when discussing global poverty. They reported *"a universal feeling that efforts have long been made to combat poverty in places like Africa and yet little has changed"* (Creative 2008).

Finally, campaign development research for Save the Children in September 2009 found the same public reactions (Mango 2009). Indeed it could almost be the same respondent as in the 2006 study:

"What's happened since Live Aid? I was at school then. Now I'm 36 and nothing has really changed."

At face value we could say that the UK public is stuck in its perceptions of Africa. But we could also argue that people are stuck in the frame they have been given for tackling poverty by Live Aid, creating a one-dimensional picture of Africa that has endured for 25 years.

A future of development fatigue?

To end this section looking forward instead of looking back, it is worth noting that the sense of being stuck is not just apparent among those who lived through Live Aid. It is also there among the younger generation, brought up on Live8. Recent qualitative research conducted for IBT with young people aged 14 to 20 has found that this new cohort are *"relatively informed but broadly disengaged"* on issues of global poverty (TW Research 2010:10). We read that *"Young audiences have inherited a sense of fatigue about the developing world... Perceptions of the static nature of development don't help."* This latest research suggests that public disengagement from global poverty is not just a historic trend but one that will stretch out into the future, unless the dominant 'static' model of development can be overturned.

1.2 The evidence on public donations

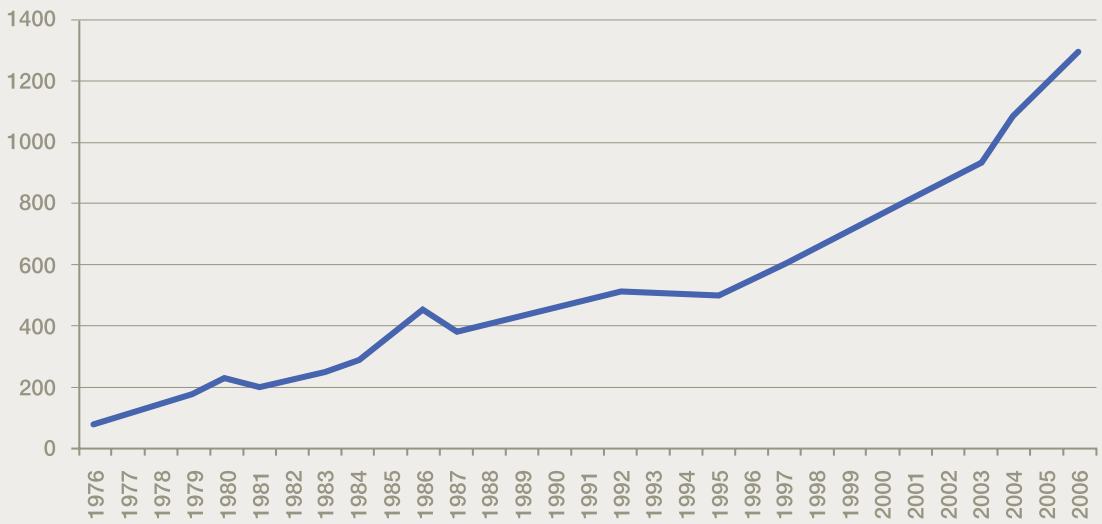
The section above has reviewed the evidence on public engagement in terms of attitudes to global poverty, and we now move on to consider some of the actions that relate to those perceptions.

Dynamic income growth

Turning to the data on public donations to international development NGOs in the UK, we could not find a starker contrast to the survey data on levels of the 'very concerned' public [see Figure 3]. Donations have shot up since 1995, and particularly markedly since 2003. There has been a steady upward trend since 1979. The data here are based on the voluntary income of international aid and development NGOs featuring in the Charities Aid Foundation's top 200 (and latterly top 500) annual NGO listings, from 1979 to 2006. The data record all voluntary income. While comprising more sources of revenue than just public donations, this can be taken as a close proxy for public donations.

Public disengagement from global poverty is not just a historic trend but one that will stretch out into the future, unless the dominant 'static' model of development can be overturned.

Figure 3: Voluntary income of IAD charities, (£millions, adjusted for inflation) 1979-2006 (CAF data, analysis by Jeff Mouhot at the University of Birmingham for the 'NGOs in Britain' project - www.ngo.bham.ac.uk)



Looking at these data on voluntary income might lead us to ask: where has the problem gone? For many practitioners in the development sector, especially those starting from a fundraising perspective, the idea that there is an immediate cause for concern may only surface after a little reflection.

If we set these data against those in the previous section, however, we are likely to be prompted to ask some serious questions about such a stark contrast. Why is concern static or falling, when voluntary income is rising sharply? Is this growth in donations sustainable? If the pool of engaged supporters is getting no larger, where will future growth come from? How stable is the support of those people who are only weakly engaged? And what will happen if economic conditions remain unfavourable? There is a possibility that these two charts paint a picture of a very mature market, one in which many of the 'customers' have little idea of the product they are 'purchasing'.

From boom to bust?

There are more recent data to draw upon than those from the CAF series. They include findings that pick up the impact of the global economic downturn in late 2008. These suggest that the long-term rise in revenue may be going into reverse.

The Charity Commission has been undertaking surveys since September 2008 to monitor the impact of the downturn on registered charities. Its most recent findings, reported under the title *Decision Making in Hard Times* (February 2010), were that 29% of 1,008 charities had experienced a drop in fundraising revenue over the previous six months (Charity Commission 2010).

A similar snapshot emerges from DFID's Public Attitudes survey, which in February 2010 asked respondents whether they had made a donation to charity in the previous six months (TNS 2010). 64% of respondents said they had – 8% fewer than in September 2009. Only 15% said they had given to 'a charity that provides aid for people in poor countries', compared to the previous figure of 20%.

The changing face of participation

How did the NGO sector achieve the soaring revenues mapped out in the CAF data? These sharp quantitative increases may be concealing a qualitative problem: there is more engagement going on, but it is of a qualitatively different kind. This is the thesis set out by Matthew Hilton and his colleagues in the history department at Birmingham University, who assembled the CAF data (as part of a project in the history of *NGOs in Britain,* 1945-1997 - see Hilton et al 2010). Writing about the changing nature of civic participation in Britain, the authors are keen to point out that the idea of a collapse in public voluntarism is a misreading.

Although it is true that far fewer people go to church or attend weekly meetings of local groups than was the case in the 1950s and 60s, that does not mean they are not participating in civil society (as the CAF data above dramatically demonstrate). Speaking of the research evidence on the continually changing nature of public engagement, Hilton writes: *"Attention has been drawn to how face-to-face member participation in voluntary associations has increasingly been displaced by a more distant, 'cheque-book' relationship between NGOs and their supporters"* (ibid:4).

In this model a social movement gains big numbers of supporters by changing the relationship with them to one that is more at arm's length. This change in the nature of voluntary sector organisations has been written about since the mid-1980s, when the phrase 'cheque-book member' was coined by Hayes (1986 – in Jordan and Maloney 1997). It is a phrase that sums up the transformation from group member to supporter – someone whose main relationship with the social movement group is a transactional one. This is the principal means by which Matthew Hilton explains the inexorable increases in revenue on the CAF chart.

What the chart does not reveal, however, is the degree of churn among the supporters who provide the revenue. Recruitment and retention costs have become key issues for modern NGOs because the cheque-book member as consumer can shop around, and frequently does. Data from the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PRFA) the organisation that oversees all face-to-face fundraising activity show that attrition rates for doorstep-recruited donors are as high as 31% only five months after recruitment. The attrition rate for on-street recruitment is 53% in the first year (PFRA 2010).

Figure 4: The characteristics of protest businesses (Jordan and Maloney 1997)	
(i) Supporters, rather than members, are important as a source of income.	(iv) Supporters are unknown to each other and do not interact.
(ii) Policy is made centrally, and supporters can influence policy primarily by their potential for exit.	(v) Groups actively shape perceptions of problems by providing supporters with partial information.
(iii) Political action is normally by the professional staff rather than the individual supporter or member.	(vi) Supporters are interested in narrow issue areas. Particularity rather than ideological breadth is the agency of recruitment.

It is a minor cause for celebration for the regulator in a recession that these attrition rates are not higher. Seen from the recruited individuals' perspective, however, the rates raise doubts about levels of engagement with the charities in question. Fundraisers know that high levels of churn are an inherent danger in the current business model, hence their efforts to minimise attrition through Customer Relationship Management. The PFRA says that the organisations that are surviving the recession are those making improvements in *"donor care and stewardship".* Developing effective customer-journey models is essential to deepening public engagement and building retention.

The high cost of churn

Churn is a classic attribute of what Jordan and Maloney labelled as a 'protest business', a term coined to capture the new relationship between social movements and their cheque-book members (Jordan and Maloney 1997). They also used the term 'revolving door model' (borrowed from Cohen 1995) to describe the intensive recruitment practices of NGO groups-turned-businesses. This is because the fundraisers of these organisations have to work hard constantly to attract new recruits in order to replace those who drop out.

Jordan and Maloney based their analysis on close study of a number of environmental NGOs that took off in the UK in the 1970s, including Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. But their definition of a 'protest business' could easily be applied to NGOs in other sectors, and up to the present day [see Figure 4].

Cheap participation

As summed up in the six-part definition above, the relationship between interest group and supporter (notably no longer called a 'member') is one characterised by the authors as 'cheap participation'. This kind of participation is 'cheap' because the barriers to entry (ie initial joining costs) are kept low, yet supporters can make a political statement about their personal preferences by being a supporter – without having to commit significant money or time resources to the ongoing relationship. From an economist's point of view, this is cheap participation in that the transaction costs of the relationship are low; unfortunately so are the barriers to leaving the relationship (hence the churn), and in the meantime the engagement with the group and its issues is shallow.

Making the relationship with the supporter as easy as possible is key to keeping the transaction costs low, and hence to the overall success of the business model. Jordan and Maloney highlight the mechanism of the direct debit as a key element of making participation cheap: it removes the need for an annual decision to continue membership and renders the membership less visible to the supporter.

Thinking back to the CAF revenue chart, it would be interesting to plot the relationship between the take-off in development NGO revenue and the take-up in direct debit giving. Anecdotally, Oxfam fundraisers have commented that the introduction of a '£2 a month' giving plan in the mid-1990s played a significant role in driving the revenue increases experienced at that time.

The rise of direct mail

Direct debit is one contributory factor mentioned by Jordan and Maloney as they describe the adoption of commercial marketing practices by interest groups. Another is direct mail methods, credited with facilitating a shift in focus that transforms organisations first into 'mail order groups' and then into 'protest businesses'. While the authors were writing 13 years ago, the use of mail order to recruit and relate to supporters has clearly been pivotal in putting the supporter at arm's length, enabling NGOs to change their business model to one focused on recruitment and retention.

Coming up to the present day, the use of digital marketing methods arouses similarly strong views. Jordan and Maloney's book is blissfully unaware of the coming internet; Pippa Norris, writing five years later, celebrates the internet as heralding *"the reinvention of political activism"* (Norris 2002:222). Norris identifies *"multiple alternative avenues for political expression",* including information, communication and mobilisation activities. She is alert to the transformative potential of the internet for civil society groups and their supporters, partly because it is a non-hierarchical 'network of networks'.

What is key to the success of online approaches is their capacity to convert online users into offline activists.

Activism or clicktivism?

Ultimately, however, the magnificence of this technology comes down to how it is employed. Some observers would suggest that it is currently being used to extend and speed up the protest business model rather than overturn it. The use of email as a tool for recruitment, fundraising and campaigning has been criticised in many quarters. A recent blog on the *Guardian* website described online campaigning as 'clicktivism' and suggested that *"…clicktivism is to activism as McDonalds is to a slow-cooked meal. It may look like food, but the life-giving nutrients are long gone."* (White 2010). The consumerist metaphor is well chosen for today's protest businesses, with their cheap (and un-nourishing) model of participation.

Most recently Malcolm Gladwell (of *Tipping Point* fame) has entered this debate with a piece in the *New Yorker* entitled 'Small change: why the revolution will not be tweeted' (Gladwell 2010). His main point is about the appropriate use of digital technology in campaigning, based on the kinds of social networks the technology best supports. Online networks are characterised by weak ties (remote relationships, but lots of them). 'High-risk activism', on the other hand – the kind of activism that drove the civil rights movement in the US – requires relationships based on strong ties (involving close friends, such as the people you grew up or went to school with). Gladwell's inference is that online activism will only enable incremental change: transformational change involves high-risk activism that challenges prevailing power structures in the real world.

Practitioners of online campaigning know this (although the 'online evangelists' Gladwell rebuts don't always say it). In a blog responding to Micah White's 'clicktivist' critique, a US online organiser makes a distinction between good and bad online activism: *"Good online organising offers a powerful and fundamentally democratic tool for achieving that vision [of a more humane, sustainable and peaceful world]"* (Brandzel 2010). Brandzel gives many examples of effective online organising, but it is notable that they all have in common a move from initial online engagement to subsequent offline actions.

The most compelling example that Brandzel cites involves the celebrated US online organiser, MoveOn.org, which has set up hundreds of local leadership councils in communities across the United States. These leadership councils recruit volunteers, draft community plans and organise neighbourhood events. As Brandzel observes: *"Most would never have gotten involved if the first step had been more intimidating than an online signature"* (ibid).

The potential for the internet to capture the previously unengaged is clear, but what is key to the success of online approaches is their capacity to convert online users into offline activists. The very name MoveOn implies a supporter journey, and it can be inferred that bad online organising is that which fails to take the public anywhere.

Tugging at the heartstrings

The current reality of NGOs as big businesses, with business models built around aggressive revenue targets, is reflected both in the content of communications and in the techniques used. Research conducted by the sector has shown that the most effective messages for securing donations are those that pluck at the public's heartstrings (see eg Mango 2008). More precisely, work commissioned by Comic Relief on *The Psychology of Giving* found that giving money involves both the heart and the head, with the initial trigger usually an emotional appeal (Leapfrog 2004). Communications that reveal the shocking truth of suffering among poor people, and then cause us to consider the good fortune of our own position, are seen as the most effective in triggering giving.

Meanwhile, the short films broadcast on Red Nose Day have become more emotionally hard-hitting over the years. The relationship between the content of the BBC telethon and public donations is closely monitored, and it is reported that the biggest 'spikes' in donations are in response to the short films that trigger the strongest emotional responses.

A Comic Relief press release reports that on the night of Sport Relief 2010, the biggest number of calls to give money occurred at 9.26pm. This was just after an appeal film that featured Chris Moyles watching a child die of malaria in a hospital in Uganda (Sport Relief 2010). The film supplied little context because its primary focus was on the child dying, and then on the stricken Moyles giving the freephone number [the clip is currently available to view on YouTube].

As well as the content of appeal films having become more direct, it is said that the films have got shorter in proportion to the rest of the broadcast. This has left more time for comics, celebrities and the celebrating of public participation and funds raised. But having intensified its emotional appeal so much over the years, where can the Red Nose Day TV appeal format go next in pursuit of revenue growth year on year?

Consortia versus competition

Similar questions are being asked in the development sector as a whole. As part of its work on the impact of the downturn, the Charity Commission has been holding regional focus groups with NGOs from a mixture of sectors in order to understand what charities can do to survive the recession (Charity Commission 2009). The Commission has aired a number of suggestions designed to help charities work smarter, including forming consortia to bid for public sector funding and working jointly with other organisations pursuing similar agendas.

Unfortunately the response from charities on the latter point was not in the direction the Commission wanted. Instead of increased collaboration, the charities felt they had *"no choice but to compete with one another"* (ibid:4). For many charities the instinctive response to the downturn seems to have been to develop sharper business practices, taking them away from their founding mission as interest groups.

It could be argued that NGOs have just been responding to wider market trends in recent years, characterised by deregulation and privatisation. The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has described these trends as the rise of 'liquid modernity' (in e.g. Baillie Smith 2008), meaning that institutional purposes become fluid and distinctly blurred. This process can be seen in development NGOs as they build stronger partnerships with governments and corporations, in order to tackle poverty in the global South.

Blurring the boundaries

The kind of liquidity highlighted by Bauman can also be seen in the rise of consultants working in the development sector and the way they operate. Consultants often work both for NGOs and for their corporate and government partners, blurring the fine lines between organisations and further embedding the sector in consumer-based models. Given far-reaching changes such as this in development practices, one can argue that it is time for NGOs to refresh the frame of themselves as charities that still dominates how the public sees them.

The issue of how development practices in the South have evolved is raised later in this report (see Section 2.4 on values). But here it is sufficient to underline that the trend towards protest businesses identified by Jordan and Maloney seems to be continuing unabated. NGOs are fervently *"chasing the same chequebooks"* (1997:152) to feed revenue growth, often at the expense of deeper engagement with the public.

1.3 The case of Make Poverty History

The case of Make Poverty History (MPH) offers us the chance to see the themes introduced in the sections above in action. We have already seen how in early 2005 an 'MPH effect' was apparent, with levels of the 'very concerned' reaching a long-term high. In terms of active engagement, MPH offered a new portfolio of ways in which people could get involved in tackling global poverty. From a strategic perspective, it can also be seen as a concerted attempt to break the Live Aid Legacy and the transactional model of campaigning.

Organisationally MPH was a very different entity from the NGOs that became its members – whether or not those NGOs could fairly be described as 'protest businesses'. The campaign was serious about its coalition structure – there was not even a core directorate or single spokesperson. This structure immediately made MPH non-competitive, and the shift away from the transactional model of campaigning was made even clearer in the uniting of the coalition behind the rallying cry of 'justice not charity'.

In putting its call for political and economic action at the centre of the campaign, and in pursuing mass mobilisation through a coalition structure, MPH can be seen as *"the direct successor"* to the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign (Sireau 2009). It also built on the platform provided by the Trade Justice Movement.

'Justice not charity'

MPH can be read as a deliberate attempt at reframing the problem of global poverty, the potential solutions, and the public's role. Its emphasis on 'justice not charity' is consistent with some of the positive frames for development that we go on to identify below. Frames analysis is particularly useful for understanding the MPH movement, with its combination of actions and communications, its open structure and yet its need for a single centre.

It is notable that the most complete analysis of MPH completed to date – a book by Nick Sireau that came out of the year he spent shadowing the MPH Co-ordination Team during his PhD – undertakes a frames analysis of the campaign (Sireau 2009). As it happens, Sireau's is a slightly different branch of theory from the cognitive frames that we adopt in this report. He looked at 'collective action frames' as defined by academics working on social movements and public participation. He identified the overarching structure of MPH as 'the economic injustice master frame' – consistent with the explicit 'justice not charity' call to action.

Mobilising the masses

As well as trying to engage a mass public in new ways, thereby reframing global poverty and the possible solutions, MPH's strategy aimed to mobilise people as never before. The idea was to show a mobilised mass public to the UK government as a means to galvanise political change at the G8 Summit. Thus large numbers of supporters needed to engage in visible actions: marching in the Edinburgh rally at the start of the summit; handing in their white bands to fill large perspex letters that could be marshalled on the hillside opposite Gleneagles (and later transported to Parliament Square); bombarding politicians with text messages, emails and postcards calling for particular policies to be delivered.

The political impact of these actions has been fiercely debated. The value of the final G8 communiqué divided NGOs in the coalition and is still contested – see eg Sireau 2009. As a mass mobilisation, however, MPH was a phenomenal success. Just in terms of its structure MPH was the biggest coalition in campaigning history: 540 member organisations were involved at its peak. It could also be judged the biggest mass mobilisation: 225,000 people took part in the Edinburgh rally (ibid) and in July 2005 87% of the UK public had heard of MPH (see eg Darnton 2007). 15% of the UK public reported having undertaken at least one action for MPH (ibid).

Despite the success of MPH in engaging the mass public, that public barely heard the 'justice not charity' message. This could simply be put down to the MPH communications not being loud enough to reach the whole country. But this is an unlikely explanation, as whatever MPH could be said to have lacked, it was not communications air time or PR support. Indeed, Nick Sireau argues that MPH was *"mainly a communications exercise"* (ibid:5). Somewhere along the way, 'justice not charity' got lost or drowned out, and MPH never achieved the transformational change it promised. The research evidence points to a number of possible explanations:

• Dominant frames overwhelmed 'justice not charity'

The campaign was constructed around complex themes: debt, trade, and aid. The research evidence outlined above (in 1.1) has shown how difficult it is for even engaged members of the public to sustain a discussion on these topics. Yet the PPP research shows that this material complexity was only the tip of the problem. More fundamentally, the public couldn't accept the 'justice not charity' frame.

In Wave 2 of the qualitative research in 2005, the MPH-involved and 'very concerned' respondents who were interviewed commented that they were sure MPH must have been raising money somehow, through selling white bands or by taking some revenue from the text messages people were sending (PPP 2005, in Darnton 2007). In Wave 3 in 2006, respondents who had been involved in MPH were mystified as to why the campaign had not sought to raise money. One reason given by a respondent to explain the general sense of ineffectiveness of the campaign was *"...because Live 8 didn't raise as much money as Live Aid..."* (PPP 2006:17).

In reflecting on these findings from a frames perspective, we could say that the transaction frame for tackling poverty (in which giving money to charities is understood to be the only way to engage with global poverty) proved too strong for the 'justice not charity' frame to depose it. It can be suggested that more effort could have been focused on exposing the prevailing (transaction) frame, in order to break it and allow the public to engage differently.

Interestingly, Graham Harrison identifies a different framing problem. His analysis suggests that as Africa came to dominate the imagery around MPH, it became more difficult to activate the 'justice not charity' message (Harrison 2010). Harrison suggests that Africa is so bound up with charity in the public's mind that African imagery was antagonistic to MPH's economic justice frame. This resonates with research on the Live Aid Legacy, and suggests that more effort could have been expended on the exposing and breaking of the existing 'aid frame' within the campaign.

• The 'justice not charity' message was delivered by... charities

It is a central premise of frames theory that frames are embedded in everyday institutions and practices, as well as in communications. The apparent disjuncture between the medium and the message may well have left those in the coalition confused. If this occurred, then there is little surprise that the message was not understood by the public.

For the 'justice not charity' frame to be successfully propounded it was essential that it came from a unified coalition that was seen as something different from the usual development charities. When some coalition members started to use their brands within the campaign (eg putting their logos on the MPH white bands), this lessened the chance of the mass public seeing beyond 'charity'.

• Lack of control and cohesion in a complex coalition

Societal values and meanings are collectively constructed. This means that the collective effort of a lot of partners and voices is needed to connect with or reinforce those values and meanings. As with the example of branding above, a good deal of strong leadership and co-ordination is required for the frame to hold firm. This is especially true when it comes to messaging, but messaging was one of the areas of MPH activity that coalition members were least able to agree upon (for revealing details, see Sireau 2009).

Another constraint was the limited time available for MPH to make its mark. It can take considerable time to reframe a whole area of public activity and achieve values change. With a complex coalition of organisations involved and a limited window of mass public engagement, MPH was unable to maintain the level of cohesion and control needed to sustain its initial impact over the longer term. The independent evaluation of MPH by Firetail describes *"the absence of a strong centre"* (Martin et al 2006:70), and explains the lack of continued activity in 2005 after the G8 Summit by saying that MPH *"simply…did not have adequate plans in place"* (ibid:69).

• Tension between achieving big numbers and moving the public on

MPH was designed to engage the mass public. Mass support was sought both to achieve a political impact and to try to transform how the public engaged with poverty. This made for a challenging campaign: there is some doubt as to whether any campaign can secure political change and transformational change at the same time. In the case of MPH, it was the former that became the dominant theme.

MPH was unable to maintain the level of cohesion and control needed to sustain its initial impact over the longer term.

All the stops were pulled out to ensure a really big political campaign, with blanket coverage in the media. White bands were used to make public support visible. Celebrities featured heavily in public communications to make it clear that poverty and MPH were big news, although most did little or nothing to get the intended 'justice not charity' message across.

The ultimate device to ensure the campaign was both newsworthy and popular was the series of Live8 events. These concerts had a highly contested genesis, with Bob Geldof (their figurehead) ending up nearly splitting the coalition (see Sireau 2009). Whatever its original purpose, Live8 became the focal point of 2005 activity for the mass public. 'Justice not charity' was squeezed out. By February 2006 PPP researchers were finding that Make Poverty History was itself history, subordinated to Live8 in the public's mind. As one MPH-involved respondent commented (PPP 2006:12):

"Live8 was the event, and Make Poverty History was its slogan."

Conclusions

In summary, this analysis of the evidence around MPH concludes that the campaign nearly managed to reframe global poverty, but not quite. In not quite achieving this objective, the events of 2005 inadvertently reinforced the Live Aid Legacy. In his analysis Graham Harrison cites one NGO campaigns director who commented in the wake of MPH that the campaign proposition had become *"Buy Charity, Get Justice Free"* (Harrison 2010:405). This view was echoed in research with the general public. In May 2007 one respondent involved in the PPP research showed how MPH had become synonymous with Live8, by recalling the campaign as follows (PPP 2007:26):

"It was a big concert in a few places around the world with all the big names in music. Bob Geldof. They did one 20 or 25 years ago. They tried to make a load of money to cancel world debt."

After all the hope of transforming public engagement, MPH appears simply to have returned the public to the place they were in when they were children. To make matters worse, the experience of some of the public who took part in MPH in some way was that a sense of false promise turned into disillusionment. In the 2007 wave of PPP research the researchers reported that *"A general sense of disempowerment feels more pervasive than ever"* (ibid:23). Underlying all the confusion around what MPH was – or might have been – was the inescapable realisation that *"Poverty isn't history"* (ibid:23).

2.The role of values in public engagement

This section...

- **Briefly continues the Make Poverty History case study, arguing that the consumerist values inherent in the campaign strategy worked against the 'justice not charity' frame.**

- **Introduces the psychological basis of values theory, following the work of Shalom Schwartz and his values circumplex. Schwartz's thesis that values are inter-related is described, demonstrating how one value can diminish the power of its antagonistic partner. Tim Kasser and colleagues' subsequent work on motivational goals is also presented.**

- **Seeks to identify which values and goals are most active in driving public engagement with global development. There is little directly relevant research on this question. There are enough clues, however, to isolate a cluster of values around Universalism – and goals relating to Community Feeling – as key to driving engagement with 'bigger than self' problems, including development issues.**

- **Introduces a few refinements to the proposed positive values for development. These are based on possible objections stemming from both the practice of development as it is undertaken in the global South (grounded in self-interest), and the practical task of engaging publics in the North (where values of Benevolence are often invoked as part of a strategy based on 'starting where people are at').**

2.1 The values of MPH lite

The section above has described MPH as representing a shift in approach for public engagement, with the 'justice not charity' proposition at its centre. This core ethos, as well as the coalition structure, demanded a radical departure from established fundraising-driven approaches and 'transactional' engagement activity. As has been explained above, however, the MPH campaign struggled to get out of the charity frame.

Part of the problem was the deliberate mass mobilisation approach. Strong voices at the time, both within and outside the coalition, criticised MPH for being too populist. Anecdotally, their complaints were also expressed as calls for the 'justice' message not to get lost in the campaign. Meanwhile other voices, also strong in the coalition, were clear that the campaign would need to be 'mass' to succeed. The primary goal was to build a campaign that would go from zero to total public awareness in seven months. This was at the heart of the brief given to MPH's advertising agency Abbot Mead Vickers (see Sireau 2009:16).

Although these contrasting views caused tensions at the time, it is clear with the benefit of hindsight that MPH contributed to giving issues of global poverty a much higher public profile, and opened up a new space for debate (a space into which papers like this one can be launched).

‘MPH lite’ seems a fair description of much of the public engagement activity.

‘MPH Lite’ and other actions

The communications campaign was built around various calls to action, pointing supporters to a wide range of things they could do to achieve the political and economic objectives of the campaign. Not all of these actions would rightly be described as ‘mass mobilisations’ however – certainly not in the sense of direct action. The PPP research asked about ten different actions that people involved in MPH could have taken. These included ‘registering on the MPH website’, ‘sending an email to a politician’, ‘sending a text message to Make Poverty History’, ‘attending a Live8 concert’ and ‘joining the Make Poverty History rally in Edinburgh’ (reported in eg Darnton 2007).

While some of these actions suggest significant commitment on the part of supporters, others are purposefully easy to undertake. The epitome of the easy actions was ‘wearing a white band’ (undertaken by 61% of the MPH involved, according to the PPP research – see ibid). The white bands became so popular that they were described by some commentators as meaningless fashion items – which they apparently were for large numbers of young people who wore them as one of many wristbands up their forearms in the summer of 2005.

Writing about what the public had (or hadn’t) learned from MPH, the PPP researchers described a whole raft of the MPH actions as ‘MPH lite’ (Darnton 2006). Notably these were the actions undertaken in the biggest numbers (see eg Darnton 2007).

‘MPH lite’ seems a fair description of much of the public engagement activity. There were actions that offered little or no message or other content related to debt, trade and aid. And the actions themselves could be deemed ‘superficial’, in terms of the level at which people had to engage to undertake them.

The low costs of participation recall the critique of ‘cheap participation’ levelled by Jordan and Maloney (see 1.2 above). For instance, the emphasis on online activism, while innovative to the extent that it allowed the campaign to communicate with a vast supporter base, could easily fall prey to criticisms of ‘clicktivism’ (a phenomenon described in 1.2).

Database deletion

In one case study of Make Poverty History, written as part of an analysis of the history and current practice of campaigning for social change, Paul Hilder describes MPH as an example of *“an effective media campaign, coupled with celebrity endorsement”* (Hilder et al 2007:50). This praise is tempered with criticism, however, of the deliberate deletion by the coalition of its supporter mailing list (containing roughly 450,000 email addresses).

The decision to delete supporter data exemplifies the lack of legacy planning by the member NGOs, whose explicit precondition on entering the coalition was to disband after the year was out. Paul Hilder sees the destroying of the mailing list as a serious error in the campaign strategy. Overall, however, he concludes that: *"The campaign achieved spectacular reach with its one-to-many media strategy and consumerism, reinforced by the use of viral symbols of solidarity like the white bands"* (ibid:47).

It is hard to argue with this conclusion but it is striking that consumerism was such a key ingredient of the recipe for success. Recalling Nick Sireau's description of the campaign not as a mass movement but as *"a communications exercise"* (Sireau 2009:5), we might note that in place of the values of economic injustice on which the campaign strategy was plotted, the consumerist values embodied in advertising, celebrities and fashion took centre stage. These elements not only obscured the 'justice not charity' frame but brought along their own values, to the point where a critical friend might reasonably ask 'where did the justice go?'

Summing up our analysis, we could say that MPH was built around a positive, and potentially transformative, master frame. But the campaign's surface framing reinforced among the public those negative values that the deeper strategy was trying to move away from.

Quantity versus quality: the tensions in mass engagement

There is a tension apparent in MPH between delivering mass engagement and delivering depth of engagement – essentially quantity versus quantity. It is illuminating to set this tension alongside other elements of the problem of public engagement we have identified in this paper. Part of the answer to breaking the lock-in of public engagement must surely lie in endeavouring to develop new models for mass campaigning – models that over time can deliver both breadth and depth.

These models will need to be built for the longer term, on positive values. They will also need to express positive values in everything they do that involves the public. It may well be necessary to engage the public on their own values, starting from where they are at, but a strategy must then be rolled out to take them to a place in which positive values for development are activated and strengthened.

In seeking to re-engage the public in global poverty once again, we should now ask what those positive values might be.

2.2 Activating positive values

"Every time a non-governmental organisation attempts to motivate change by appealing to individuals' self-interested concerns for money and status, to businesses' desire to maximise profit, or to governments' felt mandate to increase economic growth, it has subtly privileged and encouraged the portion of people's value systems that stands in opposition to positive social (and ecological) attitudes and behaviours" (Kasser 2009:8)

Tim Kasser, a US psychologist, wrote this warning as part of his recent work advising Oxfam on how to construct its campaigns around positive values. Kasser's statement neatly sums up the point that values operate not in isolation but relative to one another. In some cases the balance operates like a see-saw: if we activate one set of values, we diminish the opposing set. In as much as consumerist values are opposed to what we might call humanitarian values, strengthening the former weakens the latter.

Kasser warns that practitioners cannot have it both ways. They must decide which it is to be: which set of values they will focus upon. In so doing they will end up deciding whether certain short-term gains are worth the risk of longer-term losses. Understanding the psychological theory around values can help make sense of our MPH narrative above, deconstructing why the campaign did not lead to a lasting shift in the breadth and depth of public engagement.

Values and human motivations

Values are of primary importance in psychology, which as a discipline is concerned with understanding the origins of human behaviour. Values are seen to be at the root of our motivational system: they are the guiding principles by which we act, and by which we evaluate both our own actions and those of others.

A useful definition is offered by Norman Feather, who fuses his own descriptions of values with those of Shalom Schwartz and Milton Rokeach – probably the two most influential psychologists working on values. Feather describes values as (among other things) *"general beliefs about desirable ways of behaving, or desirable goals"* (Feather and McKee 2008:81).

To the extent that this describes human motivations it is a workable definition, although it is also helpful to make a distinction between values and attitudes. Schwartz writes that values *"transcend specific situations"* and *"...differ from attitudes primarily in their generality or abstractness"* (Schwartz 1992:3). In psychological theory, attitudes are understood as beliefs and orientations relevant to a specific object or behaviour, whereas values are more foundational. Thus a specific attitude is a stronger predictor of its related behaviour than a value would be, but values are more broad-spectrum, having a general influence across a wide range of attitudes and behaviours.

Values in dynamic systems

A substantial body of literature has grown up around values. This includes robust methods of measuring values that have been applied in studies with large samples, undertaken in many countries. Notably psychologists have found – perhaps surprisingly – that there are relatively few values in human motivational systems, and that these are found consistently across different cultures worldwide.

Schwartz's values system, perhaps the best known and certainly the most widely applied and validated of the values frameworks, comprises 56 principal value 'labels' that can be boiled down into just ten value types (Schwartz and Boehnke 2004). Schwartz's main contribution is not so much in defining the contents of the values, but in identifying the dynamic structure in which they are positioned and interrelate. First he maintains that individual values are not distinct from one another but represent identifiable points positioned on *"a continuum of related motivations"* (Schwartz 1992:45). Next he observes that the relationships between individual values can best be understood in terms of the degree to which they are compatible or in conflict with one another.

Survey tools such as Schwartz's Values Survey reveal that people find it difficult to hold certain combinations of values at the same time, whereas other combinations are relatively easy to hold simultaneously.

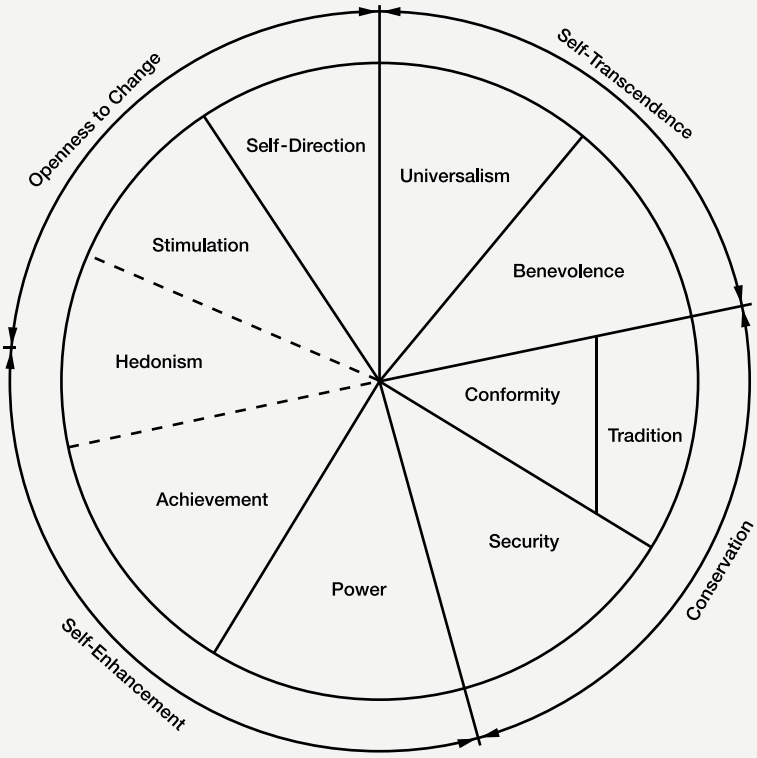
The degree of ease or difficulty with which people hold two particular values, or follow particular courses of action consistent with those values, reflects the level of compatibility or conflict between those values. For example, people who rate wealth and status as important tend not to rate social justice and living in a world at peace as equally important.

It has been pointed out that all people hold all the values on Schwartz's continuum all the time to some extent, but the balance between these values varies from individual to individual (see eg Kasser 2009). It follows from this that when we talk about 'changing values' we do not mean creating new values and introducing them into the system in place of old values. What we do mean is changing the level of importance accorded to a particular value relative to others.

Schwartz's values circumplex

Our values are often regarded as being innate. The relative priorities between them (our default settings, so to speak) appear to be strongly determined by what happens in our early life, by our families and by our education. But this prioritisation can also be changed through later influences in response to our lived experience. How our interactions in social life are framed thus has particular influence on the balance of values that we hold – hence the potential for frames to contribute to changing values (as discussed in Section 3 below).

Figure 5: Theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of values (after Schwartz & Boehnke 2004)



Due to the dynamic interrelations between values, what results when the scores from values surveys are plotted diagrammatically is not a linear version of a continuum, but a circular model or circumplex. In this model compatible values appear adjacent to one another, and conflicting values appear as opposites. Where values do not correlate with one another, they appear 'orthogonally' to one another – at right angles.

Schwartz's values circumplex is reproduced above (Figure 5). It is not a conceptual model but an empirical one: the result of what happens when the survey data are plotted out (using 'circular stochastic modelling'). Furthermore, the model has been validated through use of the Schwartz Values Survey with 200 samples in over 70 countries worldwide (see Maio et al 2009).

Once this values structure is set out, it becomes easier to see the 'problem' with consumerist values, from the perspective of increasing public engagement with development issues. The positive values that will deepen and sustain support for development are found in the north-east segments, described under the 'higher order' type of Self-Transcendence values. These are the value types Universalism and Benevolence.

These positive values are in conflict with the Self-Enhancement value types - Power, Achievement and Hedonism – in the south-west segments. Given the antagonistic relationship between opposing values on the circumplex, the positive prosocial values can be described as non-individualistic and anti-consumerist (see eg Grouzet et al 2005). These Universalism and Benevolence values can in turn be seen to motivate action to tackle a wide range of 'bigger than self' problems, within which we can include global poverty (see Crompton 2010).

Blurred boundaries between values

Schwartz says that because the circumplex expresses a continuum of motivations, the boundary markers on the model are somewhat arbitrary (*"conceptually convenient"* – Schwartz 1992:45). It follows that the values items and types can be clustered in different ways, and relations between the values plotted in different combinations. This technique is often used when designing research hypotheses and survey tools.

The primary examples of oppositional pairings are Self-Enhancement versus Self Transcendence, and Conservation (ie conservatism) versus Openness to Change. A further pairing suggested by Schwartz is Uncertainty Control (based on the 'power' and 'security' types) versus Intellectual Openness (based on the universalism and self-direction types). Schwartz argues that this pairing is likely to predict political affiliation: those with dominant Uncertainty Control values tend to be conservative, while those with stronger Intellectual Openness values tend to be liberal (Schwartz and Boehnke 2004:252).

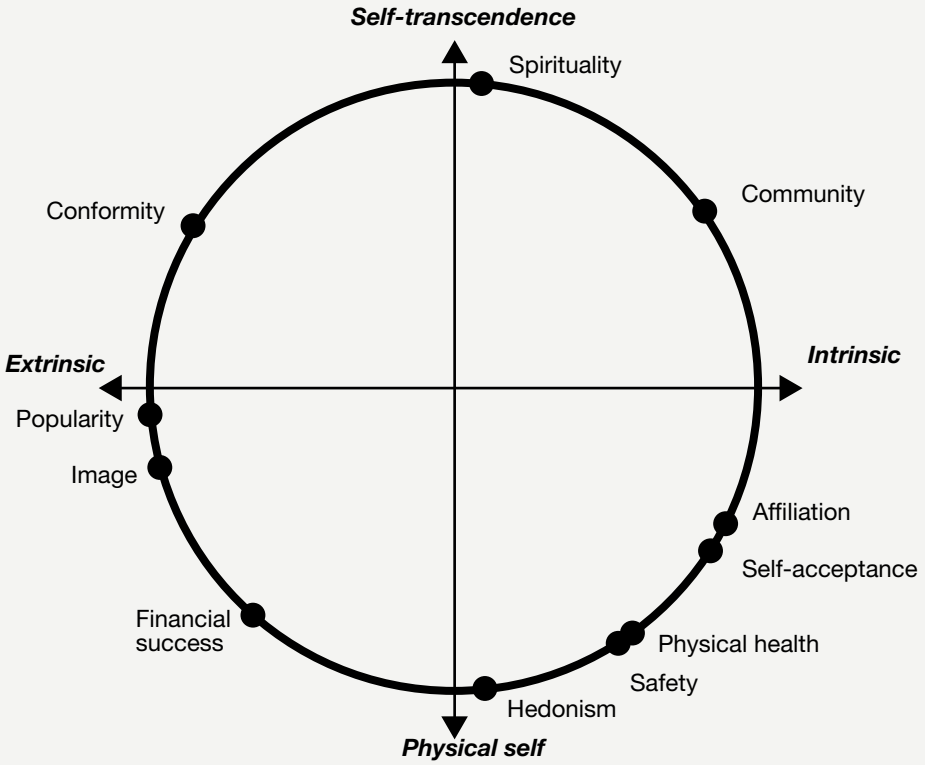
This example of how different elements of the values structure can be emphasised underlines the foundational nature of values in determining worldviews. There is also resonance between the political analysis here and the thinking on cognitive frames that we will go on to explore in Section 3 below.

Goals and psychological needs

Similar evidence on the structure of human motivations has recently been developed in relation to goals, instead of values; Tim Kasser is at the forefront of this work (see eg Grouzet et al 2005). For Kasser and colleagues, goals are subsidiary to values in the motivational system, values being *"the higher order conceptions of the ideal that typically organise people's goals"* (ibid:801). Goals reflect humans' inherent need states: a combination of their psychological needs (for affiliation and self-acceptance on the one hand, and status and pleasure on the other); their physical needs (eg for food and shelter); and their spiritual needs.

Kasser's approach is derived from 11 goal types that can be plotted against two bipolar scales, with one axis showing physical versus spiritual goals, the other extrinsic versus intrinsic. Kasser has also developed a survey tool called the Aspiration Index (Kasser and Ryan 1996). When plotted, the results from large sample surveys conducted internationally produce a circumplex model that is similar to Schwartz's.

Figure 6: Circular representation of the goals, based on a study of 1,800 students from 15 nations (Grouzet et al 2005)



Kasser's goal structure is interesting to us particularly for its minor differences in terms of the contents of the motivational items – the goals. Some of these fill gaps in the coverage of Schwartz's values. Another interesting element is the differences in structure behind the Schwartz and Kasser values systems (see Figure 6).

In terms of identifying positive goals for increasing public engagement with development issues, our attention is focused on the Intrinsic goals of Community Feeling and Affiliation, which appear on the right hand side of the model. These are shown to be in conflict with the opposing Extrinsic goals: Conformity, Popularity, Image and Financial Success.

The pairing of Community Feeling and Financial Success is taken to be the quintessential example of conflicting motivations. These goals appear exactly 192 degrees apart from each other, almost diametrically in opposition. The Grouzet, Kasser and colleagues' goal circumplex thus provides us with an even more clear-cut case that prosocial and consumerist behaviours spring from conflicting motivations, and that pursuing the two sets of goals at once is likely to prove very difficult for a given individual.

The primacy of intrinsic needs

At the same time, the 'higher order' dimensions of the goal circumplex identify the opposition of intrinsic and extrinsic needs, which is perhaps more applicable than the self-enhancement versus self-transcendent dimensions of the Schwartz values circumplex. Rather than seeing prosocial behaviour as in part driven by spiritual dimensions, the Grouzet model puts the emphasis on self-determination: the individual's sense of agency to make change for the better in society (spirituality is unpacked into the other spiritual/physical dimension).

The highlighting of the intrinsic/extrinsic axis in the Grouzet model allows us to focus more on the oppositional nature of the two sets of goals. Intrinsic goals are defined as those that are *"inherently satisfying to pursue in and of themselves".* They arise from the psychological needs for relatedness, autonomy and competence (ibid:801). Extrinsic goals are seen as *"primarily concerned with gaining some external reward or praise"* (eg status or financial success) and are *"less likely to be inherently satisfying".*

In this way extrinsic needs are understood as a sort of compensation for a deficiency in a person's capacity to achieve intrinsic goals. It is argued that extrinsic needs arise from insecurity that has its roots in an inability to satisfy innate psychological needs (Kasser 2004). This element of displacement shines further light on the motivations for consumerist and socially dominant behaviour, and suggests that self-direction in the pursuit of common goals (ie pro-social behaviour) is the more natural state of things (see also work cited in Section 3 below on mirror neurons).

Grouzet and colleagues note that people with strong extrinsic goals have more difficulty fulfilling their intrinsic needs – for acceptance, affiliation and so forth. In turn these findings tie into Kasser's earlier work on well-being (see eg ibid), which notes that achieving consumerist goals doesn't even make people happy.

The same conflicts between self-serving and 'bigger than self' motivations are thus apparent in both sets of empirical work on values and goals. If anything, the sense of irreconcilable conflict between the two agendas is sharper in the work on goals, given that they relate to the purposes of human strivings.

It is worth recalling at this point Tim Kasser's warning to NGOs quoted at the start of this section: that any form of public engagement that appeals to people's sense of self-interest will diminish their sense of common good. A number of examples of such tactics, and the collateral damage they are likely to inflict, appear in the literature. Most are taken from the environmental sphere.

In presenting a set of experiments based on Schwartz's values circumplex, Greg Maio warns about the negative impacts of promoting energy efficiency measures as money-saving steps, even though the pro-environmental and financial benefits could make those measures appear a win-win for the householder (Maio et al 2009). Likewise, in his work on values and frames, Tom Crompton cautions against selling photo-voltaic cells or hybrid cars on the basis that they will enhance the buyer's social status (Crompton 2010).

Values, causes and correlations

Values matter not only in themselves – because they reflect sharp and sometimes conflicting differences in motivations – but also because the motivations they embody in turn influence other attitudes and behaviours. Again the literature on values and goals is well evolved, and empirical work has shown both correlations and causal associations with other perceptions and actions.

Thus Kasser reports findings that show that a strong orientation towards money and possessions (hence placing importance on financial success and image goals) correlates with attitudinal orientations that include lower empathy, more manipulative tendencies, higher Social Dominance Orientiation (ie a preference for hierarchy and social inequality) and greater prejudice towards out-groups (Kasser 2009).

The last of these attributes, the tendency towards discrimination, is also found in many studies using Schwartz's values system, which tend to correlate universalism values with positive attitudes to racial difference (see eg Feather 1970, and Rokeach 1973 in eg Sawyerr et al 2005) and with readiness to contact members of an out-group (eg Sagiv and Schwartz's 1995 study of Israeli Jewish teachers, in eg Feather and McKee 2008).

Some other values types have been found to correlate with the 'Big Five' personality traits that are often used to mark out different types of people in contemporary psychology (see eg Roccas 2002). Correlations are also widely observed between motivations and behaviours. Kasser reports, for example, that people with strong Materialistic Values Orientations (MVOs) are less likely to report undertaking pro-social behaviour, and more likely to commit antisocial acts such as stealing and cheating (Kasser 2004).

Acting on values

Experiments have also been undertaken to demonstrate the causal influence of values on behaviour. These experiments tend to involve 'priming', in which certain values are activated within the participant in order to test how they influence behaviour. One widely reported class of experiments involved priming people with the term 'money', and then finding that they were less willing either to help the researcher with some subsequent task or to donate part of their research fee to charity (eg Vohs et al 2006). In this way what Maio calls the *"systemic implications of values change"* are demonstrated, whereby activating one value diminishes its antagonistic counterpart (Maio et al 2009:701).

Maio's own experiments go further, in showing that activating one value can also activate an adjacent value, as well as diminishing an antagonistic partner. Maio's results echo earlier data showing that just priming people with 'achievement' values can lead them to regard a task in a different light – the research task itself (eg a word puzzle) becomes an opportunity for proving self-worth.

These results impinge on work on framing, which is discussed in the section below. But Maio also proves through his experiments that *"priming a set of values increases behaviour that affirms those values and decreases behaviour affirming opposing values"* (ibid:712). He concludes that *"changes in either set of values have reciprocal effects on the opposing values"* (ibid:713).

It is notable that none of this evidence on the association between values and behaviours relates to behaviours concerned with tackling poverty. Indeed the laboratory experiments tend to relate to trivial 'helping' behaviours such as picking up dropped pencils. Despite this, the bigger correlations in this kind of research can demonstrate associations with more meaningful pro- and anti-social behaviours in the real world.

Universalist values, fairtrade and human rights

From this point of view there are a couple of highly relevant pieces of evidence for practitioners in development NGOs. The first is that those who express stronger universalism values also express more supportive attitudes about human rights (Cohrs et al 2007). In turn, those expressing stronger attitudes about human rights are more likely to undertake supportive actions, including donating to human rights NGOs. The second piece of evidence comes from a study of US buyers of fairtrade products (Doran 2009). All the respondents filled out the Schwartz Values Survey, and it was found that the most loyal fairtrade purchasers ranked the Universalism values as the most important. The loyal purchasers also scored highly on Self-direction values, indicating that they were willing to make minority choices and hunt out fairtrade products in specialist shops.

It is important to note that these loyal purchasers ranked the Benevolence items in the survey as less important than did 'intermittent' fairtrade shoppers, for whom these values were the most important. As well as underlining the general correlation between self-transcendence values and action to tackle poverty (here, buying fairtrade) the findings underline the need to distinguish between Universalism and Benevolence value types. The former relate to showing care for all people, and the latter to showing care for those like oneself (in one's in-group). These differences will be teased out below, as we consider precisely which values should be activated in order to engage the public in development issues.

"priming a set of values increases behaviour that affirms those values and decreases behaviour affirming opposing values"

2.3 Identifying positive values for development

We have noted that the values literature includes only limited references to the influence of values and goals on support for tackling global poverty. Reciprocally, looking at the development literature, there is little work on the values that underlie support for concern about global poverty. In this section, however, we explore these value links for ourselves. We explore what happens if we take the values theory approach, as laid out above, and apply it to driving public engagement with development. What are the positive values that result?

Despite the lack of literature about the values that drive public engagement, development academics David Hudson and Jennifer van Heerde have undertaken some exploratory work. They did this by using DFID data to explore the motivations of concern and support for tackling global poverty (Van Heerde and Hudson 2010).

Hudson and van Heerde began their analysis with a literature review that identified two root causes of political action. May and Olson provide a two-part typology for activism, one type based on 'the logic of expected consequences' and the other on 'the logic of appropriateness' (May and Olson 1996 in ibid). Essentially, those influenced by 'expected consequences' are motivated by rational self-interest, while the 'appropriateness' type is based on moral beliefs.

Back to basics: self-interest and morality

Synthesising these findings with the rest of the literature, Van Heerde and Hudson boil the causes of concern for poverty down to self-interest and morality. Interestingly, they then move on to an analysis of media coverage of the developing world in 2005. This indicates that these two prevailing models – or 'frames' as the authors call them – dictated the narrative in all the development stories in the newspapers that year.

Van Heerde and Hudson apply the dichotomy between self-interested and moral motivations to recent data from the DFID Survey of Public Attitudes (as best they can, given the problems with the available measures). They find that morality (as measured by the statement 'poverty in developing countries is a moral issue') is positively correlated with concern about levels of poverty in poor countries. But, self-interest (measured with an index based on a basket of questions about economic, security, political and personal impacts) is shown to have a negative correlation with concern for poverty.

This finding is consistent with the values evidence laid out above. It is at odds, however, with hypotheses derived from the development literature, which suggest that both morality and self-interest could drive concern for development. Van Heerde and Hudson unpick this apparent contradiction by disaggregating the self-interest index into its constituent measures, finding that while attitudes relating to the national interest correlate negatively with concern, items focusing on self-interest (eg poverty having consequences that 'affect me personally') correlate positively.

In a parallel paper van Heerde and Hudson conclude that *"It is entirely plausible and logical that people are able to hold, simultaneously, both an instrumental and normative view for supporting development assistance"* (Hudson & van Heerde 2010:15). While this conclusion might seem logical, and is in line with thinking in development studies, it goes against the well evidenced work on values and goals in the psychological literature. Indeed it is reminiscent of the cases that environmentally minded psychologists write about, such as the energy efficiency schemes that look like a win-win but are more likely to involve trade-offs between shorter- and longer-term forms of engagement (see eg Maio et al 2009).

Preference accommodation and preference shaping

In trying to make sense of this, van Heerde and Hudson highlight the work of Hay (2007), who saw a clear choice that needed to be made between two alternative strategies for engaging the public (Hay 2007). Hay's two routes to public engagement are summarised as 'preference accommodation' or 'preference shaping' – put simply, meeting the public where it is at, or aiming for values change. Hay argues strongly for the latter.

Preference accommodation, Hay says, appeals to self-interest and is ultimately a self-fulfilling prophecy: if you argue that support is rational, people will calculate the costs and benefits and conclude that engagement isn't worth it. Engagement in elections offers an obvious example, where the concept of 'pivotality' suggests that the chances of your vote being the one that makes the difference to the overall outcome are so slim that it would be illogical to vote at all. Hay argues that if you play to people's self-interest, they will become more self-interested and disengage from political activism.

Ultimately van Heerde and Hudson's analysis reaches a conclusion that is in line with the values literature. There are apparent tensions here between development studies and values theory, and these will be teased out in the following section of this paper. For the moment, however, the task of mapping drivers of engagement with global poverty points back to the intrinsic values and goals identified through the work in psychology.

Self-interest and the aid budget

An interesting study from the development sector, concerning the work of AusAid, throws up parallel findings (Instinct and Reason 2009 – discussed in detail in Darnton 2009). Seeking to increase support for spending on development aid among the Australian public, AusAid commissioned a choice modelling exercise that involved testing a range of scenarios with the public. The optimal solution identified – the one that produced the largest public endorsement for an increase in aid spending to 0.5% of GNI – emphasised self-interest motivations (spending 75% of aid on neighbours in the region, for example, and prioritising education of the kind that reduces women's propensity to breed).

Meanwhile, in AusAid's segmentation model, the two segments that reported the highest support for development aid did not show strong concern for global poverty. Instead they supported foreign aid on the premise that it would bring domestic benefits. While these findings show that self-interest can drive support for development spending in the short term, the evidence from the psychological literature and from development academics suggests that such strategies are likely to decrease public engagement in the longer term. This study provides a classic example of the choices and trade-offs that confront us if a values lens is applied to the evidence on building public support for development.

While this development sector research provides indicative findings about motivations, it doesn't go so far as to analyse support for tackling global poverty in terms of existing values and goals scales. On the basis of this review, there is certainly a need to pursue such an opportunity. As will be discussed below, some work has been done in the development sector around values. This includes Oxfam's examination of core motivations for campaigning and the Mindsets research in 2008 that informed the development of Oxfam's new customer segmentation (Oxfam 2008).

Schwartz's values types

However, such work does not explicitly tie into the psychological work on values. Because of this it misses out on drawing upon a substantial body of potentially illuminating empirical evidence. To identify the specific motivations that are supportive of public engagement with development issues, we believe it is worthwhile to examine the values and goals literature closely, and make some inferences. In order to perform this task, it is necessary to look at Schwartz's full table of the ten value types and their associated items.

Figure 7: Schwartz's ten value types and their principal value labels (Schwartz 1992)

Value Type	Definition	Value Labels
Power	Social Status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources	- Social power - Authority - Wealth - Preserving my public image - Social recognition
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards	- Successful - Capable - Ambitious - Influential - Intelligent
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself	- Pleasure - Enjoying life - Self-indulgent
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty and challenge in life	- Daring - A varied life - An exciting life
Self-direction	Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring	- Curious - Creativity - Freedom - Choosing own goals - Independent - Self-respect
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature	- Protecting the environment - Unity with nature - A world of beauty - Broadminded - Social justice - Wisdom - Equality - A world at peace - Inner harmony

Figure 7: Continued...

Value Type	Definition	Value Labels
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact	- Helpful - Honest - Forgiving - Loyal - Responsible - A spiritual life - True friendship - Mature love - Meaning in life
Tradition	Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self	- Accepting my portion in life - Devout - Humble - Respect for tradition - Moderate - Detachment
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms	- Obedient - Honouring of parents and elders - Politeness - Self-discipline
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self	- Clean - National security - Reciprocation of favours - Social order - Family security - Sense of belonging - Healthy

Psychological experiments and survey data have shown that universalism values are linked to pro-social attitudes and behaviours, and also to specific development-related attitudes and behaviours. These are accepting different others and rejecting discrimination; supporting human rights and donating to human rights organisations; and buying fairtrade products (see Section 2.2 above). In presenting his values system, Schwartz himself is clear that support for development issues is a core component of Universalism values, rooted both in human responses to resource disputes and in the realisation of living within finite limits:

"The motivational goal of universalism is understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature …The motivational goal of universalism values can be derived from those survival needs of groups and individuals that become apparent when people come into contact with those outside the extended primary group and become aware of the scarcity of natural resources. People may then realise that failure to accept others who are different and treat them justly will lead to life-threatening strife, and failure to protect the natural environment will lead to the destruction of the resources on which life depends" (Schwartz 1992:12).

Defining positive values for development

If we pursue this psychological way of thinking about values, with its circumplex structures and its evidence that certain pairs of values work antagonistically against one another, then we can identify a set of positive values for driving public engagement with development as follows:

- 'Universalism' values should be activated, including Equality; A World at Peace; Social Justice.

- In addition, given what Greg Maio calls the *"systematic effects of values change",* and Tim Kasser's warning that endorsing negative values is reinforcing them, activating positive values should also involve avoiding 'Power' values. These include Social Power; Wealth; Authority; and Preserving My Public Image.

- Given that supportive values for development and the environment are strongly compatible within the Universalism type (as articulated by Schwartz above), there may also be benefits in activating the neighbouring 'Universalism' values, including A World of Beauty; Unity with Nature; and Protecting the Environment.

- The final three Universalism values (Broadmindedness; Wisdom; Inner Harmony) may similarly have a positive effect on public engagement with global poverty, even if only because they activate their neighbouring Universalism values. Greg Maio's experiments have shown that 'target values' activate 'unmentioned values' (Maio et al 2009:701).

• It can also be argued that Benevolence values (such as Helpful, Responsible, True Friendship and Meaning in Life) should be included in a set of positive values (although they fall outside the Universalism type). This is because they are part of the Self-Transcendence higher-order values type, and as such can be seen as supportive or reinforcing of the adjacent Universalism values. But the psychological evidence shows that the Benevolence values appear to correlate with engagement with development issues more weakly than do Universalism values. We can recall the survey data discussed above, which found that intermittent fairtrade purchasers were the most strongly Benevolence-orientated (Doran 2009).

According to Schwartz's definition, Benevolence values motivate support for in-groups: *"close others"* not *"all people"* (Schwartz 1992:11-12). On the one hand these values are adjacent to the Universalism values on Schwartz's circumplex, which means that through association they may activate self-transcendent motivations such as Universalism. Benevolence values are defined, however, as driving support for the in-group, which means that the kind of pro-social actions they motivate might be to the benefit of the individual's in-group over and above the benefit of others.

To take an example from the environmental sphere, it is possible that Benevolence values could drive NIMBY ('Not in My Back Yard') responses to renewable energy developments, or the stockpiling of fuel and other finite resources. In a development context it could be argued that Benevolence values are likely to have at best a neutral effect on support for tackling global poverty. However, this theoretical assertion can be challenged from a practical viewpoint (see the section on 'Refining positive values' immediately below). These ambiguities are explored in Section 2.4, but they would clearly benefit from more primary research on the relationship between specific values and behaviours supportive of tackling poverty.

Key goals for public engagement

Returning to the goal system developed by Grouzet, Kasser and colleagues, we can recall that the Intrinsic motivations are Community Feeling, Affiliation and Self-Acceptance (Grouzet et al 2005). These are in conflict with the Extrinsic goals of Conformity, Image, Popularity and Financial Success. To identify which items we should be promoting in order to increase public engagement with development, we need to look more closely at the dimensions of each of these goals. We can do this by examining the survey statements used to measure the importance of each of the goals in Kasser and Ryan's Aspiration Index (Kasser & Ryan 2006). In the interests of brevity, the following table shows only the statements for each of the Intrinsic and Extrinsic goals we are focusing on [Figure 8].

Figure 8: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goals in Grouzet et al's goal circumplex, with corresponding items from Kasser & Ryan's Aspiration Index (reproduced from Crompton 2010)

Life-goal of particular importance for motivation to engage in 'bigger-than-self' problems	Corresponding indicator goals presented to subjects in surveys	Opposing life-goal(s)	Corresponding indicator goals presented to subjects in surveys
Affiliation. To have satisfying relationships with family and friends	People will show affection to me, and I will to them.	**Conformity.** To fit in with other people.	I will be polite and obedient.
	I will feel that there are people who really love me.	**Image.** To look attractive in terms of body and clothing.	I will live up to the expectations of my society.
	Someone in my life will accept me as I am, no matter what.		My desires and tastes will be similar to those of other people.
	I will express my love for special people.	**Popularity.** To be famous, well-known and admired.	I will "fit in" with others.
	I will have a committed, intimate relationship.		My image will be one others find appealing.
			I will achieve the "look" I've been after.
			People will often comment about how attractive I look.
			I will successfully hide the signs of aging.
			I will keep up with fashions in clothing and hair.
			I will be admired by many people.
			My name will be known by many different people.
			Most everyone who knows me will like me

Figure 8: Continued...

Life-goal of particular importance for motivation to engage in 'bigger-than-self' problems	Corresponding indicator goals presented to subjects in surveys	Opposing life-goal(s)	Corresponding indicator goals presented to subjects in surveys
Self-acceptance. To feel competent and autonomous.	I will be efficient.	As above	As above
	I will choose what I do, instead of being pushed along by life.		
	I will feel free.		
	I will deal effectively with problems in my life.		
	I will feel good about my abilities.		
	I will overcome the challenges that life presents me.		
	I will have insight into why I do the things I do.		
Community feeling. To improve the world through activism or generativity	I will assist people who need it, asking nothing in return.	**Financial success.** To be wealthy and materially successful.	I will have many expensive possessions.
	The things I do will make other people's lives better.		I will be financially successful.
Related to this intrinsic goal is the importance of a sense of agency in working to create change.	I will help the world become a better place.		I will have enough money to buy everything I want.
			I will have a job that pays well.

Of the three Intrinsic goals, Community Feeling appears to offer the most obvious fit with support for tackling global poverty. It is explicitly about taking action in the world, and building a sense of agency in the individual, such that he or she can take action and have that action achieve the desired effect. As discussed in the section above, these self-determination dimensions of the goal system are missing (or are less explicit) in Schwartz's values circumplex.

In support of Community Feeling, Self-Acceptance goals seem important because they can activate adjacent goals. But they are also important in themselves because they can help to increase feelings of agency.

We might reasonably assume that Affiliation is less important in driving support for development, as on the strength of the survey items it appears to relate to support for in-groups and to strengthening self-identity. We could make a comparison here with Benevolence in the values circumplex.

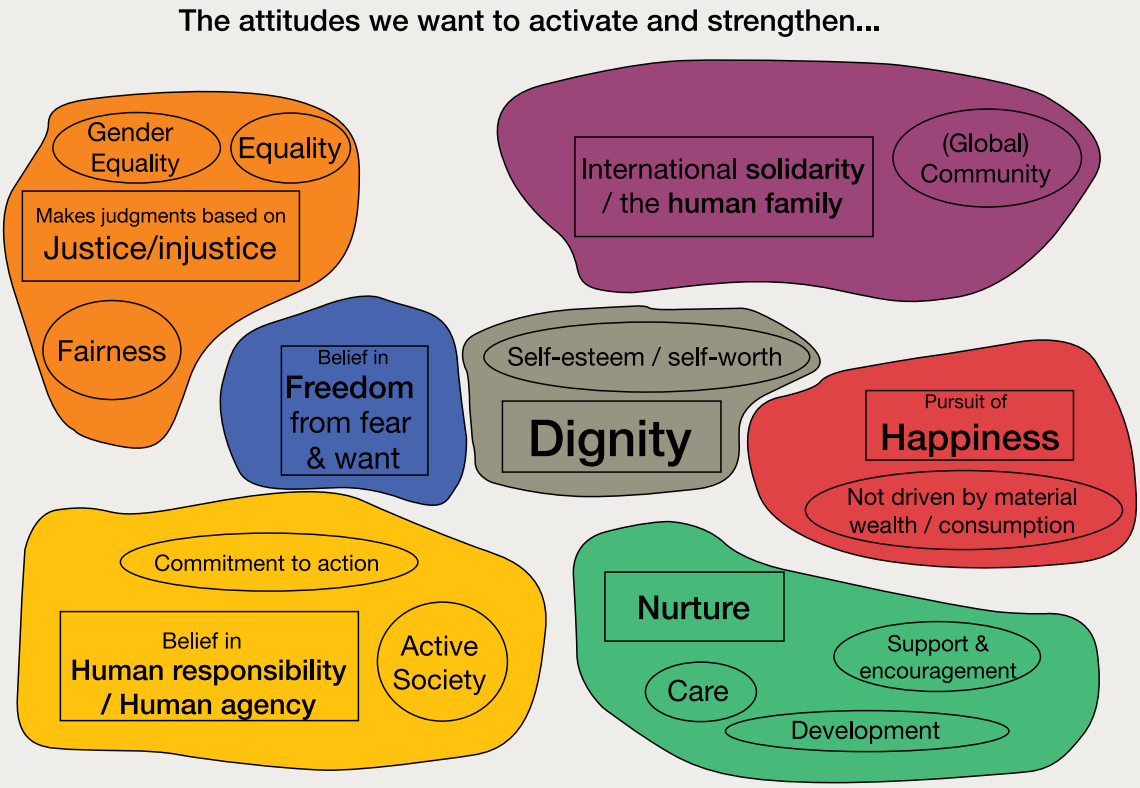
Addressing antagonistic goals

In terms of diminishing antagonistic goals, it can be concluded that Financial Success should certainly be avoided; this goal is diametrically opposed to Community Feeling. Similarly Popularity, Image and Conformity (in so far as it is central to consumer culture) should also be avoided.

Having made these inferences, based on what we know about the well evidenced relationships between Intrinsic goals and propensity to engage in 'bigger than self' problems, it is again important to stress that the relationships between the specific values and goals advocated here and measures of public engagement in development issues should be established through primary research at the first opportunity. Indeed we are already planning to pursue such a programme of research by means of a quantitative panel survey (see Section 6 below).

Community Feeling appears to offer the most obvious fit with support for tackling global poverty.

Figure 9: 'The Attitudes we want to activate and strengthen…' (Adrian Lovett for Oxfam, 2006)



The Oxfam blob diagram

However, there is further evidence that the values and goals picked out here are consistent with those that development NGOs have already identified as representing the ideal foundation on which to campaign with the public. In 2006 Adrian Lovett led a research study that resulted in the recommendation of a set of motivations around which Oxfam should build its campaigns. This outcome was represented in what has become known internally as the 'blob diagram' [Figure 9].

We can quickly see that the values and goals advocated in this paper fit well with the Oxfam prescription in the blob diagram, even though it is written around attitudes. For instance, the Universalism values of Equality and Justice are explicitly mentioned on the Oxfam model. A World at Peace value item directly relates to Oxfam's Freedom from Fear and Want. Meanwhile the goal of Community Feeling can be seen to cohere with Belief in Human Agency (supported by the goal of Self-Acceptance), Solidarity for the Human Family, and Care for Others. The close mapping between Oxfam's attitudinal blobs and intrinsic goals and values is also apparent to Tim Kasser, who has remarked on how well embedded the positive goals and values are in Oxfam's 'Be humankind' brand campaign (Kasser 2009).

Having said this, there are two of the 'blobs' in the Oxfam motivations set that do not appear to map neatly onto values and goals in the psychological literature. 'Happiness not driven by material wealth/ consumption' and 'Development as care (for distant others)' cannot be considered values or goals in themselves, but rather seem to require the reframing of familiar concepts around particular (Universalism) values.

This reading of the Oxfam motivations set suggests that the missing strand in their campaign strategy may be the use of a frames approach. Such an approach, which can activate particular values and worldviews through the use of particular words and concepts, expressed in every aspect of how practitioners engage the public, is introduced in Section 4 below.

2.4 Refining positive values for development

The section above began by laying out a perceived opposition in the literature on the drivers of public engagement with global poverty: morality on the one hand versus self-interest on the other. But we have also encountered David Hudson's argument that there is no logical reason why support for development should not be motivated by both sets of values at once (Hudson and Van Heerde 2010).

Values theorists would argue that it is difficult to span both sides of the values circumplex simultaneously, and yet for Hudson it seems *"entirely plausible"* that people manage it (ibid). For instance, when a member of the public buys something from an Oxfam shop, or purchases a fairtrade product, they are likely to be exercising dual motivations with no sense of dissonance whatever.

Similarly there could be an objection from development practitioners that a psychological approach based purely on values theory does not recognise the practicalities of development work on the ground. It could be argued that the ends of development are more important than the means: if self-interest drives public or state-level support, then surely that is preferable to no support at all. However there are clearly myriad ways to achieve those ends, and values theory can help us to see the trade-offs inherent in different approaches.

A conflicted space for NGOs

There is evidence that NGOs increasingly find themselves in this conflicted space when undertaking development work. Development academic Matt Smith writes of the *"blurred boundaries"* between NGOs, states and markets (Baillie Smith 2008:11). Such blurring does not easily fit with a dichotomous view of development work, such as one based purely on values theory. These slippery exchanges between practice and principle are one reason why Matt Smith advocates an approach to public engagement grounded in development education, based on enabling the public to participate in discussion and deliberation about the purposes and practices of development work. Such an approach has the added value of building up the legitimacy of NGOs to do that work, in the eyes of the public.

Moreover, it appears that the way development is actually being delivered in the global South at present is more driven by self-interest on the part of developing nations than by altruism on the part of Northern donors. The South is advancing its own development agenda, and South-South partnerships are the dominant model.

Development academic Emma Mawdsley is exploring models of South-South development, and in a recent paper she cites Brazil and India talking about global development as 'horizontal co-operation' and 'development co-operation' respectively (Mawdsley 2010:11). China is the biggest force in this emerging model of development, pursuing its agenda not through donations but through partnerships. Mawdsley tellingly quotes the Chinese ambassador announcing his government's intention to build a $1bn hydro-electric dam in Guinea with the words: *"The dam is not a gift; it is an investment... That is what win-win means"* (ibid: 18).

The overlap between North and South

Whether or not the contractual arrangement proposed by the ambassador really constituted a 'win-win' is an open question. Many development practitioners (and other commentators) express reservations about China's way of working, in Africa in particular. To an extent, such development realities are a distraction from the main thrust of this paper, which focuses on engaging the UK public in development. Yet the two arenas of activity – public engagement in the global North and development practice in the South – do overlap. For example, it is notable that a number of NGOs (including Oxfam and WWF) are working with the governments of developing countries (including China) to try to manage the potential negative impacts of partnership arrangements, grounded in self-interest, on the world's poorest people.

One of the implications drawn out at the end of this paper is that NGOs will need to find a new way to present themselves and their work to the UK public. If and when they do so, we would suggest that the model they should present is one that takes account both of how development is being practised in the South, and how their own role in that development is shaping up.

Mauss's gift theory

Beyond these real-world tensions based on development in action, there are also theoretical concerns about a development model based solely on self-transcendence. These concerns arise not from psychology but from development studies grounded in other disciplines such as geography, anthropology and sociology.

Marcel Mauss's gift theory has become a staple of sociological thought, and an influential text in development studies (Emma Mawdsley uses gift theory to structure her recent paper). Mauss focuses his attention not on the gift itself but on the act of giving, which is a social act that creates a bond of solidarity between the giver and the receiver (Mauss 1954). For the bond to be fully established, the recipient is expected to reciprocate with a gift of their own at some point in the future.

When a gift is given without the expectation of reciprocation, the result is what Marshall Sahlins calls 'negative giving' (1972 – in Mawdsley 2010). As Mauss explains: *"The unreciprocated gift makes the person who has accepted it inferior, particularly when it has been accepted with no thought of returning it"* (Mauss 1954:65). The implications of this kind of negative giving in an international development context are stark. A charity-based development model entrenches uneven power structures and results in aid dependency – a phenomenon observed by a number of recent authors on development aid, including Sachs, Easterly and Moyo (Mawdsley 2010).

Two-way exchange and reciprocation

This reading of charity as gift is not necessarily entirely incompatible with an approach to development grounded in intrinsic values, but values theory suggests that gifts freely given through Universalism must also allow for an element of reciprocation, or exchange. Rather as instant online activism with no further engagement can be regarded as mere clicktivism, so mechanisms for gathering donations that involve no subsequent interaction or other meaningful two-way exchange can be seen as simply reinforcing the prevailing, unequal, status quo.

Away from this fundamental critique of development as charity, there are potential problems with the specific values that are identified as driving support for development, when we look at them pragmatically. First, there is the danger that Universalism can appear high-minded. Rather than building empathy, an insistence on support grounded in, say, the value of equality could be read as having the reverse effect. If the subjects of the support – states in the developing South – are motivated by self-interest, then an insistence on intrinsic motivations in the supporting North could enhance the 'othering' effect apparent in the current model of development as charity.

Negotiating disciplinary divides

We are grappling here with something of a clash of disciplines and a collision of different specialised vocabularies. Universalism describes a specific set of values items as defined in a particular school of social psychology. 'Universal values', on the other hand, have wider resonance in a number of disciplines that inform development studies. In each of these disciplines, universal values (or principles) tend to be problematised.

For instance, the philosopher Nigel Dower writes critically about the universal ethics informing global citizenship, as embodied in international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Earth Charter (2000): *"No ethic is universally accepted, or is ever likely to be..."* (Dower 2005). Similarly, Matt Smith has remarked *"universal values are clearly not from nowhere, and definitely from somewhere"* (personal communication).

'Universal values' as they appear in the development literature are clearly distinct from the Universalism values of social psychology. Because of this, it is important when advocating the adoption of Universalism in the context of development that we are aware both of the problematic resonances of the term 'universal' and of the potential for mistakenly defining a rigid set of values and assuming them to be universally good. Practical examples from development as it is happening on the ground (as discussed above) suggest that other ways of doing development exist, and some of these may be delivering at least as much 'good'.

Benevolence in action: Citizens UK

If universal values (and also Universalism) could be seen to be high-minded, then Benevolence can appear to have greater instinctive appeal when seeking to engage the UK public in global poverty. There is a risk, as discussed in the previous section of this paper, that too much Benevolence could lead people to entrench themselves further in their in-groups. This could mean that they do not reach out to others who are distant from them. Yet Benevolence is widely recognised by development practitioners as an effective way in to working with the public. Being all about care for one's in-group, Benevolence values are seen to be more in line with people's daily concerns than are Universalism values. It is for this reason that values campaigning and community organising principles traditionally 'start from where people are at'.

The most successful current exponent of community organising in this country is Citizens UK. Its success can be measured not least by its influence on contemporary politics. It hosted the unofficial fourth leaders' debate before the 2010 General Election, and has since been adopted by the government as an exemplar for the Big Society concept.

Citizens UK's method is to work with existing groups, such as community groups and faith groups, giving everyone a chance to speak and then reflecting people's concerns back to them. This is followed by a process of bringing groups together around a common agenda, built up from the initial concerns that people voiced. The local groups become members of Citizens UK, then the executive takes their common agenda forward and lobbies for political change at a high level (in Westminster, for example, or by targeting London's Mayor as in a recent campaign on the living wage).

This method of organising has apparently been very effective both in engaging and empowering local groups, and in making the space for political change. From a values perspective, it is Benevolence in action. The danger, however, is that it activates and reinforces Benevolence values, to the point where participants never get beyond caring for their in-group. For some campaigning agendas (such as the living wage, or rights issues) that may be sufficient. But for 'bigger than self' problems such as climate change – or global poverty – such an approach may be insufficient.

Instead of taking action on the global environment, for example, local groups engaged through a Citizens UK-style approach may just work on local environmental issues such as dog fouling and litter. This potential shortcoming was confirmed by Neil Jamieson, chief executive of Citizens UK, when he spoke recently to a meeting of senior leaders of UK NGOs: *"The agenda comes from our members. It usually starts with my children, my home, my street. But never international development"* (personal communication). Underlining the differences between community organising (grounded in Benevolence) and development (understood as grounded in Universalism), Jamieson continued: *"Our people don't go to those meetings [ie those convened by development NGOs] – they're too self-serving, too sacrificial. Our people are convened around family."*

Ways forward for Benevolence

While observing the potential limitations of the Citizens UK approach, as NGOs we must acknowledge the apparent advantages of engaging the public through the Benevolence values which they more strongly hold, rather than the Universalism values which will be needed in order to deepen their engagement with global poverty. In any case, Benevolence is next to Universalism on the values circumplex, and we know from experimental work that activating Benevolence values will strengthen the adjacent Universalism values (see eg Maio et al 2009).

Yet values theory also highlights tensions in campaigning approaches, and reveals the potential effects of applying different engagement techniques. We cannot afford to rule out the chance of people becoming empowered campaigners if that means engaging them first on the things they care about the most (or most often). But if their immediate concerns do not coincide with those of development NGOs, then practitioners will need to have strategies in place to strengthen positive values, and within this to bring Universalism values to the fore. Clearly there is a debate to be had over what constitutes positive values for development, and this paper is designed to inform that debate (and others besides).

Ways forward for Universalism

As with Benevolence, this section has discussed challenges to an approach to public engagement grounded wholly in Universalism. Many of these challenges come from observing how development work is done on the ground, driven forward by mutual self-interest. Notwithstanding these observations, the real-world evidence from psychology is clear that the use of negative, extrinsic values reinforces those values and diminishes people's intrinsic motivations and their pro-social actions.

If, for short-term reasons, NGOs choose to trade on extrinsic motivations, to earn revenue or engage new supporters, then they must do so, but all the time being mindful of the collateral damage these tactics will cause to the supporter base in the longer term. Such tactics should only be employed as part of a considered, longer-term strategy for building public engagement with development – a strategy founded on the positive values outlined above. As with the example of online organising cited in Section 1, the key to achieving deeper public engagement is getting supporters onto a journey of engagement: from local to global, from online to offline. Not for nothing is the pre-eminent US online organiser called MoveOn.org.

Other ways through the evident tensions between the practices and principles of development NGOs, and the core business of engaging the UK public, will be apparent to other readers of this paper. Many of the tensions and contradictions in development work are likely to remain insoluble – hence the need for debate and deliberation to work through these tensions as far as possible, as development educators have advocated.

There are likely to be no easy answers to many of the ethical and values-based questions we are posing. Working with values can seem formidably abstract – values are abstract by their very definition (Schwartz 1992). In using frames, however, we can find a way to activate values and make them usable in public engagement activities by development NGOs, as we will endeavour to demonstrate in the next section.

If, for short-term reasons, NGOs choose to trade on extrinsic motivations, to earn revenue or engage new supporters, then they must do so, but all the time being mindful of the collateral damage these tactics will cause to the supporter base in the longer term

3.A frames approach to public engagement

This section...

• Introduces frames, and seeks to explain the concept via a brief overview of its rich heritage across a number of academic disciplines. The relevance of frames to development NGO practitioners is established, based primarily on frames' ability to tap into, and activate, particular associated values.

• Focuses in on the idea of cognitive frames, as they appear in cognitive linguistics. In particular we look at frames as practical tools for campaigning, in the 'cognitive policy' work of George Lakoff.

• Sets out Lakoff's practical distinction between 'deep frames' (a specific sort of conceptual frame that presents a moral worldview) and 'surface frames' (which identify the context of a discourse and provide an angle of viewing).

• Explores the practical applications of these two interrelated concepts.

3.1 An introduction to frames

We have argued above that it is time to reframe international development and how the task of tackling poverty is constructed and approached. In particular, our analysis of the current state of public engagement suggests that the public is stuck in a transaction frame, with the Live Aid Legacy as the dominant model of how tackling poverty is understood. Breaking out of this transaction frame, and the associated aid frame, involves every facet of our public engagement work and how we communicate it. This includes the fundamentals of how we campaign and how we fundraise.

In the development sector we are happy enough to talk about reframing in this way; we all know essentially what it means. But what exactly are 'frames' and how do they work? How might frames lead us to the values that we have identified as driving public engagement with global poverty over the long term?

Frames can be defined as cognitive devices that we use to understand words and things, and by which we structure our thoughts. When we hear a word, it automatically evokes in us a set of ideas, values and feelings. This set of evocations can be described as the 'conceptual frame' for that word. When we encounter new words, we understand them by reference to existing frames, and as we acquire new frames so our understanding moves along. What occurs with words also occurs with sensations and experiences: we understand the world by reference to our existing frames.

Frames in the mind, in language and the world

George Lakoff, a US academic working in cognitive linguistics, defines frames in this way (2006:25):

"Frames are the mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality – and sometimes to create what we take to be reality …They structure our ideas and concepts, they shape how we reason, and they even impact how we perceive and how we act. For the most part, our use of frames is unconscious and automatic – we use them without realising it."

Most obviously, frames are found in language. Linguistic 'discourse analysis' can examine large bodies of text to pick out commonly used words and the other words they are used in connection with (their 'colocations'). In this way, frames can be identified. As we have mentioned, frames can also be discerned in the everyday world, particularly in spaces that have been deliberately constructed (including buildings, settlements, institutions and policies).

As well as existing out there in the world, and in language, frames inhabit each one of us. They are, after all, mental structures. Cognitive linguists such as Lakoff argue that conceptual frames open up their own neural pathways; as the frames are repeated (or we encounter them repeatedly), so the pathways are reinforced.

We keep frames in our long-term memory. In this way it can be literally said that frames structure how we think. They essentially become the defaults with which we understand the world. This means that they are deeply ingrained, but they can also be revised over time. Through repeated exposure to what we hear, read and experience, new frames can become dominant in our minds.

3.2 Different concepts of frames

Lakoff offers a view of frames that we wish particularly to highlight in this paper because of its potential value to public engagement strategies. In recent years Lakoff has focused considerable attention on how to operationalise frames analysis as a practical, campaigning tool.

Before examining the detail of Lakoff's work, however, we should go back to the roots of frames analysis. The frames concept has an impressive and diverse heritage in academic thought in the late 20th century, and it is worth setting out a few other readings of 'frames' in order to gain a fuller understanding of the concept. This will enable us to understand Lakoff's approach to framing in its wider context.

Frames are the mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality – and sometimes to create what we take to be reality

The origins of the frames concept: Minsky, Goffman and Fillmore

The concept of frames seems to have burst into a number of different academic literatures around 1974. It all began with a number of US authors writing from different disciplines, some of them connected to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), exploring frames in relation to their different fields. They included Marvin Minsky, a pioneer of Artificial Intelligence and computer programming; Erving Goffman, a sociologist; and Charles Fillmore, a linguistics and semantics expert.

Minsky is generally credited with being the first to use the term. He seized upon the idea of 'frames' as a theoretical means of explaining the apparent power and speed of human thought processes – which Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems would need to emulate. Minsky referred to 'chunks' of knowledge – human or artificial – as frames. But he did not claim any great originality in developing the concept. He acknowledged his debt to the psychologist Frederic Bartlett, who wrote about similarly chunked 'schema' in his seminal book Remembering (1932).

In Minsky's 1974 paper, the frames concept is introduced as follows (1974:1):

"Here is the essence of the theory: When one encounters a new situation (or makes a substantial change in one's view of the present problem) one selects from memory a structure called a frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary. A frame is a data-structure for representing a stereotyped situation, like being in a certain kind of living room, or going to a child's birthday party. Attached to each frame are several kinds of information..."

The information that is contained within the frame structure is both *factual* and *procedural* in that it encapsulates both what to do and how to do it. The fact that these different kinds of knowledge are stored together in a chunk is key to providing our thoughts with speed and ease. The frame structure is described by Minsky as *"a network of nodes and relations"* – a structure that can apply to brains just as well as to computers.

The top level of each frame is fixed, as there are certain elements of a frame that must always be in place for that frame to apply. A living room, for example. must have walls and a door and some comfortable furniture. The lower levels of the frame consist of 'slots' or 'terminals' in which specific pieces of information can be held. These effectively fill in the detail of a specific occurrence of a frame – eg particular furnishings and decor.

Using frames to understand the world

In Minsky's explanation, we understand a scene or discourse by picking a pre-existing 'stereotype' frame. As we fill in the detail, in the lower 'slots', we continue to adapt the pre-existing frame. In some cases there may come a point where the specific data no longer fit the top-level conditions for a particular frame, at which point a new frame is substituted in (and the observed facts effectively break out of the first frame).

Minsky's idea of frames made up of terminals, some of which are pre-set and some of which are empty, is central to Artificial Intelligence. It was further developed by other early thinkers in AI, including Roger Schank and Robert Abelson, a pair of cognitive psychologists at MIT who wrote about the closely related concept of 'scripts' (1977). Schank and Abelson's thesis follows Minsky's, except that the slots in the frame are patterned into a narrative or scenario which is also a part of the stereotypical situation, or 'script' as they call the frame structure.

In the 'restaurant script', for example, the slots include 'chef', 'waiter', 'diner', 'menu', 'main course' and 'bill', and these are formed into scenarios that arrange them into a narrative (eg we expect the bill to arrive towards the end of the script). All these elements and arrangements are co-located in the unconscious brain. They are activated when we encounter a restaurant, or a discourse about restaurants. The script or frame brings with it not just the dictionary definition, but all we know factually and procedurally about the word or situation. This may include how we feel about it, and in this way frames can activate values.

Writing around the same time as Minsky but from a sociological perspective, Erving Goffman uses 'frames' primarily to explain everyday practices and institutions. Goffman talks about frames as *"frames of reference"* and *"basic frameworks of understanding available in our society for making sense out of events"* (1974:10). Explicitly drawing on Gregory Bateson's use of the term some 20 years previously, Goffman defines frames as *"Definitions of a situation, built up in accordance with the principles of organisation which govern events – at least social ones - and our subjective involvement in them"* (ibid:11). The definition nicely shows the circular quality of frames: we perceive them in daily life, or discourse, and we use them to structure our process of perceiving.

Charles Fillmore, the semantic linguist, puts forward a definition of frames that is similar to Goffman's but applies to the context of language. *"The frame idea is this. There are certain schemata or frameworks of concepts or terms which link together as a system, which impose structure or coherence on some element of human experience..."* (Fillmore 1975:123).

Fillmore describes how he first hit upon the idea of a frame in thinking about sentences. The sentence, which he calls the 'syntagmatic structure', is the frame within which sit 'paradigmatic items' – or words. These words can be substituted for one another within the frame.

When worked up, this linguistic approach results in Fillmore's definition of a semantic frame as *"any system of linguistic choices – the easiest case being collections of words – that can get associated with prototypical instances of scenes"* (ibid:124). At the end of his first paper on frames, Fillmore contrasts his definition of frames with those used by Goffman and Minsky. Despite differences of detail and application, Fillmore concludes that *"the sense of organisational coherence is present in all its uses"* (ibid:130).

In summary it is possible to think about frames as 'structuring structures' (to borrow a phrase from the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, writing about 'habitus' - 1977).

3.3 Lakoff's cognitive frames

George Lakoff was an undergraduate at MIT under Noam Chomsky, and was already well established as a linguist by the mid-1970s. His work is cited in Fillmore's paper. Lakoff summarises Fillmore's main thesis thus: *"The meanings of all words are characterised in terms of frames: a hypothesis that has held up for over 30 years"* (Lakoff 2008:251).

In 1975 Lakoff was one of a handful of pioneering academics establishing the foundations of cognitive linguistics, a discipline that brought an understanding of the brain to bear on theories of language and meaning. In cognitive linguistics, the meaning of a word is not just a simple dictionary definition but a cognitive frame associated with a particular word in a particular language community. Other mechanisms, such as metaphor and prototyping, can also be involved.

Cognitive frames, words and the association between them are stored in our long-term memories – *"instantiated in the synapses of our brains",* as Lakoff puts it (2004:17) – then activated by the use of particular words. That activation does not just involve some abstract meaning of the word. It also involves the experiential context (the 'scene' as Fillmore or Goffman might put it), together with its physical and emotional components and any positive or negative valuations.

So meanings of words are not just abstract definitions in dictionaries. Access to the meaning of a word is gained through activating the whole frame, and the association between a word and its frame is built into the brain through a process of neural binding.

"Neurons that fire together wire together", it has been observed (see eg Lakoff 2008:83). And the more they fire, the stronger the connection – and the more a particular frame is potentially referenced when activated by a particular word or experience. We have to note that different individuals and different social groups may have different dominant frames – including different experiences, values and emotions – linked to the same word.

The unconscious function of frames

All the diverse authors writing about frames are keen to stress that the 'actor' tends not to be aware of the frames he is activating as he does so. In Fillmore, for instance, frames give the reader access to *"aspects of the scene never made explicit in the text"* (1975:125). In cognitive linguistics, shaped by recent discoveries in the brain sciences, frames become a key part of the structure of the automatic brain. They are lodged in the 'cognitive unconscious', which Lakoff says is responsible for 98% of the thinking the brain does (Lakoff 2008:3). This is consistent with Marvin Minsky's original purpose in evolving the frame concept, in order to explain *"the power and speed of mental activities"* (Minsky 1974:1).

Lakoff describes his approach to frames as taking advantage of the *"massive new knowledge"* about how we think, made available through developments in neuroscience (ibid:4). Lakoff's work in cognitive frames can be compared to that in behavioural economics, which also builds on recent progress in brain science. It is fitting that Lakoff's most recent book, *The Political Mind,* was published in the same year as Thaler and Sunstein's influential *Nudge* (2008); both texts build on the foundational work in cognition and decision making undertaken by Danny Kahneman (a psychologist who won the Nobel Prize for Economics). Lakoff devotes a whole chapter to discussing the behavioural economic principles arising from Kahneman's work, and their echoes in his own version of frames theory.

Revealing mirror neurons

One of the more recent discoveries in neuroscience is that of 'mirror neurons'. Lakoff was involved in this discovery, and built it into his thesis on cognitive frames. Mirror neurons, situated in the premotor cortex of the brain, have been found to fire both when we act and when we see someone else acting (2004:54). They also form pathways to other neuron circuits, which are associated with emotions.

It is concluded from this that when we see someone else acting, we can physically feel how they are feeling. This is relatively new science: the discovery of mirror neurons did not come until the late 1990s, led by neuroscientist Marco Iacoboni and colleagues at the University of Parma (see Iacoboni 2008). There is still much detail to be sketched out (for instance, the related structures of 'super mirror neurons' are *"just beginning to be studied"* – Lakoff 2008:118). Already, however, the scientists' findings confirm Lakoff's contention (and Fillmore's hypothesis) that words activate whole chunks of knowledge as frames.

Taking up the concept of mirror neurons, Lakoff and his colleague Vittorio Gallese neurologically explored the activity of 'grasping'. They found that the information for understanding the activity was co-located in the brain with the neurons that control the act of grasping, as well as those that recognise grasping when they see it performed (2008:252).

As well as strengthening the cognitive frame hypothesis, the discovery of mirror neurons allows Lakoff to claim that humans are cognitively wired for empathy. The worldview that he promotes in his recent writing (that of the 'morality is care' model) is the one that is truest to our brain anatomy: we are not naturally utility maximising machines in the traditional economic mould. Thinking back to Section 2 on Values above, we can see that a good fit is suggested between a frames approach to campaigning, and the values that we have picked out as supportive of strong engagement with global poverty.

Our cooperative instincts

Further overlaps can be found between cognitive science and linguistics in the work of Michael Tomasello, of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig. Tomasello is a cognitive and developmental psychologist who also works with cognitive linguists. In many detailed experimental studies, he has shown that children have a natural tendency towards helping their peers and their elders. On the basis of empirical investigation he argues that this is a specifically human behaviour, not found in our primate cousins.

Moreover, it appears that helping and cooperative behaviours are not, as some may suspect, a product of cultural conditioning and parental training (2009:3-5). Tomasello suggests the reverse: that young human children are instinctively helpful and cooperative, and only later do they learn to limit this tendency through socialisation into their group norms.

A complementary approach is taken by the primatologist Frans de Waal in his book *The Age of Empathy.* He argues that apes do have empathy and a helping instinct, and that his must be continuous with the human make-up (de Waal 2009). Whether we agree with Tomasello that humans are special in this respect or with de Waal's assertion that we are like our chimpanzee cousins, these biological and psychological data support the idea that humans have natural empathetic and co-operative dispositions. The nature and culture of humans are far more complex than those of chimps, and this is why we need to pay close attention to the cognitive frames that humans depend on and deploy.

Such analysis is supportive of the case put forward by psychologists such as Tim Kasser. Kasser describes extrinsic goals as an expression of deficiency in the ability to find intrinsic fulfilment. Evidence that shows that humans are predisposed to be empathetic and to act co-operatively is therefore highly relevant for how we manage cognitive frames. Some cognitive frames (the 'deep frames' we discuss below) will play in favour of these predispositions. Others will work against them.

3.4 Lakoff's cognitive policy

Lakoff's recent work makes extensive use of developments in the brain sciences, and thus develops the principles of cognitive linguistics. In his more recent work we see a shift in focus: from an analytical interest in cognitive linguistics as the study of language and thought, to a practical pursuit of 'cognitive policy' (the setting of that theory in the context of running political campaigns).

Lakoff's work since 2000 has been credited with helping the Democratic party win back public support in the United States (see, for instance, *Don't Think of An Elephant!,* 2004). He has used frames analysis to reveal the process by which 'conservatives' in the US have taken control of the discourse around key areas of public policy. They have done this by using frames to embed *"their deepest values into the brains of tens of millions of Americans"* (Lakoff 2008:3).

Framing political discourse

One of Lakoff's favourite examples is the tax relief frame – the consistent use of the phrase 'tax relief' by those on the American right. Lakoff uses 'tax relief' both to explain the concept of a frame, and to show its political application:

"We think, mostly unconsciously, in terms of systems of structures called 'frames'. We use our systems of frame-circuitry to understand everything, and we reason using frame-internal logics. Words activate that circuitry, and the more we hear the words, the stronger their frame circuits get. Take the frame evoked by the phrase 'tax relief' as an example. The word 'relief' evokes a conceptual frame of some affliction, and a reliever who performs the action of relieving. So taxes are an affliction, a reliever is a hero, and anyone who wants to stop him from the relief is a villain. You have just two words, yet all of that is embedded. If you oppose reducing taxes and you use the phrase 'tax relief', you've already lost." (Lakoff 2010a:12)

Lakoff defines cognitive policy as *"the practice of getting an idea into normal public discourse",* an aim that can be achieved by the sustained use of particular frames (2008:169). As well as being an explanatory device, frames become a political tool in the work of Lakoff. This turns Lakoff from a cognitive linguist into a self-avowed 'cognitive activist' (*"I think the label fits me well"* – 2004:74). Lakoff has thus put distance between himself and other academics, and lays himself open to charges from linguists that his approach is *"an extension of what is supported by cognitive science"* (in Brulle 2010:87).

Frames analysis is always a subjective endeavour. Goffman frets throughout his book over how he should write about the structuring frameworks he observes in social life, as he can only write about frames using the frames he has to discern them. However, in the writing of Lakoff the cognitive activist, frames analysis becomes an explicitly political endeavour. Lakoff admits: *"As a professor I do analyses of linguistic and conceptual issues in politics, and I do them as accurately as I can. But that analytic act is a political act"* (2004:74).

In the process of operationalising cognitive frames for policy purposes, Lakoff and his colleagues are drawing on a body of widely accepted scientific theory and evidence. In developing the application of this scientific base, they have provided useful clarifications and definitions for the practical analysis of political discourse.

While most cognitive linguists, cognitive scientists and cognitive psychologists remain in the study or the laboratory, Lakoff and his associates have developed an approach that has practical value for campaigners and other change agents. Lakoff is not alone in applying cognitive science and linguistics to the analysis of practical and political discourse (see Chilton 1996, for example). What is distinctive and important about his approach, however, is that he has identified some highly resonant frames that have proved to be powerful tools for changing how people campaign, act and think. It is for this reason that we have used Lakoff's classification of frames in our approach.

3.5 Deep frames, surface frames and conceptual models

For the purposes of this emerging programme of work, we have chosen to base our approach to frames on the work of George Lakoff and his colleague Joe Brewer. Brewer is a frames analyst who has applied Lakoff's thinking to change issues. The scientific basis for using the idea of cognitive frames is well founded. The existence of frames in human cognition and communication is widely accepted by cognitive scientists, cognitive psychologists and cognitive linguists. Frames are an integral part of the way our brains work, even though they cannot be seen by looking at neurons themselves.

It is important to note that, being cognitive structures composed of and carrying meanings, frames tend to be culturally specific. Terms such as 'house' or 'land' activate different frames in different cultures. In a development context the term 'charity' does this too.

As we have seen with values, different individuals and subgroups use different frames as their defaults. This means that there are question marks over whether some of the most widely applied of Lakoff's frames carry across to the UK context. Despite this there are frames from Lakoff's work that resonate with the public engagement questions we are examining. Moreover, Lakoff has provided some terminology to differentiate between different kinds of frames. His work in this area helps to make the concept of frames into practical tools.

Distinguishing between deep frames and surface frames

Lakoff and Brewer make the distinction between 'deep frames' and 'surface frames', which Lakoff describes as follows:

"Surface frames are associated with phrases like 'war on terror' that both activate and depend critically on deep frames. These are the most basic frames that constitute a moral worldview or a political philosophy. Deep frames define one's overall 'common sense'. Without deep frames there is nothing for surface frames to hang onto. Slogans do not make sense without the appropriate deep frames in place" (Lakoff, 2006:29).

As Joe Brewer would explain it, a surface frame sets the context for what a situation or discourse is about – effectively it names the subject matter, and at the same time provides an angle for viewing it. 'Tax relief' and 'war on terror' are examples of surface frames, already mentioned, as are 'house', 'land' and 'charity'. These surface frames can activate deep frames that are the evaluative context for the discourse.

The link between deep frames and values

Deep frames set the subject in a moral context, or ground it within a worldview. Surface frames can be neutral (they are not necessarily charged with positive or negative associations) but deep frames are always loaded. Deep frames are seldom made explicit, but are usually taken for granted within the discourse or experience; it requires analysis to identify them.

Deep frames are important as they can activate, and reinforce, particular values. They function at the level of values; for Lakoff, they are neural circuits in themselves.

It has to be emphasised that the concept of deep frames has only appeared in Lakoff's work very recently. It seems to have been coined as part of the political task of operationalising frames theory. The term 'deep frames' is only used once in Lakoff's most recent book, *The Political Mind,* and is introduced not as a concept in itself but to explain cognitive policy: *"Cognitive policy is a framing campaign that precedes specific material policies. It introduces the deep frames, the moral frames that come first"* (2008:170).

Some cognitive linguists might prefer to write simply about 'conceptual frames' (as indeed Lakoff did in 2004). Conceptual frames are explanatory knowledge structures stored in the long-term memory. They are activated by specific words or scenes, and they incorporate particular roles and scenarios (much as in the definition of a script, provided above). Elements of this conceptual frame are likely to overlap with other related frames to form 'frame systems'. A single word may activate several frames at once in a single system.

To provide a development-relevant example, the 'charity' frame may evoke the semantic meaning of a particular kind of social institution, as well as our understandings about it and how to engage with it. It may also activate related conceptual frames, such as those concerned with moral judgements about aspects of what charities are and what they do – a 'rational self-interest' frame, for example. It is values-linked conceptual frames such as these that Lakoff seems to be referencing with the term 'deep frames'.

From changing frames to changing practices and institutions

One of the benefits of isolating 'deep frames' from other conceptual frames is that it enables Lakoff to provide guidance to practitioners on how they should be used. According to the methods of cognitive policy, activating and changing deep frames should be pursued as the first priority. The aim should be to popularise new deep frames that can support new surface frames in the form of new practices and institutions, and new communications messages (eg Lakoff 2010b).

"Surface frames relate to our everyday language, practices and the wider world….Deep frames work at a more foundational level, and are in dialogue with our values."

Without having the supporting deep frames in place, communications messages that aim to draw on deep frames will be effectively unintelligible. This is because they will have no framework of meaning to support them. Switching his dimensions from depth to length, Lakoff states: *"The effectiveness of short-term frames depends on the prior effectiveness of long-term frames"* (ibid:79).

The distinction between 'surface' and 'deep' frames is not generally made in the cognitive linguistics literature. The term 'surface frame' is only used infrequently by Lakoff, although rather more often by Joe Brewer and his consultancy Cognitive Policy Works. It is useful, however, in analysing actual discourse, to talk about 'surface framing'. This can be described as the practice of selecting words to evoke particular conceptual frames or frame systems – what Lakoff has described in cognitive policy as *"a way of framing reality to reveal a deep truth"* (2008:171).

One way surface framing works can be seen in an everyday example we don't usually notice: in the 'Commercial Transaction' frame (a widely-described conceptual frame) we have roles including 'buyer', 'seller', 'goods' and money'. Framing a sentence around someone buying goods is different from framing it around someone selling those goods. The sentence ''Fred bought the beans from Bill" evokes the same scenario as "Bill sold the beans to Fred" but the focus is different: in one case our interest is directed to the buyer as the actor, in the other it is directed to the seller.

Frames as propaganda: 'the war on terror'

Another way in which surface framing works can be seen in a more dramatic example: the phrase 'war on terror', which is a surface framing in the form of a slogan. What it does is select one frame that encourages us to think in terms of war and military means as opposed to, for example, international law and policing. The example of 'tax relief' comes in the form of an everyday term but also selectively activates a relief-and-rescue scenario, as Lakoff has amply shown.

The practical problem with surface framing is that it can often be exploited for propaganda purposes, or 'spinning'. Lakoff goes to some lengths to explain why framing is not just spinning, however (see 2004:100). When used honestly, he argues, surface framing is not trying to disguise what is happening, as spinning does.

This is another reason why Lakoff suggests that surface frames will be meaningless slogans if deep frames are not put in place first. From the practitioner perspective, the distinction between deep and surface frames is a useful one, helping to identify the level on which strategists are working, and to ensure that the elements of a strategy, a campaign, and a communication are all consistent.

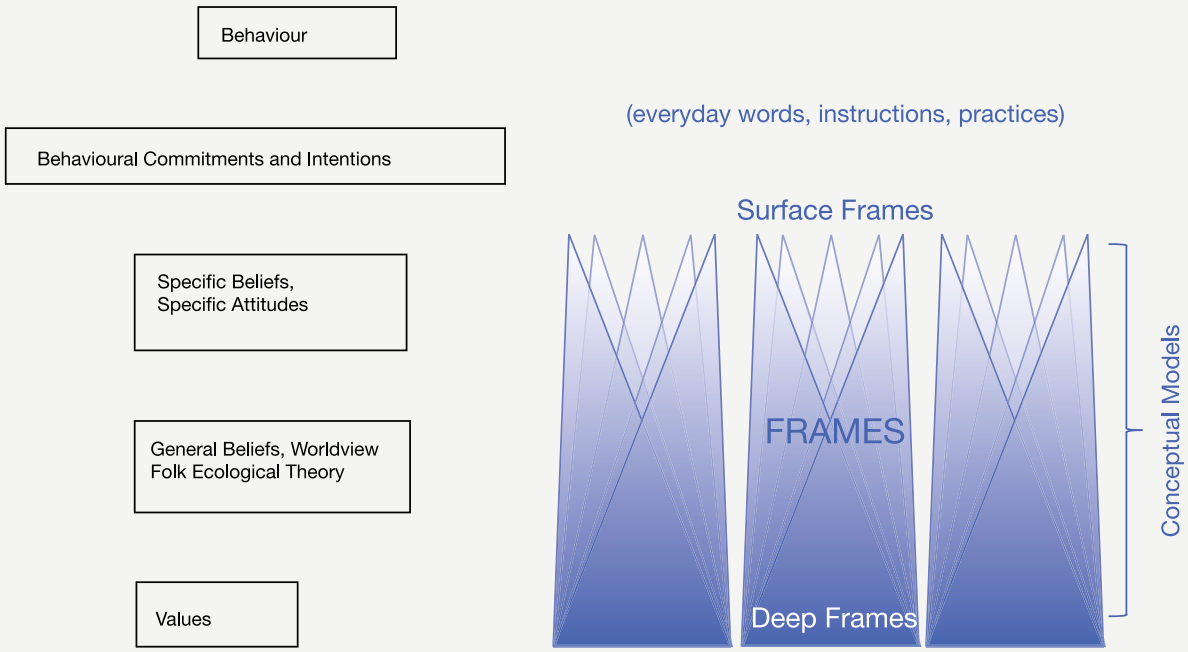
Charting the relationship between deep and surface frames

It is clear from the above that, despite differences in terminology, certain deep conceptual frames, or conceptual frames working together, link into values systems. We have developed a chart [Figure 10 below] to clarify the relationships between deep and surface frames, values, attitudes and other psychological constructs.
The lefthand side of the chart arranges psychological constructs into a hierarchy familiar to psychologists (based on Stern et al 2005). There are no lines or arrows linking the constructs, as influence can flow both ways.

We have set our reading of Lakoff's and Brewer's surface and deep frames alongside the psychological schema. We did this to show how surface frames relate to our everyday language, practices and the wider world, and how they can reflect our attitudes towards certain subjects and situations (eg 'land' or 'charity'). Deep frames work at a more foundational level, and are in dialogue with our values.

The multiple peaks from each deep frame up to the surface frames show how a given deep frame can be activated by a wide variety of surface frames. Reciprocally, the use of one or two surface frames does not guarantee that a particular deep frame will be activated. Different people are inclined to respond using different deep frames that they depend upon, and it can take several surface frames woven together to ensure that a particular deep frame is activated as the speaker (or 'actor') intends.

Figure 10: Vertical slices of frames mapped to psychological factors



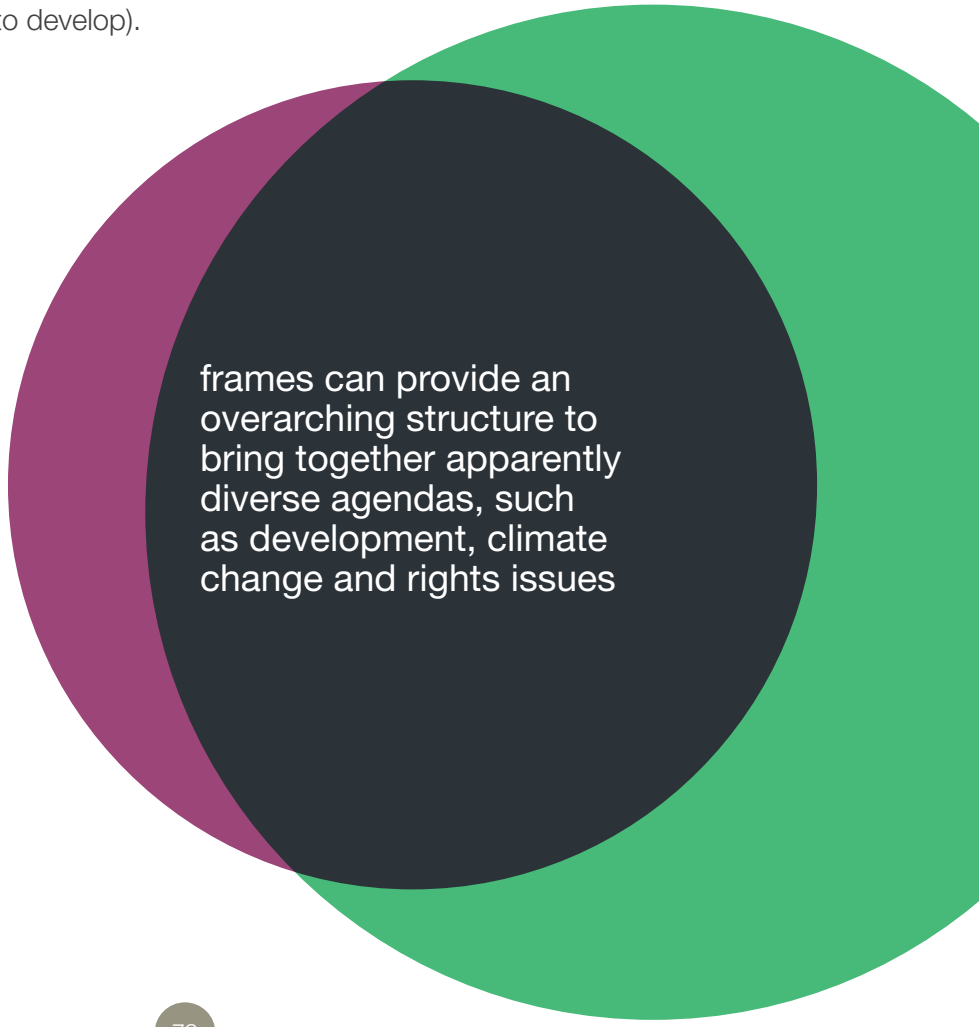
After 'A Schematic Casual Model of Environmental Concern' (Stern et al 1995)
Plus 'Vertical slices of deep frames, surface frames, and everyday life' (Darnton, Crompton, Kirk 2010)

There is one further element of Lakoff and Brewer's classification of frames that may be helpful in indicating how frames can be operationalised as tools for change. Our diagram above shows deep and surface frames grouped together as 'Conceptual Models', which are defined by Joe Brewer as mental models that enable people to interpret *"how something works".* Various surface and deep frames cluster together in conceptual models, to provide a person's understanding of how a certain situation unfolds or sustains itself. Clusters of deep and surface frames of this type might usefully be labelled 'explanatory conceptual models'.

This approach is consistent with cognitive linguistics, and goes back to Lakoff's earlier work. It antedates the introduction of the terminology of deep and surface frames. For instance, Lakoff's *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things* (1987) outlines a more restricted notion of 'idealised cognitive model' – one that is similar in many respects to Fillmore's frames and bundled together with like concepts of *"frames, scripts and schema"* (ibid:116). The notion of an explanatory conceptual model, whose function is to provide a ready-made understanding of how some part of the world (eg the economy) works, is a useful analytical tool for our present purposes.

Explanatory conceptual models are of interest to us as practitioners (or 'actors') because they are a way to bring together surface and deep frames, and also a way to make sure that the stories we tell (verbally, or through our actions) activate the values in our audiences that we would like to encourage. For instance, when the subject of global poverty is introduced, it evokes sets of feelings, values and ideas, which include mental models of how poverty works. Often these can involve causal chains of thoughts (eg global poverty means poor people, who lack money, because they live in third-world places, which are undeveloped, and need to follow first-world principles to develop).

Within these conceptual models, deep frames are also activated, imbuing the story of how things work with a sense of how things should work, or what makes them work. Through these models, narratives that superficially relate to different areas of policy and everyday life are brought together through their basis in common worldviews and values. In this way, frames can provide an overarching structure to bring together apparently diverse agendas, such as development, climate change and rights issues (see also Crompton 2010).



4. Towards positive frames for development

This section...

- **Explains the exploratory methodology we used to identify the frames employed in development NGOs' current discourses and practices.**

- **Goes on to identify some hypothetical deep frames that we see shaping NGOs' discourses and practices. From these we infer some alternative (positive) deep frames that are consistent with the positive values for development identified earlier in this report.**

- **Extends the process of identification from deep frames to surface frames, setting out some current surface frames for development that are problematic in terms of the deep frames and values they activate (and these identifications are corroborated by the wider development and research literature).**

- **Tentatively sets out some alternative 'positive' frames for development, but on the proviso that these are intended as inputs into a wider process of deliberation among sector NGOs and wider stakeholders (including the public). This deliberation is needed to amend and refine these frames, ideally before taking them out into research.**

We have already used a frames perspective to explain some of the problems that current practices in development engagement may be exacerbating for sector NGOs, and DFID. Now we would like to explore the potential for using frames as a practical tool to reframe those practices, and to re-engage the public in global development.

Section 2 above has set out the 'positive values' suggested in the literature, which could reshape our communications and other engagement practices. At their broadest level these are intrinsic values, which can enhance engagement in all 'bigger than self' problems (see eg Crompton 2010). In the language of the values circumplex, these are Universal values, common to tackling global resource problems in both the environmental and development spheres (see eg Schwartz 1992).

Define, then design

Specifically these 'development values' include those that Schwartz identifies as 'equality', 'social justice' and 'broadmindedness'. We know what these values are; by identifying them in specific frames, we should be able to develop tools to activate and strengthen them in our audiences. This strategy is consistent with that advocated by Lakoff for advancing Progressive values in *Don't Think of An Elephant!:* first define the values to campaign on, then use frames to activate and reinforce those values.

Ultimately the 'cognitive policy' task for Lakoff is about *"bringing our country together around its finest traditional values"* (2004:95). By analogy, it follows that we should be bringing interested parties together around positive development values, through the activation and strengthening of positive deep frames.

4.1 Towards positive deep frames for development

It has been mentioned above that Lakoff and Brewer have identified a series of deep frames that occur in a wide range of discourses and situations, particularly relating to public policy and campaigning. In order to identify which of these relate to the development sector, we staged a conversation about common practices and working assumptions in the UK development sector. We invited senior NGO staff to take part, and arranged for Joe Brewer to observe this brainstorm from his office in the United States. Brewer's role was to perform and write up an 'extempore' discourse analysis.

In developing his analysis Brewer identified a few deep frames that resonated with our conversation, plus a larger number of surface frames that marked out different themes in the conversation. He brought these frames together in a number of conceptual models.

It should be emphasised that this was an exploratory exercise. The frames that Brewer identified are effectively hypothetical, in that they have not been validated through a formal discourse analysis exercise. We hope to go on to undertake such a task in due course. Nor is it likely that our conversation captured all the possible surface frames that relate to the development sector, or that we necessarily reflected them in the most rounded fashion. In short, there is more work to do here, but these frames constitute a starting point. They provide the sense that there is great potential in developing frame-based tools for the sector more rigorously.

Deep frames for development: Brewer's list

The deep frames that Joe Brewer identified are briefly outlined below, presented as antagonistic pairs. As with the values that they draw on, people only tend to be able to work within one half of the pair at a time – the mind struggles to take two contradictory positions simultaneously.

In terms of values and attitudes, psychologists call this 'cognitive dissonance'. In frames theory Lakoff shows how conflicting deep frames are *"mutually inhibitory",* stating that it would be physically impossible for the brain's circuits to map the two conflicting worldviews together (eg 2008:88). Thus, if you are activating one deep frame, you are effectively suppressing its partner. Each deep frame works as a cognitive structure as much by the absence of its inverse frame as by the presence of the lead frame. In some cases there is no clear inverse possible, but ideas of the opposite worldview are inherent in the description of the frame.

A number of the deep frames that George Lakoff has identified in his work on frames analysis were apparent in our conversation about UK development NGOs' practices. These principal deep frames are set out below, based on descriptions by Joe Brewer.

1. Rational Actor v Embodied Mind

At the heart of every major social issue will be a theory of human nature that asserts what is natural and good for human communities. Currently, there are two major competing theories of human nature that are structured by specific deep frames.

The Rational Actor frame is a representation of the human mind that presumes a specific rational analysis (eg cost-benefit calculations to maximise 'utility') as the principal model for decision-making. This frame asserts a world filled with individuals who make self-directed choices. Reasoning is treated as an abstract, formal process independent from the bodily experience and represented by mathematical formulations, a decision-making 'calculus'.

This is by far the most prevalent explanatory conceptual model of humanity in the world today. Its core tenets have been built into the foundations of many major institutions including the World Bank, the IMF, the marketing industry, public education and publicly traded corporations.

A new model of human nature is taking shape in a variety of research areas through the cognitive sciences. The emerging coherence of this model is captured in the Embodied Mind frame, which represents the human mind as an emergent phenomenon comprised of vital inputs from the brain, body, and physical/social environments. This frame asserts a world that is filled with complex social organisms whose reasoning is profoundly influenced by neurological and cultural processes.

In this worldview reasoning is not purely a mechanical process like mathematical logic, but comes from human interaction with the physical and social environment. It is equally important that rationality is not separated from other elements of humanity, in particular emotions and moral values. More specifically it is important that it is not separated from two key aspects of the mind, namely *empathy* (Lakoff, cf de Wall) and the instinct to cooperate (Tomasello, and also de Waal).

2. Free Market v Shared Prosperity

Two contrasting explanatory conceptual models predominate when considering how markets work, where wealth comes from, and what the root causes are for the economic conditions of people.

The *Free Market* frame presumes that the world is filled with individuals seeking to maximise their self-interest (see also the Rational Actor frame). Wealth is created through the industrious efforts of these individuals, whose personal freedoms combine with self-discipline to make them more competitive. This presumed industriousness makes them deserving of the wealth they acquire.

Free markets are moral: If everyone pursues his own profit, the profit of all will be maximised. Markets are endowed with a natural capacity to produce optimal outcomes, so the best path to poverty alleviation is to open trade routes for corporations (treated as rational actors) to generate wealth and increase general prosperity.

The *Shared Prosperity* frame presumes that the world is filled with support systems, often referred to generically as 'the commons'. These serve as mechanisms for generating wealth. The commons are owned by everyone, and are available for everyone's use. They may be natural (as with aspects of ecosystems) or manmade.

Wealth is created through shared infrastructure that empowers people to cooperate on a societal scale. This infrastructure may be schools for educating the populace, courts that issue trustworthy contracts for business transactions, or transportation systems for moving people, goods, and services. Markets comprise one piece of this shared infrastructure and are only as effective at creating widespread prosperity as their design features allow.

3. Elite Governance v Participatory Democracy

Two contrasting explanatory conceptual models arise for explaining how democracy works and what the proper role is for citizens in the decision-making process.

The *Elite Governance* frame asserts that governance is too complicated for the everyday citizen. Experts are needed to take care of important decisions on behalf of the people. These elites are seen as the vanguard for democracy because they bring their technical expertise to bear on challenging problems and protect the governing body from irrational whims of 'the mob'. In some instances, this means replacing direct representation with 'rational' management procedures such as cost-benefit analysis (thus making the governing body into a rational actor, as described above).

The *Participatory Democracy* frame is grounded in a basic belief that people are capable of governing themselves. While experts are needed to provide essential counsel, it is the people themselves who should be empowered to set their own trajectory.

Elected officials are accountable to the democratic process through direct engagement with key publics. The crowd is seen as a source of valuable knowledge and insight, sometimes referred to as 'wisdom of the crowd'. It is the empowering potential of this frame in particular that provides its resonance with development issues: it calls for recognition of the self-determination of both Southern peoples and Northern consumer-supporters.

4. The Moral Order frame

The *Moral Order* frame can be described as an 'ancient frame' or explanatory conceptual model that taps into folk theory about how the world works (it clearly antedates the 'rational actor' frame). The logic is this: since we owe everything we are – our very existence – to the workings of nature, nature is seen as moral. Over history, natural hierarchies of power emerge. But because they are natural, and nature cannot be immoral, these traditional hierarchies of power are moral.

The history of who has been most powerful then comes to define a natural moral order: God above man, man above nature, adults above children, Western culture above non-Western culture. The moral order is all too often extended to men above women, whites above non-whites, Christians above non-Christians, straight people above gay people. As such it underpins many of our narratives around charity and mission, indeed this frame informs the foundations of the big development NGOs that operate around the world today.

The moral order depends on our understanding that relationships are expressed vertically, and that being placed higher in the hierarchy makes one item or person morally *superior* to those in *inferior* positions. This frame is consistent with an authoritarian worldview, and inconsistent with more egalitarian principles.

There is no clear antagonistic partner for the Moral Order frame, so dominant is it in our culture. But, like the Rational Actor frame, there are alternative models of order that have recently emerged. These include those developed through cybernetics and computer sciences, which arrange items into networks non-hierarchically.

Non–hierarchical structures

Network theory of this kind is generating new models of relationships, models which may in time crystallise into an alternative, non-hierarchical, ordering frame. At present these non-hierarchical 'open' structures capture the redistributive thrust flowing from positive values. However, it may be that these open networks prove too values-neutral, or do not automatically activate the values we would wish to advance. Ultimately the openness of these networked relations should be allied to strong moral purpose and an explicit drive for equality if this frame is not to slip into moral relativism.

What is needed is a model of 'good' and 'bad' that is not premised on 'up' and 'down' or 'higher' and 'lower'. Drawing on existing structures in political philosophy, cultural anthropology or religious worldviews may help to refine this frame into something both charged and salient. Importantly we can see these ideas resonating with contemporary development practice, notably South-South partnerships of the kind described in Brazil as 'horizontal development' (discussed in 2.4 above).

These may not be all the deep frames that most resonate with UK development sector practices, but this suite provides a solid foundation for initial debate. It also offers a good basis for further research. It can be observed that these deep frames overlap and reinforce one another; more than one will often appear together in a particular discourse or situation. Some other deep frames identified by Lakoff and Brewer have been deliberately omitted. This is because although they might have a similar core (and activate similar values), they also support a range of less development-specific surface frames.

The Self Interest versus Common Wealth deep frames are a good example of such an omission, overlapping with the Free Market versus Shared Prosperity frames that we have included. Lakoff's Strict Father versus Nurturant Parent deep frames have also not been included in this analysis. They are ubiquitous in Lakoff's cognitive policy work (eg 2004; 2008) but we felt they were too US-specific to apply readily to UK situations and discourses. We also felt that they might clash as much as overlap with the Moral Order versus Non-hierarchical Networks pairing, especially in the context of global development.

These are clearly questions for debate, and that debate should be informed by further empirical work. Most obviously, research should be undertaken to link values to frames – to establish precisely which values are activated by which frames. Formal discourse analysis will also be required to verify the salience – and the precise definitions – of each of the identified frames for particular subgroups of people, and in particular contexts.

Even when a substantial body of evidence has been gathered, debate should continue. The antagonistic structure of Lakoff's deep frames is one of the areas that needs to be considered at length. Lakoff's polarities fit well with the primary use for which cognitive policy was developed: helping 'progressive' Democrats in the US to reclaim the political agenda from the prevailing Republicans. Because of this it seems right for Lakoff to be partisan about the use of deep frames: in the electoral context (after re-counts and legal challenges if necessary) there are clear winners and losers. It could well be observed that this kind of dynamic is not applicable to the pursuit of global development, in which development for all (or a good quality of life) is the ultimate objective.

Refining deep frames

In the context of development we are right to be particularly cautious about advocating one route and judging it correct in opposition to another that is posited as wrong. As was observed earlier in the section on refining positive values for development (2.4 above), development work on the ground is looking for 'win-wins' and cannot afford to eschew any route in practice, even if that route is apparently at odds with 'positive' principles.

In the context of campaigning for transformational change, Malcolm Gladwell highlights the importance of networks with strong ties and a strong hierarchical structure at their core. He gives the example of the US civil rights movement, largely co-ordinated through the hierarchical structure of black churches: *"If you're taking on a powerful and organised establishment, you have to be a hierarchy"* (Gladwell 2010:7).

Gladwell's argument runs that one reason why online activism can't deliver transformational solutions is that social media are good at building networks, which are the opposite of hierarchies. This view echoes the diagnosis of Lakoff's deep frames, which shows hierarchies and networks in opposition to each other. The key difference is that Gladwell reminds us that different organisational structures are good for different purposes. Sometimes when we are campaigning, we will need to make use of hierarchies as well as networks. It could be argued that the Make Poverty History coalition might have benefited from some hierarchy at the centre, giving it more control over strategy and messaging.

Development blurring boundaries (again)

This example underlines how frames theory could be subject to much the same criticism as values theory in the development context: advancing development is simply not a zero-sum game. Yet frames seem better suited to resisting such criticism because they are more complex structures than are single values. Frames are in conversation with the world, being both the pre-existing structure we use to see the world and the structures we develop in the act of seeing the world. This is why they can be defined as 'structuring structures' as described above.

For instance, the moral order frame is likely not merely to tap into the negative values of Power and Achievement, but also to have elements of 'charity' in it that tap into Universalist values (recalling the 'othering' effect of development based on supposedly universal values – again at 2.4 above). Frames' very complexity, and their construction and evolution through engagement with the world at large, should make them resilient to such criticisms in a way that values might not be.

Deep frames are particularly resilient in this respect because of their power to activate values that might otherwise remain abstract and hard to mobilise. This makes it harder to measure frames than to measure values, but it also makes it easier to work with them.

If a coordinated approach can be taken across the sector, then there is the potential to make inroads into how the public engage with global poverty.

Deep frames for debate

Looking back across the deep frames that Joe Brewer has identified, we would like to suggest that practitioners in the development sector engage with and deliberate over the following deep frames, with a view to adopting them in their communications and public engagement practices:

The Embodied Mind frame, not the Rational Actor frame

The Shared Prosperity frame, not the Free Market frame

The Participatory Democracy frame, not the Elite Governance frame

Non-hierarchical Networks, not the Moral Order frame

The implications of a frames approach are opened up in Section 5 below, which reflects on how NGOs' practices might change if these suggestions are carried forward. As deep frames are usually implicit in discourses or practices, operationalising these frames will involve some interpretation on the part of practitioners. This is also where surface frames and conceptual models come in.

It will be up to each practitioner to establish how to apply these frames in their practice, and to decide how that practice should change as a consequence. If a coordinated approach can be taken across the sector, then there is the potential to make inroads into how the public engage with global poverty. While this journey of change cannot be entirely mapped out from this point, the deep frames we have identified should provide a sound footing on which to begin the process of debate and collaboration that will be required.

4.2 Towards positive surface frames for development

It is relatively straightforward to prescribe a set of positive frames at the level of deep frames, given that these are so closely linked to values and so morally charged. Deciding which surface frames should be used to foster positive values is more difficult. This is because surface frames operate much more as situational markers, locating the discourse in a particular situation or flagging up the subject to the audience. As has been discussed in the context of conceptual frames in general, some frames are not values-linked at all, and using them on their own will not activate values-related ('deep') frames. Further contextual clues, and additional surface frames, are often needed to ensure that a particular deep frame is activated, as part of a system of frames.

Because of this, we cannot recommend that a particular surface frame be used in place of another, as a means of reinforcing particular positive values. But we can say that certain surface frames are likely to trigger particular deep frames (alone or in combination). We can also say, on the basis of the 'do no harm' principle, that those surface frames that link to negative deep frames should be used only where they cannot be avoided.

Avoiding, not denying, negative frames

Lakoff's work makes clear that challenging harmful frames, by tackling them head on and attempting to refute them, only serves to activate and reinforce the frame. This is the point made in the title of *Don't Think of An Elephant!* – when exhorted not to, the images and associations of an elephant come straight to mind (Lakoff 2004:3). On a more serious level, Lakoff frequently quotes the example of then President Nixon saying 'I am not a crook!'; the US public heard, not for the first time, the frame 'crook' and Nixon was stuck in it (eg ibid).

Accordingly frames theory suggests that practitioners should avoid using negative frames, rather than challenging or repeating them. Again, we see that practitioners need to be wise to the impacts of the frames they are reproducing. There will also be times, however, when it is possible (and indeed desirable) to open these contested concepts up to structured debate. We will argue for such an approach at several points below.

Some of the surface frames that we consider to have more negative associations are outlined here; many more will be apparent to practitioners as they proceed with the task of applying the recommended deep frames to their communications and engagement strategies. We have provided a summary table that suggests some alternative ways of framing particular topics.

Work in progress

We are hesitant about specifying positive frames, for two reasons. First, we are not best placed to do so: practitioners must work out solutions that suit the audiences and contexts they are working with and align with the positive values and deep frames we have identified. Second, the development sector must evolve its own new frames in partnership, and then apply them through collaborative working. Changing values and frames is an ambitious endeavour and can only be achieved collectively.

At no point should this programme of work be top-down. Instead the audiences we are trying to reach should be engaged in a bottom-up process of strategy development using deliberative methods, wherever possible. It is important to stress that different surface frames will work better for different audiences, who will be starting with different perceptions and frames of their own.

Despite these caveats, however, we offer some alternative frames as a starting point for the sector's work on positive frames. Our suggestions are supported by arguments based in frames theory, but also draw on other disciplines. It is hoped that readers may use these arguments in debates about adopting a frames-based approach to public engagement that they will pursue beyond the bounds of this paper.

- **'Charity'**

The surface frame that the word 'charity' presents is problematic if seen from a frames perspective. It may evoke the moral order deep frame, with its connotations of unequal power relations (powerful giver, grateful receiver) – hence MPH's core call to action of 'justice not charity'.

'Charity' is also problematic as a way to describe organisations whose goal is social or global justice. It taps into the moral context of the moral order frame, and the transactional context of the free market frame, both of which reinforce the extrinsic goals related to Social Dominance Orientation.

As we have seen above, this reading is consistent with thinking from development studies, most notably that of Marcel Mauss (see section 2.4). Mauss argues that the unreciprocated or 'negative' gift sustains unequal power balances and renders the recipient inferior. This plays out in the development economics literature about aid dependency. Mauss sums up the impact thus:

"Charity is still wounding for him who has to accept it..." (Mauss 1954:65)

The public's limited understanding of what 'charities' do should be taken as an opportunity to reframe the work of these organisations. Note that other words that link together in the frames system around 'charity' – such as 'donate' and 'donation' – are also likely to activate the moral order frame.

- **'Aid'**

As the object at the centre of the charitable transaction, 'aid' is perhaps the most problematic surface frame in our analysis. As the research data show, the public only tend to understand it as 'emergency aid in response to disasters' (eg Creative 2006; McDonnell et al 2003). Because of this, to use 'aid' more widely threatens to reduce the work of the sector simply to providing a conduit for aid, with the assumption that providing aid is the best (or only) way to tackle poverty.

The aid frame is also likely to activate the moral order deep frame, as well as presenting a transactional or monetised model of engagement, grounded in the free market frame. The word 'aid' is best used solely for describing emergency supplies in response to disasters – broadly the work of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) and UKAid – leaving NGOs and other civil society stakeholders (potentially including DFID) to pursue broader objectives.

• **'Development'**

The concept of development is problematic because it could potentially activate the moral order frame – especially among those audiences who are not development sector professionals. Lakoff cites 'development' as one of the prominent frames that link into the moral order deep frame.

The way this frame works in people's consciousness can be explained via a metaphor in which each country is a person and industrialisation is understood as adulthood. 'Developing' or 'undeveloped' nations are represented as children, and are therefore backward. The only way they will be able to progress to maturity is by learning lessons from those higher up the moral order (2004:11).

As suggested earlier, some academics working in development studies are troubled by the term. We have already discussed the 'othering' effect of 'development as charity' (based in universal values – see Baillie Smith 2008). In a paper on the history of UK development NGOs in Africa, Firoze Manji describes how 'development' was introduced as a corrective to discourses around 'civilisation'. This was at a time when UK NGOs were trying to adapt in order to move with the spirit of independence in African states.

The problems with the term are explained in the language of frames as follows (Manji and O'Coill 2002:574):

"The real problem was that the dominant discourse of development was framed not in the language of emancipation or justice, but with the vocabulary of charity, technical expertise, neutrality and a deep paternalism.… The discourse of development...reproduced the social hierarchies that had prevailed between both groups under colonialism. On this basis, the so-called 'developing world' and its inhabitants were (and still are) only described in terms of what they are not."

As well as picking out the 'othering' effect of the development frame, Manji suggests some alternative frames, including justice and emancipation. 'Development as freedom' is the conclusion of Amartya Sen's celebrated analysis of development issues from an economics perspective (Sen 1999). 'Freedom' as an organising structure for development work is consistent with the wider literature on development studies; it also echoes our thinking on deep frames, where ideas of non-hierarchical networks offer an alternative to the moral order.

Recent work in development studies has gone beyond Sen's model. AK Giri, a professor of development studies in India, has written that 'development as responsibility' should replace 'development as freedom' – *"because freedom discourse...is still incapable of undertaking the suffering that the self needs to undertake in order to fulfil its responsibility to others"* (Giri 2005:342). We are reminded of the debate (at 2.4 above) on the status of universal values in the context of development, where the purity of Universalism might only represent a weak call to action (or worse, an othering device for sustaining inequalities).

It is worth recalling here that the specific 'Responsible' value item is allocated to the Benevolence value type, adjacent to Universalism. This could strengthen the argument for including Benevolence values in engagement strategies – see 2.3 above.

It should be emphasised that Giri (unlike Sen) still teaches in India. His framing can be understood in the context of 'horizontal development' models based on South-South partnerships. Accordingly, Giri makes space for values of self-interest, on the grounds that care for the self is a prerequisite for care for others (Giri and van Ufford 2003:254, in Baillie Smith 2008:15):

"There is a need to rethink development as an initiative in self-development on the part of both the subjects and objects of development, and ethics not only as an engagement in care of the other but also as an engagement in care of the self. Such a redefinition and reconstruction of both ethics and development is a crucial starting point for a new understanding and reconstitution of development as a shared human responsibility, and as a shared human possibility."

• 'Corruption' and 'aid effectiveness'

This review has cited recent research that shows that corruption is the only aspect of global poverty that all segments of the public are keen to talk about. This means that the resulting conversations need to be handled carefully. Work on frames strongly suggests that 'corruption' should not be tackled head on, on the 'don't think of an elephant' principle. It is a word that readily activates both the moral order and free market frames, reinforcing the insoluble nature of the problem of poverty thus defined.

We contend that 'aid effectiveness' isn't much better than 'corruption' because it sits within the aid frame, and links to the negative deep frames already identified with 'corruption'. With its talk of effectiveness, it also reinforces 'rational actor' models of policymaking. In fact, 'aid effectiveness' could be deemed a good example of the kind of superficial 'spinning' that George Lakoff is keen to expose: simply turning a phrase around to make it sound positive, without tackling the underlying frames it activates.

There is no doubt that attitudes to corruption need to be tackled: it has become a universally acknowledged impediment to addressing poverty and to engaging the public. We would suggest, however, that taking practical steps to tackle corruption (and financial iniquities of all kinds such as profiteering by banks in developing countries) is a better course of action than just talking to the public about tackling corruption. Out of such practical activity, and deliberative work with the public to develop and communicate it, new frames should emerge.

• 'Communications'

'Communications' may not be a phrase much used when talking to the public, but it could be deemed to be an unhelpful frame for internal audiences and sector partners. In the right context 'communications' could be positive, if the terms were understood to mean 'dialogue' or 'two-way communication'. As it is, 'communications' can often be associated with a range of tools, most probably used for marketing purposes, through which an organisation 'gets its message across'.

The inadequate ‘conduit model’ of communication ... is one-sided and hierarchical: the sender does the work and the recipient is disempowered.

Phrases such as this are revealing of the conceptual model of communication that is dominant in our culture and so many of our organisations. This model has been described in terms of a ‘conduit metaphor’ (Reddy 1979); it is an encoding-decoding model in which a message is sent from a sender to a receiver. The message contains a meaning, which the receiver unwraps or decodes.

Part of the conceptual problem here is that the folk model of communication assumes that words are like vessels that contain meaning - they have a fixed 'content'. Thanks not least to work in cognitive linguistics, we can now see this model as inadequate. Communication is a co-operative process, one that involves not explicit coding but a good deal of taken-for-granted background and active inferencing (which may be more or less unconscious).

Instead of having fixed content, the meaning of communications is emergent. It takes shape in the course of communicating, rather than having been pro-formulated. The reason why NGO practitioners should worry about the inadequate ‘conduit model’ of communication is that it is one-sided and hierarchical: the sender does the work and the recipient is disempowered. This kind of one-way model of communication can activate the negative deep frames of moral order, the free market and the rational actor (based on the power of information). If we are to talk about ‘communications’ then we must be sure that the context needs to be carefully managed in order to generate genuine dialogue.

- **‘Campaigns’**

In the development NGO context, ‘campaigns’ (like ‘communications’) is a frame that we should have certain reservations about. The main risk is that a ‘campaign’ frame activates a certain understanding of NGOs as ‘charities’, which brings with it assumptions about the role of superior Northern supporters and inferior Southern recipients. If campaigns have short timescales, and prescribed roles for ‘activists’ (also potentially problematic), then they are in danger of reinforcing negative deep frames. Once again, careful management of the term is required.

Having identified some surface frames that are potentially problematic, we tentatively suggest some alternatives in the summary table below. These alternative frames should be regarded as range finders, suggested to help others find positive ways of framing their messages.

Current (negative) frame	Alternative (Positive) Frames?
Charity	*Justice; Fairness*
Charities	*Movements; NGOs*
Aid	*Mutual support; Partnership*
Development	*Well-being; freedom; Responsibility*
Corruption; Aid effectiveness	*Good/bad governance; Fraud*
Communications	*Conversations*
Campaigns	*Engagements; Dialogues*

The exercise of finding positive frames is far from simple: each alternative comes with its own frame system, and activates other frames that may not be as positive. Additional research is required to explore questions such as 'Can these new frames 'stretch' across different subgroups?', 'Can they 'travel' from their current contexts to development applications?' and 'What associated frames do they bring with them?'.

Once new frames are arrived at, they will need careful testing with different audience groups. Such testing is needed to establish which deep frames and which values are being activated. Terms such as 'governance' and 'NGO' are already linked to other frame systems and may well bring problems of their own.

As well as research with the public, discussion and debate will be required. If consensus can be reached on some of the alternative frames, the process of values change will be a smoother one. Rather than being viewed as an expert task, the process of finding frames should be understood as a journey of debate and deliberation, involving a range of stakeholders and audience groups. New frames should emerge from these stakeholders talking and thinking together.

Formal discourse analysis should now be undertaken using source material both from the development sector and about development issues.

A participative approach

Our proposed methodology for frame development is more participative than empirical; it bears a closer resemblance to development education work than to market research. The capacity of development education to evolve new frames has already been spotted by Matt Smith, who recommends that *"a more reflexive approach is suggested which goes beyond the instrumentality of 'frame changing' and brings constituencies into the development process"* (Baillie Smith 2008:15).

In addition to the negative and alternative surface frames suggested above, a full list of the 21 surface frames identified in our stakeholder conversation is given in Annex A, described in Joe Brewer's words. It will be noted that these surface frames are not divided into positive and negative; in some instances they appear to be bivalent, or neutral. This is in keeping with the theoretical point that some conceptual frames are not values-linked. In practical terms it underlines that there is further analytical and deliberative work to be undertaken by those in the sector before a working list of new frames for different contexts can be drawn up.

In effect, the frames we have developed so far are hypothetical. Formal discourse analysis should now be undertaken using source material both from the development sector and about development issues. This is needed to validate and refine our frames, and also to identify any additional surface frames not included in our conversation.

The work on frames that we have undertaken is only in its preliminary stages, so it will be evident that the methodologies used for operationalising frames analysis as a tool for change are in the early stages of development. The next section of this report sketches out how sector practices might look if redesigned around positive values and frames.

Beyond this paper, we propose taking our draft frames out to practitioners in the sector, to engage and dispute with them. We want to encourage reflection about how sector practices might look if reconfigured around these frames. That is one element of a programme of work that we envisage carrying forward in collaboration. Our goal is to embed new frames not only in development NGOs but also within DFID, among stakeholders across the wider NGO community, and in society as a whole (see Section 6 below for next steps).

5.Implications for practice

This section...

• Applies the thinking in the paper to date on positive values and frames, setting out some implications for what development NGOs' practices might look like if values and frames theory were applied across their work. These implications are intended as inputs into the urgent debate required within and beyond the sector; they are intended also to demonstrate the transformative potential of adopting a values and frames approach.

• Sets out implications as they relate both to development NGOs internally and to their work in collaboration with one another and with the wider third sector. Specific implications are described for development NGOs' campaigns, fundraising and charity shop teams.

• Identifies implications for the UK government, including the possibility of a wider convening role across the loose collaborative and deliberative networks that will be required.

So far, this report has identified that the UK public's engagement with global poverty is shallow and limited. It has also proposed some potential routes to addressing this problem, based in values theory and frames theory. Now, in this penultimate section, we explore the transformative effects such theories could have on the practices of development sector bodies.

The implications set out in this section represent challenging ideas that could be taken up across the sector. In the context of this report, they also represent concrete illustrations of how frames thinking can result in practical changes with the potential both to cut across everything NGOs do and to ripple outwards to re-engage the public.

Models for behaviour change

Engaging the public in global poverty can be seen as a behaviour change task, in which the purpose is to encourage supportive actions for tackling global poverty. Those actions can be developed through direct approaches to the public (such as communications or fundraising), or by providing people with a supporting 'infrastructure' (such as shops, campaigns, and opening up fairtrade markets).

Behaviour change as a practical approach starts with an understanding of behaviour – or ideally multiple ways of understanding behaviour (just as in this paper we have used both values and frames theories). In recent guidance on behaviour change produced for the UK government (drafted by one of the co-authors of this paper) it is stressed that there is no one winning model for delivering behaviour change (Darnton 2008).

This approach is not about experts in one discipline (even a loosely bounded one like behavioural economics) having all the answers, and everyone else following.

Instead we need to look at myriad models and theories that have something to say about human behaviour. In so doing, the practitioner will ask different questions, identify different problems, and suggest different interventions. In this kind of approach, doing behaviour change is about opening up safe spaces for thinking about behaviour, deliberating together with other stakeholders in the problem, and trialling multi-stranded interventions – which can then be monitored and refined, or abandoned. This approach is not about experts in one discipline (even a loosely bounded one like behavioural economics) having all the answers, and everyone else following.

Models from psychology, sociology and development studies

Such an approach to behaviour change resonates with the themes of this paper, and specifically ties in to the multiple disciplinary approaches which we have adopted here. These include:

- **Social psychological approaches**

In presenting his Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour in 1977, US social psychologist Harry Triandis wrote about models as *"concepts that will help people use their heads"* (Triandis 1977:283).

- **Sociological approaches**

In presenting the new concept of frames in the context of Artificial Intelligence, Marvin Minsky explains how the slots in a frame effectively determine what questions we should be asking in a given situation. In the children's birthday party frame, for example, the questions might include 'what should I wear?' and 'what should I give as a present?' (Minsky 1974). This idea of frames as frameworks for understanding situations is developed in sociology by Erving Goffman (1974).

- **Development studies approaches**

In calling for more deliberative and participative activities to generate new notions of development and build the legitimacy of NGOs, Matt Smith quotes Michael Edwards advocating the setting up of *"safe spaces for dialogue"* as central to the strengthening of global civil society (Edwards 2000 in Baillie Smith 2008).

Each of these approaches resonates with the themes of this paper and provides clues about how to get to grips with the different theories available and how to navigate the tensions between them. If there is no one winning model, then as practitioners we do not need to choose one theoretical approach and rigidly adhere to it. In this context, values and frames become lenses through which to read problems and think through possible solutions. At the same time, the act of thinking through problems becomes an important act of doing; deliberation itself will produce transformational change in sector and public practices.

Shifting between different theoretical approaches can be difficult. For those accustomed to finding the right answers, it is likely to be a frustrating process. For complex 'bigger than self' problems, however – including those characterised by blurred boundaries, as is the case with international development – multiple perspectives are likely to yield the most fruitful approaches. The capacity to shift between perspectives is key to developing solutions.

Marvin Minsky writes about this as one of the inherent strengths of frames as organising concepts. He argues that 'view changing' (ie shifting perspectives, or the frames through which a situation is viewed) *"is a problem-solving technique important in representing, explaining and predicting"* (Minsky 1974:26).

No silver bullet

In short, as so many policy papers on behaviour change conclude (eg Defra 2008), there is no 'silver bullet' that we can turn to here. Yet the two theoretical perspectives that we chiefly adopt in this paper – values and frames – come up with a clear prescription of the objectives we should set ourselves in order to extend and deepen public engagement in global poverty. More research needs to be done to refine and validate these assertions. But for the moment they provide sufficient foundations to enable the primary task of deliberating as a sector, and with wider audiences and stakeholders, on how to reframe development, and re-engage the public.

This section opens up the debate by drawing out some clear implications for the sector about how our practices could change if we applied the values and frames prescriptions in their purest form. If we begin by reiterating the recommendation that positive values and frames should drive public engagement with global poverty, then we can identify a series of practical implications. Some cut across the entire third sector, while others apply only to development NGOs and their structures, or to specific public engagement activities. Finally, implications for the role of government are also spelled out.

5.1 Positive values

This paper has reviewed strong empirical evidence on the role of certain values and goals in motivating pro-social attitudes and behaviours, including actions to tackle global poverty. Activating these intrinsic goals and universalism values should secure public engagement with development for the long term. It should also help to bring about a shift in societal values that should ultimately increase the pool of engaged public supporters. Importantly, the evidence shows that activating conflicting motivations – such as values of power and goals of financial success and image – will diminish the potential for sustained public engagement.

The empirical evidence for the causal relationship between values and behaviours is more developed in relation to pro-environmental and other pro-social behaviours than to behaviours linked with global poverty. But global poverty can be seen as one of the 'bigger than self' problems for which positive values can work. Based on such broader evidence, as well as evidence relating to specific development behaviours (eg buying fairtrade), we have identified the following values and goals as either positively contributing to, or negatively detracting from, public engagement with global poverty.

The values and goals we are recommending are not uncontested. For instance, universalist values are seen as problematic by some working in development studies (because of their 'othering' effect). Benevolence values are held by many practitioners to be important ways of engaging the public, although they do not naturally appear to motivate concern for others from whom that public is distant. Self-interest, meanwhile, which is associated with 'negative' self-enhancement values, is seen to be a key driver of development practice on the ground in the global South.

Positive values to debate

It is vital that debate occurs around these issues. Given the problem of static or falling levels of public engagement in the UK, this report's recommendations for a move to positive values seem timely and necessary. But they must work within the practical limits and tolerances of the sector.

Our proposed approach is to follow the recommendations inherent in values theory, encouraging practitioners in the sector to engage with those values and enter into a collaborative debate. At the same time, we will seek to validate the relationships between these positive values and supportive actions for tackling poverty, through further research.

'Positive' values for development,
to be activated and reinforced:
the 'Universalism' values of Equality; World at Peace; Social Justice.

Of secondary importance,
also to be activated and reinforced:
the 'Universalism' values of A World of Beauty; Unity with Nature; Protecting the Environment; Broadmindedness; Wisdom.

Of potential importance, and only to be activated for specific purposes as part of a longer-term strategy (especially in order to engage the previously unengaged and the outright sceptical): the 'Benevolence' values of Helpful; Responsible; True Friendship; and Meaning in Life.

'Negative' values for development,
to be avoided and diminished:
the 'Power' values of Social Power; Wealth; Authority; Preserving my Public Image.

'Positive' goals for development,
to be activated and reinforced:
the 'Intrinsic' goals of Community Feeling; Self Acceptance; and, as part of a longer strategy, Affiliation.

'Negative' goals for development,
to be avoided and diminished:
the 'Extrinsic' goals of Financial Success; Popularity; Image; Conformity.

5.2 Positive deep frames

This paper has described how particular deep frames were identified as part of the staged conversation we held with key NGO staff, which was analysed by Joe Brewer. From that set of deep frames, we have identified those that we feel will most strongly tap into positive values for development (see Section 4 above).

Again, these deep frames are not uncontested, and should be opened up to debate across the sector. They should then be refined in response to that debate. It will be interesting, for example, to test how well our frames can respond to the 'blurred boundaries' of some development activity, and whether their simple polarities are sufficient to cope with the complexities of development NGO practices.

Following the process of debate that we are advocating, we intend to validate the deep frames through formal discourse analysis, and also to explore their relationship to specific positive values, through primary research. For the moment the status of these deep frames must be deemed hypothetical, and their primary purpose is to serve as starting points for debate. The deep frames we have suggested can be summed up as follows:

The 'Embodied Mind' frame
(not the 'Rational Actor' frame)

The 'Shared Prosperity' frame
(not the 'Free Market' frame)

The 'Participatory Democracy' frame
(not the 'Elite Governance' frame)

'Non-hierarchical Networks'
(not the 'Moral Order' frame)

5.3 Positive surface frames

As with the deep frames listed above, so this paper has identified some surface frames that we feel can be supportive, or detrimental, to advancing positive values for development. These surface frames are set out in Section 4 in full. They are necessarily hedged about with considerable caveats about the exercise of identifying them. These reservations are principally methodological: the frames were derived from our subjective reading of Joe Brewer's analysis of our staged conversation, and will need to be validated and refined both through formal discourse analysis and through deliberative research with the public.

It is worth recalling, however, that the identification of negative frames is also supported by points from other disciplinary approaches and by primary research with the public. Because of this we feel confident about identifying certain problematic terms with negative associations, and we believe it is appropriate to regard the deep frames we have identified as significant in a development context.

Our reservations about specifying the positive surface frames are also procedural: practitioners themselves will be best placed to find the surface framing that works for them, and this exercise should be undertaken in collaboration between diverse practitioners. The sector will need to work in concert if a values shift is to be brought about.

Most importantly, these surface frames should be viewed as the logical outcomes of adopting particular positive deep frames. As Lakoff argues, surface frames have nothing to hang from if there are no deep frames in place; they become mere slogans. We recommend that practitioners engage with our deep frames, and explore how to embed them in their organisations and activities. When they have done this, it will then be the right time to consider how they 'surface frame' their messages. As they reach this point, our suggestions for positive surface frames may represent useful range finders for the task.

Our summary table is provided below, with current negative frames set against suggestions for alternative positive frames. We are more confident about the negative frames we have identified than the positive ones we have put forward: our positive frames are necessarily more speculative until practitioners have subjected them to a process of vigorous deliberation and debate. We also need to subject our surface frames to further research, particularly observing differences in context and across different subgroups of the public.

Practitioners themselves will be best placed to find the surface framing that works for them, and this exercise should be undertaken in collaboration between diverse practitioners.

Current (negative) frame	Alternative (positive) frames?
Charity	*Justice; Fairness*
Charities	*Movements; NGOs*
Aid	*Mutual support; Partnership*
Development	*Well-being; freedom; Responsibility*
Corruption; Aid effectiveness	*Good/bad governance; Fraud*
Communications	*Conversations*
Campaigns	*Engagements; Dialogues*

5.4 Implications for development NGOs

If we follow this report's recommendation to use positive values and frames to engage the UK public in global poverty, we arrive at a set of implications for UK development NGOs, and other stakeholders – including the UK government.

Rebalance campaigns and fundraising approaches

The first, overarching implication is that development NGOs should rebalance their current focus on campaigns and fundraising with a sector-wide set of objectives geared to build deep public engagement with global poverty over time. All the other implications described below can be inferred from this one overarching goal.

This implication may prove challenging to acknowledge, let alone adhere to. A shift away from 'emergency aid' fundraising may diminish public donations in the short term: fundraisers know that showing graphic images of suffering works. Moreover, we do not know what the impact will be on revenue raising if we hold conversations with the public grounded in positive values.

Given the success of the transactional model, and the fact that the most effective fundraising approaches are known to be the most transactional (Sport Relief's Chris Moyles film of a child dying in hospital, for example), it is likely that a complete shift away from such approaches would result in a noticeable drop in income. This means that it is unrealistic to suggest such a total change of tack by development NGOs.

We need to get beyond notions of ‘charity’, as these are bound up in connotations of mission and aid

A number of commentators who work in and around the sector have argued that it is unrealistic to expect NGOs to step away from the marketplace and overturn their business models (see eg Baillie Smith 2008). But at the very least, adopting positive values as a critical lens or thinking device could enable NGOs to judge both the likely collateral damage of their strategies and their impact on public engagement in the longer term. Our analysis of the problem of public engagement suggests that without a fundamental change of tack, the gradual ebbing away of public support for tackling poverty will continue.

One way of beginning to move away from transactional approaches is to use them more sparingly, as part of longer-term engagement strategies based on positive values. Appeals based on financial transactions or disempowering images of human suffering (both of which tap into extrinsic motivations and negative frames) may prove impossible to give up in the short term. But their negative impacts could be somewhat limited if they were used only to pull in new supporters – supporters who could then be offered only engagement activities based on more positive values and frames.

This strategy builds on current good practice in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), but constructs the ‘supporter journey’ model around a shift in values and frames. The risk here is obvious: that the mass-market ‘front–end’ of public engagement will remain essentially unchanged, with values- and frames-based activities reserved for more engaged subgroups. But ways to move away from such transactional activities may also be developed over time, if new supporter-journey models can be found.

The empirical evidence for the potential of positive values to drive donations is very scarce, but there are clues based on the data showing that universalism values are good predictors of charitable giving (Cohrs et al 2007). If the frames approach does prove less effective for fundraising in the short term, it should provide deeper and wider engagement in the medium term and ultimately broaden the potential supporter base for all development-sector NGOs. The challenge is to work out ways to move to a future model of engagement – as yet undefined – that activates positive values and secures public donations now and for the future. It is vital that fundraisers contribute to the debate about how to operationalise frames theory in their organisations.

Go beyond the charity approach

A positive frames approach ultimately amounts to a different ‘face’ for UK development NGOs. We need to get beyond notions of ‘charity’, as these are bound up in connotations of mission and aid – both of which reinforce negative frames of the free market and the moral order. What we should be moving towards is a ‘third sector’ status: independent organisations working in partnership with governments North and South (particularly civil society in the South), aligned primarily by their core values. The goals at stake are global development (enhanced well-being) and good governance, not disaster relief.

Members of the public who support such new-style NGOs are more like change agents than activists; their contacts with an NGO are transformational experiences, not transactions. This implication is in keeping with thinking in development education, concluding that NGOs should regard their range of public engagement activities as *"an opportunity for dialogue and deliberation rather than a one-off purchase"* (Baillie Smith 2008:14).

Incorporate all public-facing activities

It follows from this reading of frames theory that NGOs should implement this approach across all their public-facing activities. Frames theory is clear that attempting to embed positive frames solely through campaigns messaging or brand communications is extremely unlikely to have an impact on the frames of core supporters, let alone the wider public.

Collaborate across the development sector and beyond

NGOs simply do not have the firepower within the public sphere to shift frames by themselves. Their voices and activities are too small amid the din of comment, opinion, advertising, and day- to-day business raging in national life.

Even the biggest – like Oxfam, with its 99% brand recognition and a near ubiquitous high street presence – cannot hope to affect dominant social frames on their own. That said, NGOs are critical contributors in frames that dominate issues of social justice. Unless they lead the way in applying frames theory, it is difficult to imagine who might.

It follows that NGOs should collaborate around their shared values base. This represents a real challenge to the current business model, based on good donor stewardship and inter-agency competition and differentiation. As MPH showed, collaboration is hard to achieve. It may be sensible to build a series of open-ended and non-binding engagements, following the format of thinking spaces. Importantly such a collaboration, based on positive values and deep frames, would logically extend beyond the development sector – responding to the calls made for a shared values platform across the third sector in *Common Cause* (Crompton 2010).

Stick resolutely to a positive values agenda

Despite the open-ended approach necessary for creating thinking spaces, a thoroughly joined-up strategy and programme of work will be needed if we are to bring about a frames shift in society. Collaborating NGOs will need to hold firm to an agreed agenda around positive values and frames, and not revert to habitual ways of campaigning and fundraising during the period of reframing.

In themselves, sector practices based on collaboration rather than competition would transform the sector. They would activate more positive values, associated with the 'shared prosperity' frame. However, this kind of collaboration will require a new level of focus. It may become desirable to set up a steering group to develop a medium- to long-term strategy for partner NGOs that are looking to ensure a common approach in designing public engagement activities.

Campaigns should be designed to provide opportunities for active participation by supporters

Identify new indicators to measure success

With new goals of driving public engagement through the instilling and reinforcing of positive values, new success measures will be required. It is suggested that one implication for evaluation methods should be the adoption of formal discourse analysis, to see the extent to which positive frames developed in collaboration by the sector have been enacted in different communications contexts: in NGO materials, in media features and in the public's everyday conversation.

5.5 Implications for development NGOs' campaigns

Enable active participation

If we take the prescription of positive values and frames into the arena of campaigns by development NGOs, there is a clear implication that such campaigns should be designed to provide opportunities for active participation by supporters – including transformational experiences wherever possible. This approach activates the embodied mind frame, and seeks to move the balance away from transactional models of engagement.

Universalism values correlate strongly with civic participation. To tap into this people should be able to do a variety of things in relation to a campaign, including playing an active part in developing the campaign itself. In this way our model of campaigning can be transformed.

Volunteering is an obvious vehicle for such involvement, but many other forms of participation that build agency in the supporter are available. Some of these could arise from the dialogue and deliberations that are called for in the multi-disciplinary approach to change advocated in this paper. Such activities give people agency, and they also reinforce the qualities of self-determination that are part of intrinsic motivations.

Facilitate deeper engagement

Campaigns should place a premium on depth rather than breadth of engagement. Instead of attempting to lower barriers to entry and make taking part more quick and simple – thereby amassing large numbers of shallow actions based on appeals to ease and urgency – campaigns should be designed to encourage deeper, more active participation.

Frames theory suggests that what we should aim for is a networked model of engagement. Supporters should be drawn together to form empowered networks in which they debate and formulate plans of action themselves, in contrast to current models. The current approach is dominated by campaign actions being worked up between individual campaigners and the NGO, or dictated by the NGO to campaigners. There is a need for active networks not only across countries in the global North but also – critically – between North and South.

By moving to a longer view of engagement based on supporter journeys, tactics that are used to achieve short-term goals may be outweighed by those designed to deepen engagement over the longer term.

Avoid short-term, simplistic messages

Campaigns should move away from short-termism in messaging, notably anything that suggests complete solutions in short or imminent timescales (eg Stop Climate Chaos, Make Poverty History, End World Hunger) or claims of opportunity ("last chance to…"; "it's now or never"). Such claims too often inject short-term urgency at the expense of longer-term engagement. They also invoke a rational actor frame through the assumption of a linear progression of problem–solution that is rarely accurate, and which suppresses acceptance of the messy nature of change that is inherent within network frames.

There will, of course, be moments when tight timescales must be made explicit – sometimes there is real urgency or a make-or-break moment – but frames theory implies that these should be the exceptions, not the rule. As with fundraising strategies, it is suggested that by moving to a longer view of engagement based on supporter journeys, tactics that are used to achieve short-term goals may be outweighed by those designed to deepen engagement over the longer term.

Use celebrities sparingly and judiciously

Following on from the above, the evidence from values theory suggests that celebrities should be used extremely judiciously. This is not just the same old point about matching the celebrity to the cause, and not overusing well known figures. From a values and frames perspective there is a fundamental problem in using highly individualistic consumer icons as focal points for a campaign.

The association between the dominant celebrity culture and consumerist values (especially social power and financial success) has been demonstrated above, in the context of Make Poverty History. The involvement of some celebrities is likely to forge unwanted connections to the negative frame of the free market. Using celebrities to generate headlines for a campaign can serve to draw its discourse up to the surface, making it broad, shallow and short, instead of deep, long and rewarding. There may be moments when brevity and a simple and immediate impact are desirable, but again only as part of a longer- term strategy based on positive values and frames.

There may be exceptional cases to this principle. Not all celebrities are the same, and some are regarded less as 'consumer icons' than others. Lenny Henry and David Attenborough, for example, can be seen as people in the public eye who hold some moral authority but are not obviously on the 'celebrity circuit'. In his analysis of Make Poverty History, Graham Harrison singles out Bono and Bob Geldof as two particular (and different) cases. They brought their own frames to the campaign, with different effects (Harrison 2010).

As well as differentiating carefully between celebrities, we have to recognise that the impact of deploying a celebrity varies according to the context in which he or she is used. Campaigns can be highly effective when they successfully position the celebrity as the public's 'friend on the ground', acting as a proxy to the full-body experience of witnessing everyday lives in poor countries. Examples of such effective celebrity-based campaigns were found during PPP research into Sport Relief films (Darnton 2007).

Interestingly the successful stories all leveraged a sense of 'common humanity'. This encompassed both the Southern people featured and the Northern celebrities reporting to the television audience back home. These celebrities were able to take up the role of 'someone like me' for viewers if the layers of their celebrity status were peeled back (for instance through a genuine emotional bond to the place and people, or a visceral response to the suffering). In such cases, the potential negative values activated through the use of celebrities may be offset by the activation of more intrinsic motivations, such as affiliation and community feeling – although this is a tricky balancing act to perform (as values theory, and PPP research findings, attest).

5.6 Implications for development NGOs' fundraising appeals

Move away from transactional approaches

As discussed above, modern NGOs are businesses and must operate as much in the marketplace and along financial lines as any other corporation. But if the lessons from values and frames theories are to be followed, new models of fundraising will need to be evolved to shift the balance of engagement away from transactional models.

Using direct appeals as just the opening push in a longer-term and more positive strategy has already been identified as one way to minimise the collateral damage to public engagement. Other ways to redraw fundraising activities so they do not rely so heavily on self-interest/national interest arguments should also be explored. We need to find ways to avoid the free market and moral order frames (eg by avoiding the use of disempowering imagery) and minimising the use of transactional frames such as '£5 buys…' appeals, and child sponsorship drives.

Donations could be presented as supportive of an NGO's long-term work, based on partnership working to help recipient countries to develop. This kind of approach could incorporate positive frames such as education and infrastructure projects, and the building of better governance and new institutions. Conventional 'emergency' aid should always be positioned as a part of this bigger picture. Ultimately the aim is enabling development, ideally reframed as advancing well-being, pursuing freedoms, or building a sense of personal and shared responsibility. This case should be argued on the grounds of common humanity, and with reference to positive values wherever possible.

Expand community fundraising

Further fundraising methodologies that activate the embodied mind and shared prosperity frames should be explored and enhanced, as we currently cannot readily identify fundraising approaches that evoke these deep frames. While it is challenging, we do not think that the quest for new approaches is unachievable.

New strategies could include more community fundraising, where individuals take an active part in activities instead of relying heavily – as many NGOs do – on individual 'chequebook' or direct-debit giving. These more prevalent forms of giving reinforce transactional frames and other problematic frames around 'charity' and 'aid'.

5.7 Implications for development NGOs' charity shops

Return to your roots

If charity shops' purpose is simply to increase revenues for their organisations, they will present a problem to NGOs trying to break out of the transaction frame. In this particular frame supporters are consumers, while NGOs are seeking to build demand for the products they sell. But supporters are also donors: they give both unwanted items and their own time as volunteers.

From a values and frames perspective, it follows that charity shops should go back to their roots, doing all they can to promote the 'giving' aspects of the shop above the 'buying' ones. Closing up the loop between the two will also provide a strong circular model, one that is consistent with Universalism values and principles of shared prosperity. Reducing the emphasis on the 'selling' side is also important. Not selling new product (as opposed to donated items) is one clear way to differentiate charity shops from other models. In this way, it is hoped that charity shops could become more expressive of the positive values of their NGO owners.

Move away from high-street retail norms

As well as exemplifying the values of their parent organisations, charity shops represent a rich resource for embedding positive frames in everyday life. They are the frontline of public engagement, right in the middle of the high street. Our reading of a frames approach suggests that charity shops should explore new ways of being as unlike the rest of the shops on the high street as possible.

The notion of a ‘community shop’ is in keeping with positive goals around community feeling and self-acceptance.

Different economic models of transaction could be trialled, such as not pricing items (buyers pay what they think is a fair price in the context) and holding items such as toys or DVDs in a lending library arrangement for a short period, before selling them on. Shops could also be used much more effectively as windows onto the developing world. New ideas such as video links could be used to develop transformative experiences for the supporter-shopper.

A new wave of community shops?

Recent work with Oxfam on values and frames has uncovered evidence to suggest that not all shops are as potentially harmful to positive values as others. Across the Oxfam shops network, it is reported that there are certain shops that are highly profitable. But this profitability is not linked to their having the sharpest business practices. It is all about having the strongest links into their communities.

Such shops can be characterised as serving a ‘community hub’ function, enabling other local networks to flourish. They also benefit from the self-direction and sense of agency of the volunteers who staff and manage them. The notion of a ‘community shop’ is in keeping with positive goals around community feeling and self-acceptance. It may in time come to represent a new frame for the charity shop.

5.8 Implications for DFID

Play an active role in the debate

DFID potentially has a key role to play in enabling otherwise financially competitive NGOs to debate and plan together using values and frames perspectives. This convenor role would fit well with DFID’s position as the body most obviously driven by the need to foster public support for development.

As a government department, DFID does not have to compete for public donations as NGOs do. Because of this it can almost be seen to be non-partisan. It is notable that some development academics identify DFID as having a central role to play in promoting development education (eg Baillie Smith 2008).

There is some idealism in these suggestions, of course; DFID is a highly political entity, and an expression of both domestic and international political intent on behalf of the government. If in the current climate of budgetary restraint DFID cannot actively enable a process of cross-sector collaboration, it may be that other neutral cross-sector organisations – most obviously BOND, but also the DEA or IBT – could facilitate the necessary debate across the sector.

If DFID is not to lead, however, it should still play a central part in the process of society-wide deliberation that we are advocating. By doing so it would recognise the pivotal role of government policy in determining how the public engage with global poverty. Excluding itself from this programme of dialogue and collaboration is not an option, if there is to be a step change in levels of public engagement with global poverty.

Build on the citizen segmentation model

A values-based engagement strategy that involves overlapping networks of NGOs and stakeholders from wider society will represent a challenge to current ways of measuring success. As DFID moves towards a convenor role, so success could be measured in terms of how successful DFID has been in bringing in a wide range of partners.

The ultimate success of public engagement should be measured across the sector as a whole, as well as among the public. We need to be asking what, if anything, is changing in people's attitudes to global poverty and what they are doing about it. DFID's citizen segmentation model, based on a basket of measures, should offer an excellent tool for advancing measurement among different groups of the public. In addition, as suggested above, methodologies should be agreed for tracking the uptake of positive frames in the media and other areas of public discourse – including people's everyday talk.

From 'development' to 'well-being'?

The coalition government has recently moved away from announcements based on financial inputs, placing greater emphasis on measurements based on impact. This move has some immediately positive implications from a frames perspective, as it holds the potential to remove a negative transaction frame from the discussion. However, care must still be taken around any remaining language that reinforces charity, aid or the moral order.

Ultimately the very name of the department, activating the 'development' frame, may be problematic (in so far as the public is aware of what DFID stands for). We would tentatively suggest that a Department for International Well-being would pursue a rather different policy agenda from the one that DFID pursues today, while a Department for International Freedom would probably be unrecognisable. Such a suggestion indicates the capacity of a values and frames approach to bring about transformational change – a scale of change that we would argue is needed to meet the scale of the global challenges we are facing.

6.Next steps

The endpoint of this review represents a jumping-off point for the next stage in what we hope will become a long-running programme of work. This report could usefully inform and support a process of dialogue and deliberation designed to change NGO practices, in order ultimately to move the UK public on in relation to global poverty.

We have used values and frames as thinking devices to help examine the problems associated with low public engagement with global poverty (as exemplified in current NGO practices, and in the particular case of Make Poverty History). We have also seen that values and frames hold the potential to serve as useful creative tools for developing solutions to these problems. They are not perfect tools; there are weaknesses within them, and inconsistencies between them. Neither appears to hold all the answers. Yet together they open up possibilities for identifying deep changes in NGO practices that could help catalyse transformational change in public perceptions.

Importantly, the solutions we are seeking are not to be found in their natural state in the theories themselves. Instead solutions are likely to emerge by drawing on values and frames as critical tools in an informed debate.

What we believe is needed is a deliberative process involving multiple 'partners' in and beyond the development sector. Such a process should be instrumental in itself in bringing about a positive shift in sector practices. This way of working is in keeping with the interdisciplinary approach of policy making for behaviour change.

It also echoes well-evolved practices in development education that are based on setting up 'safe spaces' in which to deliberate and shape possible solutions.

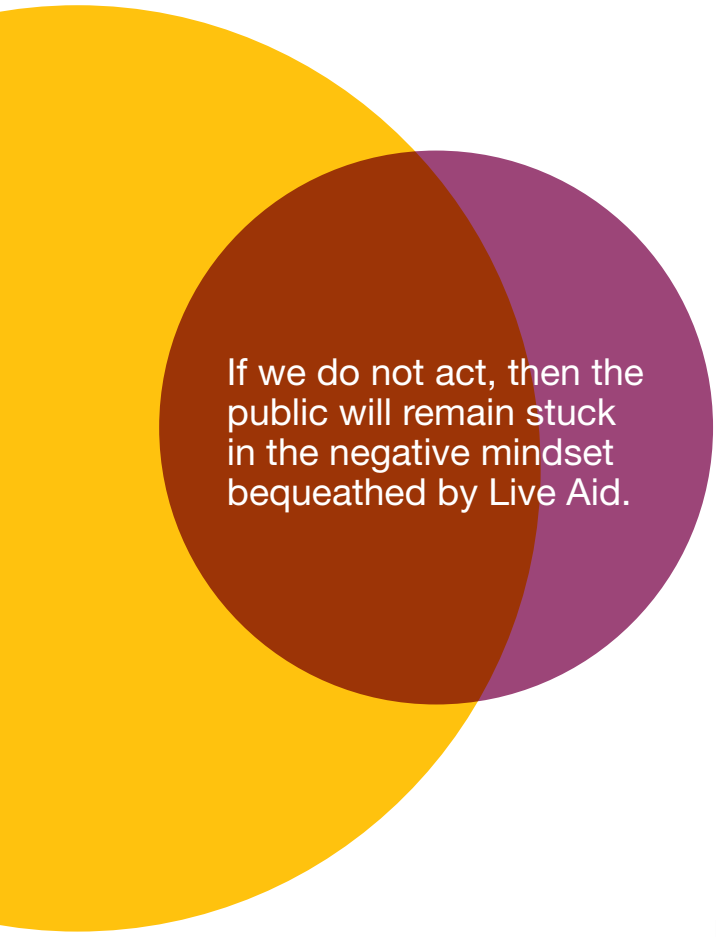
There is inevitably some uncertainty over which specific positive values and frames to promote in the context of development, and we are planning research to refine and validate our recommendations. Rather than specifying positive values and frames ourselves at this stage, we believe that the values and frames required should emerge from a sector-wide debate. We all need to work through the challenges of public engagement together, using theoretical lenses to view them and suggest solutions.

However, this does not amount to a vague set of recommendations, or the need for a talking shop. Rather, we would underline that the need for transformative change is urgent, and that doing nothing will only exacerbate the current static or downward trend in terms of public engagement.

If we do not act, then the public will remain stuck in the negative mindset bequeathed by Live Aid. NGOs will compete for supporters ever more aggressively, and campaigns and other public engagement activities will end up at the bottom of the barrel. In this scenario public support and donations will also ultimately decline and the public mandate for ringfenced aid spending could evaporate. If this happens, there will be little chance of the public moving beyond the aid frame to become aware of any other meaningful way of engaging in positive change.

There is already evidence that the next generation of potential supporters (aged 14 to 20) have inherited a sense of fatalism and 'development fatigue' from the media and from the Live Aid generation (TW Research 2010). This shows that the negative cycle we are locked into is set to continue unless we do something to take urgent action. What is needed is systemic change – across the sector and up from the roots of the sector – to break that cycle. Values and frames represent tools with which we can work together to deliver that change.

In order to move towards change, we can identify further substantive steps from here, as follows:



i) First, we should set up overlapping working groups to debate values and frames approaches, define the problems of public engagement using those tools, and refine a set of positive values and deep and surface frames for driving public engagement. We suggest an open-ended network of overlapping groups, stretching out to cover different facets of society: NGOs, funding bodies, government, the media, academia and so on. Together these groups could develop a joint agenda for driving public engagement with global poverty, using values and frames approaches to define the problem and identify possible solutions. Within NGOs, we particularly look to campaigners, fundraisers and CRM managers, and communications staff to embrace this debate. Fundraisers in particular should share their data on recent fundraising performance and the costs of recruitment and retention; in this way, challenges to the current fundraising model can be better understood. The relationship between fundraising methods and levels of public engagement could then be explored more deeply. This is just one example of how we would like to embed a values and frames approach in sector-wide practices. We invite any interested readers to contact us and enrol their organisations in such a programme of work.

ii) We urge interested organisations to look at their own practices through the lenses of values and frames. New ways of working need to be evolved and tested, and specific organisations may be able to do this innovation work alone. For instance, Oxfam has begun the task of embedding values and frames into its long-term strategies, and different teams within the organisation are working out what a values and frames approach means for them. So far the senior management team, the UK campaigns team and the Oxfam shops team have all applied this thinking to their strategy development.

iii) For our part, we plan to engage in a programme of dissemination and debate around this paper. We will pursue a programme of public events, respond to invitations to speak wherever possible, and find opportunities to open up debate to a wider audience. As we do so, we shall refine our thinking, and extend our networks. We would welcome the opportunity to come into individual organisations and open up the themes of this paper to internal audiences.

iv) Finally, we propose undertaking further research, in parallel with a process of dialogue and deliberation. There is a need for primary research to explore the relationships between positive values and supportive development actions. We also intend to engage the public in deliberative research to refine positive surface frames, and to differentiate these across particular subgroups. In addition we wish to undertake formal discourse analysis of development-related communications materials and media stories, in order to track the extent to which positive frames are becoming embedded in daily life.

All these proposed actions involve collaboration. We will need involvement from across the whole sector to carry this area of work forward, and engagement with the whole of society to embed the positive values and frames we wish to foster in the next generation. Only through collaboration will we finally break out of the Live Aid Legacy, and deepen and widen the UK public's engagement with tackling global poverty.

Annex A: Surface Frames for the UK Development sector

1. Activist frame – A person engaged by the NGO is seen as one to be 'activated' around a particular issue or campaign.

2. Campaign frame – Actions are constrained to the roles and relationships of a traditional campaign (contrast with Social Movement frame below).

3. Change the System frame – Effort is directed toward shifting power structures and reforming institutions in order to alleviate poverty.

4. Charity frame – The NGO is seen as the mechanism for privileged people to share their wealth with the poor.

5. Common Good frame – The underlying value that motivates people to action is a sense of caring for others, with the goal of increasing collective well-being.

6. Corrupt Government (Africa) frame – Aid sent to Africa is like sending buckets of cash to corrupt officials, a pointless and wasteful action.

7. Empathy frame – Underlying value that motivates people to care for the poor, based on feelings of commonality and compassion.

8. Giving Aid frame – The primary activity for reducing poverty is a direct monetary transfer from wealthy nations to poor nations.

9. Help the Poor frame – A description of what NGOs do that emphasises a 'hand outstretched' to help those in need.

10. Human Kindness frame – A belief in the basic goodness of people and a strategy for evoking compassionate response to drive action.

11. Ignorant Public frame – A belief that the reason people don't do more to help is that they are uninformed, which leads to a 'public education' strategy for increasing engagement.

12. Individual Concern frame – Emphasis on altering individual decisions through appeals to core concerns of individuals.

Annex A: Surface Frames for the UK Development sector

13. International Solidarity frame – Sentiment that rich and poor are all part of the same community; what affects some of us impacts us all.

14. Invest in Entrepreneurs frame – Notion that the way to alleviate poverty is to treat the world's poor as entrepreneurs who only need to be given loans (eg microcredit) so they can start their own businesses.

15. Market-Driven Fundraising frame – Treatment of NGO list members as potential customers to engage with marketing strategies.

16. Poverty frame – Defining the issue of concern as poverty, often to the exclusion of interrelated issues like trade, corruption, environment, governing philosophies, etc.

17. Social Justice frame – Drawing attention to race and economic class differences, with emphasis on justice and human dignity.

18. Social Movement frame – Telling story of NGO efforts in context of a movement to remove a moral failing or achieve a freedom or right for a disenfranchised community (contrast with Campaign frame above).

19. Social Responsibility frame – Underlying value that calls upon people to recognise their role in making society better.

20. Transaction frame – Emphasis placed on an exchange of goods or services between individuals, commonly in the context of an economic exchange.

21. Transformational Experience frame – Exposure to an emotionally powerful experience that results in deep introspection and a persistent change of character.

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