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Post-wristband Blues: the Mixed Fortunes of UK Development Campaigning under austerity and the Conservatives.

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Post-wristband Blues: the Mixed Fortunes of UK Development Campaigning under austerity and the Conservatives.

INTRODUCTION

2005 witnessed the rolling out of the Make Poverty History development campaign coalition. The general, but not unanimous, view was that Make Poverty History (MPH) made tangible headway on many of its demands. Member NGOs generally declared the campaign a success, and the celebrity advocates that grabbed media attention spoke about historic victories. Seen in retrospect, this moment of success seems rather bathetic, the last great hurrah of a campaign logic that subsequently fell into abeyance. From 2006 onwards, individual campaign organisations each made a quieter and less celebratory post-mortem of the 2005 moment before returning to organisation-specific campaigning.ⁱ

There was a general understanding that large collaborative campaigns were unlikely to happen again and that some damage to its prospects had been wrought by the Make Poverty History campaign. As a result of economic recession from 2008, the meta-narrative of British politics shifted to crisis and austerity. In 2010, New Labour was replaced by a coalition government of Conservative and Liberal Democrat, in which the latter were dominant. This election outcome removed a key institutional relationship that development campaigners had come to rely on: a ruling party that shared many of the development norms of the campaign organisations themselves. Nevertheless, in 2013, a major national development campaign coalition was once again devised: the Enough Food If campaign (EFIF). This article explores the motivations and strategies that underpinned the construction of a campaign coalition in such adverse circumstances. The first section sets out the difficult legacy left by Make Poverty History before proceeding in the second section to consider the changed environment within which EFIF emerged. The third section looks at EFIF in some detail, paying particular attention to the ways in which it faced both the MPH legacy and the new political environment. The fourth section sets out an argument that the major logic of the campaign was to lock in a success narrative from beginning to end, over and above other strategic campaign aims, and in this sense to shake off the post-wristband blues of its time. Finally, the article concludes.

THE ROAD TO 2015

The Make Poverty History effect

Make Poverty History was, in a sense, the best of times and the worst of times for development campaigning. Its most convincing success was its ability to mobilise some level of awareness and engagement from large numbers of people. Reportedly, as many as eight million white wristbands were worn. The support base of the coalition expanded massively, a base that was also designed to give supporters an opportunity to 'migrate' into a specific campaign organisation. The demonstrations around the Gleneagles G8 Summit and media impact of the Live 8 concerts generated moments of media saturation in which it was difficult for anyone to avoid

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3 the campaign. The level of cultural endorsement from celebrities, media, and
4 politicians was exceptional.

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6 These features might be considered as intrinsic victories, ones that relate to the aims
7 of campaigning itself: public mobilisation, the growth of campaign organisations, the
8 legitimisation of their purposes. One can also argue that the campaign's extrinsic
9 purposes were achieved to a considerable degree. That is, the policy objectives of
10 the campaign were largely met.ⁱⁱ The G8 Summit led to commitments to aid and debt
11 reduction which, for some campaign coalition members, demonstrated the success
12 of MPH. Within the campaign, people had different expectations of what 'success'
13 might mean, but many – especially from the larger organisations – considered the
14 outcomes to be positive, at least in regards to aid and debt. The dominant metaphor
15 at the time was that a mountain had successfully been climbed but that this revealed
16 other peaks in the near distance.

17
18 However, this metaphor was itself a symptom of the fact that MPH was not an
19 absolute success. The G8 would not make poverty history in any tangible sense. The
20 campaign messages throughout 2004-5 relayed a sense of epochal temporality:
21 making history by making poverty history; a momentous year in which the direction
22 of the future of poverty was to be decided by 'eight men in a room'. The campaign
23 logic was that this was a 'now or never' moment. The fact that, especially after July,
24 the campaign presented to the public a victory that would *not* make poverty history
25 but rather offer a significant step forward over the next few years if the G8 leaders
26 honoured their commitments which were a 'good enough' success rather than an
27 historic victory generated significant anxiety within the coalition in terms of
28 expectation management and the extent to which the G8 had the political will to
29 fulfil its commitments as the years passed.ⁱⁱⁱ

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32 Furthermore, for some coalition members, the commitments were *not* worth
33 celebrating; a 'whisper' rather than a 'roar' (Abugre 2005). The commitments of the
34 G8 were seen as not equal to the task of mass poverty reduction, and the
35 commitments that were made did not modify prevailing neoliberal development
36 practices and ideologies. As the campaign progressed towards the G8, some
37 coalition members had become so concerned about the closeness of the campaign
38 to New Labour that they left the coalition, judging that both the politics of the
39 campaign and the ability of New Labour to use it to boost their own legitimacy made
40 it effectively morally and politically bankrupt (Hodkinson 2005). Reports seeped out
41 as the year went on of considerable disagreement within the coalition.

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45 As a result, as the dust settled on a campaign that ostensibly lasted a year but was all
46 but over by August, the public celebration of 'mission accomplished' dissolved into a
47 rather complicated, diffuse, and dour ratcheting down of the coalition as each
48 member reflected on the pros and cons of the endeavour and moved back into their
49 own silos with both positive and negative lessons from the coalition.

50
51 From 2005 to 2010, development NGOs maintained low-level networking and
52 information sharing, mainly through BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development),
53 the organisational hub for development NGOs. The NGOs continued to work within a
54 context that was still underpinned by a positive relationship between the larger
55 NGOs and the New Labour government. In other words, the fall-out of MPH was in
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3 some degree calibrated by a government that remained positively-disposed to the
4 mainstream development campaigning project. As a result, it was relatively easy for
5 large NGOs to transition out of MPH. Indeed, some took aspects of MPH's imagery
6 and discourse into their own unilateral campaigns and maintained the kinds of
7 working relations with government that were at the heart of MPH. This kind of
8 transition was enjoyed mainly by the large NGOs that led the campaign, especially
9 Oxfam, Christian Aid, Action Aid, CAFOD and Save the Children UK. A second distinct
10 group (notably War on Want and World Development Movement, now Global
11 Justice Now) spent this time moving into a more explicitly 'social movement' frame
12 which was considerably more cynical about New Labour.
13

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15 In retrospect, the five years after 2005 look like the six years before 2005. There was
16 a ruling party with an ideology that was sympathetic to the core norms of the
17 development campaign NGO community; there was a well-institutionalised and
18 resourced NGO sector in which each organisation had its membership, institutional
19 specificities, and networks; there were a series of organisation-specific campaign
20 issues that generated advocacy and fund raising in specific development areas
21 (Porteous 2008:12, 19).
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24 25 *International development, NGOs and New Labour*

26
27 New Labour's relationship with the development campaign community defines this
28 period. The Labour party had campaign, social, and ideological roots in
29 internationalism and Third Worldism (Howe 1993). This is evident in its Fabian
30 politics, its connections with anti-apartheid (Vickers 2011, Bush 1999: 248 et seq.),
31 its links with labour unions that had solidarity connections with post-colonial unions
32 and movements, and with socially-progressive church organisations. From 1997,
33 New Labour condensed these variegated developmentalist associations into a strong
34 normative discourse around ethics and virtue in international relations and
35 development (Gallagher 2011); one component of New Labour's international
36 development ethics was partnerships with development NGOs.
37

38
39 New Labour understood international development in what might be broadly
40 glossed as progressively liberal. Good governance, development partnership,
41 capabilities approaches, civil society and NGOs, and a socially-progressive market-
42 based economy were the pivots of New Labour's vision of a development future. The
43 UK's development NGOs fitted well into this vision as providers of resources, good
44 development partners, and friends of civil society. Both Government and NGOs
45 shared a strong desire to galvanise a pro-development constituency within the
46 British public (Biccum 2007, Manzo 2006). New Labour channelled significant
47 amounts of official development assistance through selected NGOs. It invested in
48 both research and public relations to promote the construction of a form of
49 knowledge based in a revived, ethical, and effective aid project in which UK NGOs
50 played a pivotal role. The creation and political focus on DFID embodied New
51 Labour's developmental intentions. From its origins, DFID took on something of a
52 campaign role itself: its foundational statement of intent *Building Support for*
53 *Development*, could easily have been on a major campaign NGO's website. Arch
54 celebrity campaigner Bono spoke at New Labour's 2004 party conference; Bob
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3 Geldof was asked by Blair to act as a celebrity-advocate for the Africa Commission
4 (Street 2012).

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6 This comity between development NGOs and New Labour was the political context
7 within which the rise and fall of MPH was managed, and it came to an end in 2010.
8 In the next section, we will map out the salient political changes that took place after
9 2010. We present these changes as a context within which another campaign
10 coalition emerged in 2013. Bearing in mind how inauspicious the circumstances were
11 for a post-MPH campaign coalition, we need to explore the features of the campaign
12 not only on their own terms but also as a response to a generally rather depressing
13 state of affairs for international development campaigning. Seen in this light, the
14 Enough Food If campaign is best understood as an attempt to re-define a *modus*
15 *operandi* and *vivendi* for development NGOs in a context significantly transformed
16 from that of the previous thirteen years.
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19 20 NEW GOVERNMENT

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22 It is important to start with a note of moderation. It is not the case that the coming
23 to power of the Coalition government or indeed the subsequent Conservative
24 government represented any kind of totalising counter-revolution in development
25 policy. Indeed, for many analysts on the Left, the short history of Blair's New Labour
26 and David Cameron's Conservatism was one of substantial convergence. Both in
27 terms of public image, leadership style, and substantive areas of policy strategy, New
28 Labour and Conservative policy shared a great deal.
29

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31 New Labour reconciled itself to a non-socialist and broadly liberal policy agenda,
32 based in a faith that private business and socially-beneficial competition would
33 address the core concerns of the party: inequality and poverty (Porteous 2008).
34 Within this intellectual framing, international aid was largely articulated within a
35 neoliberal framework. One could see this in the Africa Commission Report (2005), a
36 report which fed into the Government's preparations for the G8 and engagement
37 with MPH (Brown 2006). DFID also embraced a vision of development through
38 support for competitive market-based growth and the facilitating of a positive role
39 for transnational corporations and unconstrained markets: making globalisation
40 work for the poor (Cammack 2001).
41

42
43 The Conservative party publically affirmed that it would commit to the 0.7% GNP aid
44 target which was previously a key aspiration of New Labour. Making this
45 commitment publically allowed the Tories a fairly cheap means of brand
46 decontamination (Heppell and Lightfoot 2012), emerging as it was from a public
47 image of sleaze and self-interest. Cameron's Big Society, 'golden thread' in
48 development, and quality of life conceptual orientations also fed into a development
49 vision that was moderately distinct but substantially similar to New Labour's. Both
50 party's orientations regarding international development were fundamentally based
51 in a vision of good governance, open economies, competitive markets, and a faith
52 that liberal political sociability would spread unproblematically into poor societies if
53 all of the former components were in place. The two parties offered different points
54 of emphasis and articulation within a substantially shared development vision.
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3 Thus, there was no great shift in international development thinking by the Coalition
4 or Conservative governments. But, this did not mean that nothing changed. In the
5 first place, campaign organisations were now faced with a political party that had
6 been culturally and ideologically distant from it. Few Conservative MPs considered
7 international development as a major policy issue and, compared with New Labour,
8 there was a weaker pro-aid constituency. More broadly the Conservative party in
9 Parliament and amongst its membership were ideologically hostile to international
10 development campaigning values, which had been constructed out of a Fabian,
11 socialist, and social-democratic Christian bundle of values. More practically,
12 development NGOs simply did not have good advocacy networks with Conservative
13 MPs. All of the celebrity advocates taken up by campaign NGOs were broadly on the
14 left and culturally anti-Tory. The NGOs' policy positions on things like trade, climate
15 change, and transnationals were clearly more distant from Tory views than they
16 were under New Labour for all of the convergence at the heart of policy. This new
17 environment was uncertain and potentially adversarial.
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21 Secondly, in some ways, the Conservatives *have* shifted international development
22 strategy, although this has not been as publicised as perhaps it should be. The core
23 shift has been away from good governance and partnerships with aid recipient states
24 which was at the very heart of New Labour's strategy. In its place there is a far
25 stronger focus on private companies as key development partners (Mawdsley 2015).
26 The Conservative government has consolidated an aid model based in the
27 contracting of private companies. This was present during the New Labour
28 administration (Taylor 2012: 454), but there is also a more clear strategic orientation
29 by the Conservatives to present private companies as 'developmental'. And, large
30 amounts of DFID expenditure go on private company services. Beyond the actual
31 payments to contracted private enterprises, aid strategy has, in a sense, been
32 corporatised in that the kinds of claimed knowledge and skills that private
33 companies have are perceived as part of the international aid project itself. One can
34 see this most clearly in the new green revolution for Africa (AGRA) (Kaarhus 2011).
35 One can also see it in the providing of technological and infrastructural services by
36 large transnationals. Discrete projects to promote microfinance, communications
37 technology connectivity, the introduction of new seeds, and training all involve
38 private corporations as service providers, knowledge holders, and aid recipients. The
39 Conservative approach to development was/is more concertedly 'corporate' in that
40 business is seen as a *direct* agent for the promotion of development, not just a
41 source of capital which, according to most economic models (and subject to the right
42 policy environment), generate developmental effects. We shall come back to this
43 strategic reorientation later more specifically in regards to EFIF's concern with
44 hunger and malnutrition.
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49 It seems sensible to conclude that the direction of movement under the Tories
50 was/is concertedly towards a model of funding private companies directly to do
51 development work and in the process celebrating this sector as the driver of change.
52 Inasmuch as this is the case, it poses a challenge to NGOs who had customarily
53 focussed around the activities of NGO, civil society, and partner government
54 initiatives. This was the core dispensation throughout the thirteen years of New
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3 Labour. From 2010, campaign NGOs were faced with a sectoral context defined by a
4 post-MPH legacy and a new and ostensibly less amenable government.

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6 And, of course, the shift in the British party system roughly overlapped with the
7 global economic crisis. This fed into the NGO sector in a way familiar to other
8 economic crisis moments previously: it generated a concern that fiscal austerity
9 would impact upon the aid budget, that rising unemployment and stagnant
10 disposable incomes would reduce charitable donations, and that the general public
11 mood would shift against aid because of a concern for the poor 'at home'. The rise of
12 UKIP was explicitly based in arguments about massively reducing or abolishing aid,
13 laced with barely-disguised racism.
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15 It was this context within which Cameron's explicit endorsement of the 0.7% figure
16 and declaration of 'One World' Conservatism opened the door very slightly to a new
17 working relation between international development NGOs and the government.
18 Against some currents within his own party and somewhat against the austerity
19 narrative his party enthusiastically embraced in most areas, Cameron's leadership
20 identified overseas development assistance as a diagnostic of its social conscience.
21 This rather marginal and protean development within the Tories is vital to
22 understanding the emergence of EFIF.
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26 ENOUGH FOOD IF
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28 29 30 *A window of opportunity*

31 Campaign coalitions offer an opportunity to understand the nature of campaigning
32 in a way that is especially revealing. Most obviously, one can explore the dynamics of
33 relations between individual campaign organisations because they are having to
34 work together formally as part of a single political project. Secondly, the campaign
35 coalition itself requires co-ordination, all manner of dialogue, the construction of a
36 shared discourse, and the establishing of an institution that manages, leads, and co-
37 ordinates the efforts of individual NGOs. Thirdly, campaign coalitions' core purpose
38 is to create a high-publicity action that strongly and publically engages with
39 government or other official development agencies. As such, campaign coalitions
40 offer a revealing way to explore the place of individual development campaigns
41 within a broader British polity and public space. It is in this light that we shall explore
42 the Enough Food If campaign of 2013. EFIF emerged shortly after the changes
43 outlined in the previous section, a fact that raises key questions concerning the
44 ability of development NGOs to negotiate a terrain defined by a sense that
45 something similar to MPH was unlikely to happen again and that the relatively
46 amenable political environment of New Labour had been replaced by something
47 more problematic.
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51 The Enough Food IF campaign became a coalition of over 200 NGOs, oriented around
52 issues of global hunger and malnutrition. In 2012, David Cameron hosted a post-
53 Olympics Hunger Summit in 2012, a 'summit' that was largely a
54 celebrity/sportsperson-endorsed expression of concern about global hunger,
55 claiming that this would be a major international issue for the Government leading
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3 into its hosting of the G8 the subsequent year. ONE and Save the Children attended
4 and the summit spoke warmly about Cameron's commitment. The EFIF coalition
5 identified this moment as the 'open door' through which Britain's development
6 NGOs might find a revived role in the new political environment. This marked an
7 opportunity for major development campaign NGOs: a statement of government
8 openness to campaigning and a high-profile event in which 'hunger'^{iv} would be a
9 prominent focus.
10

11 The large development NGOs with strong lobbying abilities have always sought the
12 ear of politicians. This was at the heart of MPH. It was also the case that these NGOs
13 sought an audience with Gordon Brown (and him with them) when he became Prime
14 Minister; and it was also the case when the Conservative Party came to power.^v The
15 purpose of these informal contacts was to secure a certain common ground
16 between the Government's agenda for the G8 and the kinds of campaign goals that
17 the development NGO sector might advocate. There is a symbiosis here in which a
18 ruling party enjoys a 'halo effect' from publically supporting aspects of development
19 NGOs' campaigns and NGOs can make claims to success based in expectations that
20 some of their 'asks' are informally assured as amenable to the government.
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23 Thus, it seems reasonable to identify the beginnings of the coalition in 2012 when
24 some NGOs were speaking with each other informally and also in communication
25 with the government, all around the notion of hunger which had been identified as a
26 strong starting position for 'detoxifying' the Conservative Party. A broad agenda that
27 would reflect a development coalition's common interests and also have a
28 reasonable chance of being supported in part by the UK government could serve as a
29 starting point for coalition building in earnest.
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32 In October 2012, a BOND Annual General Meeting was held in which plans for a
33 coalition around food and hunger to focus on the G8 were mooted. At this point, a
34 group of prominent and relatively radical NGOs chose to remove themselves from
35 the coalition, expressing concerns about the focus on hunger and the apparent lack
36 of adversarialism concerning the Conservative-dominated government (interviews
37 War on Want, Jubilee Debt Coalition).
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40 41 *Finding common cause*

42 From November 2012 onwards, EFIF Assembly meetings rolled out a series of actions
43 to focus mainly on the UK-hosted G8 in June 2013.^{vi} Member NGOs reported on their
44 own actions, and the Organising Committee (OC) members shared information
45 about the broader strategy for the UK budget and the G8 'moments'. A set of four
46 core themes related to hunger were set out, partly as the outcome of talks with
47 Cameron, partly as important and inclusive campaign themes.
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50 The EFIF campaign was publically launched at Somerset House, London, on the 23rd
51 January 2013.^{vii} The event was focused on generating media attention. Its main
52 impact was through a high production value three dimensional film, beamed onto
53 the façade of the House. The main speaker in the film was Bill Gates. The invitees
54 were from EFIF campaign members, some celebrities, and people from the media.
55 The event itself made no attempt to convey the demands of the campaign, develop
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3 an engagement with a broader public, or identify a core problem that needed
4 addressing beyond 'hunger' as a condition.

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6 In March, EFIF carried out a series of actions or 'stunts' to publicise this 'ask', mainly
7 focussed around an intense tweet and email operation focussed on Chancellor
8 George Osborne, an 'elephant in the room' image campaign, and a series of George
9 Osborne 'rush mobs' in which campaigners wearing Osborne masks turned up in
10 public places for photo opportunities. As a result, In April, the coalition claimed a
11 success in securing a commitment to achieving 0.7% aid expenditure. However,
12 because the Government did not commit to include the magic 0.7% as legislation for
13 the Queen's speech and because this commitment had been supported by Cameron
14 repeatedly before the Budget, perceptions of a campaign success were muted. The
15 commitment to 0.7% and a general increase in DFID expenditure had been ongoing
16 since 2010. Nevertheless, in the April meeting, it was presented as a campaign
17 success.
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20 After April, EFIF focused on the G8 meeting to be hosted by the British government.
21 The G8 'moment' was conceptualised as a week-long period, commencing with a
22 large public assembly which aimed to coincide with Cameron's hosting of a Nutrition
23 for Growth pre-summit meeting. Following on from that date, smaller publicity
24 events would keep public attention until a smaller rally took place on the 15th in
25 Enniskillen to coincide with the G8 meeting. Between April and June, EFIF
26 propounded its four demands to be addressed by the G8. These were: a
27 commitment to 0.7% of GNP dedicated to official development assistance; a move to
28 ensure international companies pay 'fair' levels of tax in poor countries; a halt to
29 'land grabbing' in poor countries; transparency in development aid and practice. It is
30 striking how (with the exception of land grabbing) these demands closely mirror the
31 Conservative Party's own development strategy, embedded in the golden thread^{viii}
32 notion mentioned earlier, but also Cameron's more recent 'three Ts' of transparency,
33 tax, and trade which had each become core parts of EFIF demands.
34

35
36 Transparency and tax were foregrounded by the Conservative party at a time when
37 Cameron was still centrally concerned to introduce a more socially-minded image to
38 his party. This was a period when public attitudes towards government and big
39 business were relatively negative. There was not only concern about the fraud and
40 collusion by banks in the aftermath of the financial crisis and associated rescue
41 packages; this was also a period in which large companies like Amazon, Google and
42 Starbucks were revealed to be paying no or extremely little tax to the British
43 government. The Tory focus on tax and transparency and its connection to a morally-
44 positive international development campaign addressed the bad publicity emanating
45 from tax evasion within big business.
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50 *The Big If*

51 The London 'Big If' rally took place on 8th June. Attendees were invited to plant a
52 flower-windmill in a way that resembled a commemoration of a single death. A
53 pathway from this field to a stage with band and film clips brought people into the
54 main event. Geographically removed from the G8 meeting which was to take place a
55 week later, the experience of the rally was complex: a mixture of expressions of
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3 concern or lamentation about hunger; sociability; spectacle; and in an indirect way
4 an address to next week's meetings in Lough Erne. There was a sizable attendance
5 from people who were already members of development NGOs: in a survey carried
6 out by XXXX, 67 per cent of respondents identified as members of development
7 organisations.^{ix}
8

9 The assembly at Hyde Park coincided with Cameron's hosting of a Nutrition for
10 Growth Summit which had an overlapping agenda, based in a project to address
11 hunger through business and science. This was the epitome of the Conservatives'
12 DFID vision. Cameron's summit laid heavy emphasis on the role of corporate
13 technologies – this was the essence of the meaning of 'business and science'. This
14 meeting, held at Unilever House, was not mentioned throughout the day, although
15 Bill Gates, the major video speaker, propounded his usual messages about the
16 benefits of technology and big business.^x On the 7th June EFIF staged a hand-in at
17 Number 10 of empty plates by schoolchildren with 'messages for leaders' written on
18 them which was aimed at the Nutrition for Growth summit.^{xi}
19
20

21 The Lough Erne G8 Declaration starts: 'Private enterprise drives growth, reduces
22 poverty, and creates jobs and prosperity for people around the world.' It then
23 proceeds to itemise an agenda that precisely overlaps with the Conservative
24 international development world-vision. The media generally reported on the G8
25 outcomes with an exclusive focus on Cameron, adding in some imagery of EFIF visual
26 stunts of G8 leaders as chefs, or anonymous fat cats in a tax haven.^{xii} The G8 did not
27 commit to clear and concrete measures to ensure transparency in tax reporting and
28 to prevent tax evasion, something that authoritative experts stated clearly and
29 critically. Nevertheless, the EFIF spokesperson spoke of a 'step in the right direction'
30 and the 'right ambition'.^{xiii}
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32

33 The loose and generalised connection between the EFIF assembly and the G8 made it
34 difficult to discern in any concrete way the effects of the EFIF campaign on the G8,
35 especially in light of the closeness of the agenda of EFIF to Cameron's own. Although
36 EFIF campaign managers were pleased with the profile afforded to the campaign in
37 the media, the content itself is less reassuring, based as it was on the association of
38 campaign images with a generally government-focused and uncritical reportage on
39 what were fairly moderate and vague commitments.
40

41 A final wrap-up meeting was held in July. The main content of that meeting was an
42 enthusiastically-delivered general assessment of the campaign by the Chair of the
43 Policy and Advocacy Working Group which awarded gold, silver and bronze to
44 general areas of the campaign's aims. This was delivered in a very positive fashion
45 but was not accompanied by any organised critical reflection. In place of this,
46 attendees were invited to write on post-its and pin them to boards under different
47 themes. The exact purposes of this exercise was not clear. The impression – at least
48 for this attendee – was that the primary purpose was to ensure positive feelings
49 about the campaign. The person reporting to the meeting on the overall
50 performance of the campaign declared 'we got every single thing!'^{xiv} It is worth
51 bearing in mind that this meeting was of coalition members only; it was not
52 'outward facing' and did not require 'spin' for the purposes of messaging and brand.
53 In this context, it seemed clear that the meeting was driven strongly by a therapeutic
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3 sense of ensuring positive closure to the campaign after the difficulties that had
4 defined the period from 2006 to 2013.

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6 Throughout the campaign, EFIF's policy aims were flexible and broad. They revolved
7 around vague causal premises. There was no clear idea of how the campaign or
8 indeed the G8 might arrest 'land grabbing'. An emphasis on biofuels early on was de-
9 emphasised. The issue of tax reform rose in importance, in spite of an opaque
10 causation with hunger and malnutrition which seemed to boil down to an
11 expectation – naïve by any analytical standards – that increased tax revenues from
12 FDI would create larger resource for investment in agriculture. Furthermore, the
13 strong emphasis on smallholder farming and local technological change that came
14 from early meetings and the small member organisations of the campaign was lost.
15 Through the Tories and the G8, the 'solving hunger through business and science'
16 and new Green Revolution corporate-state project garnered highly publicised
17 commitments of resource.
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20 The fact that the campaign took care to establish campaign aims which did not
21 require specific targets of achievement connected to metrics or discrete policies
22 does not only raise questions about the way one might evaluate campaign success; it
23 also opens up a deeper analytical question about how success and failure are
24 constructed. In essence, EFIF was set up *not* to fail. The demands it made were
25 sufficiently broad and integrated into Government initiatives as to make it possible
26 to put a positive spin on practically any outcome from the G8 in terms of
27 commitments to address hunger and malnutrition. The breadth, generality, and
28 creeping moderation of EFIF's demands necessarily left space for those who wished
29 it to declare success. This might be considered not so much as a 'failure' of the
30 campaign to get certain things achieved, but rather as a *strategy* elaborated within
31 the specific conditions of the time. We will now explore other ways in which this was
32 so.
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37 CONSTRUCTING SUCCESS

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39 Success for EFIF was framed in a specific way. The framing of success was not
40 strongly oriented towards the policy achievements and resource commitments
41 emanating from the campaign's pressure on the G8 which, we have argued, was
42 difficult to discern. Success in terms of G8 action was, at best, broadly implied,
43 partial or affirmed rather than demonstrated. The concrete outcomes of the
44 campaign were only positive in the sense of possibly leading to action by G8 states in
45 areas that had already been identified by the British government as possible areas
46 for action. The G8 (which saw global hunger as one issue amongst others) did not
47 make strong clear commitments for action in any case. Since 2013, it is fair to say
48 that those who drove the EFIF campaign have not followed up or campaigned to
49 ensure that the areas of success have been realised. It is also very obvious that, to
50 date, little has been achieved in reducing mass hunger and malnutrition and what
51 success has been achieved can hardly be accounted for by G8 agency.
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55 But there was very positive *affect* in the wrap-up meeting which put a kind of seal on
56 a campaign that had worked well enough to establish a kind of besieged *modus*
57 *operandi* for coalition campaigning: strategically cautious, aware of the difficulties of
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3 coalition building, and in some sense therapeutic for an NGO sector that was looking
4 for a sense of renewal in hard times. Principally this message was directed towards
5 those within the coalition itself. Although entirely subjective, this observer was
6 struck by how much time and energy was spent in assembly meetings talking up the
7 project itself in ways that seemed to border on motivational speaking.
8

9 Enough Food If did not achieve a brand or legacy in the way that Band Aid, Jubilee
10 2000, or Make Poverty History did. Even the most sympathetic reading would not
11 claim that EFIF had a big impact on British government development practice. It did
12 not become part of Britain's 'ribbon culture' (Moore 2010).
13

14 Although there was broad and positive media coverage of the campaign's 'event'
15 high spots, there was less media reporting of mission accomplished or success. There
16 was no high profile media event to relate the campaign's successes to the general
17 public. The campaign coalition's main success comes from its achievements in
18 organising a campaign coalition, establishing a relationship with government, and re-
19 energising its existing members during a politically depressing period. This kind of
20 success derived from strategic decisions made by the coalition's managers.
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24 *The EFIF campaign: short and sweet?*

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26 The campaign itself was effectively six months long. Aware of how MPH had tailed
27 off after the G8 and that coalition member commitment had waned, EFIF focused on
28 the G8 summit in June and then held a wrap-up meeting for coalition members in
29 July. As noted, the wrap-up meeting was overlain with a 'success' message which
30 was not strongly evidenced and left no space for clear critical reflection. There was
31 no 'next steps' moment either, although an evaluation consultancy was
32 commissioned (Tibbett and Stalker 2014).
33

34 The first campaign meeting was in camera. Some campaign organisations attended
35 this first meeting and then left the coalition on the grounds that it reproduced the
36 moderate and (in their view) apolitical strategy that came to dominate MPH.^{xv} In this
37 sense EFIF had, by its first meeting open to all organisations, defined itself around
38 the 'BOAG' NGOs and without the larger 'radical' NGOs. This had the effect of
39 reducing the political tensions that had for a time pervaded Make Poverty History.
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41

42 The first open general assembly of EFIF (16th November 2012) commenced with
43 some scene-setting addresses from those in the coordination team. There was a
44 strong affective content in these addresses that aimed to produce an affirmative and
45 encompassing feeling in the venue. One key speaker related how good it felt to be
46 back together again, implicitly referencing the sense of break-up left by MPH. Even
47 in this first general meeting, there was a strong framing of the campaign around
48 what one speaker called 'ending well' and 'celebrating'. This is, of course, entirely
49 understandable at the start of a project to build a coalition. But, it was also
50 noteworthy that there was no sense of contention (Tarrow 2005), uncertainty,
51 struggle, or opposition upon which a mobilisation might be constructed. One
52 representative who asked if hunger and malnutrition could be meaningfully
53 addressed in the absence of demands to end the 'war on terror' was pointedly
54 excluded, although the points he made were quite reasonable.^{xvi}
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3 Beyond the '0.7', was no specific target setting, identification of a basket of specific
4 policy 'asks' from G8 governments, or clear identification of problem of hunger. The
5 four themes of investment, land, tax, and transparency were announced as the
6 orientations of EFIF. As the assembly meetings proceeded and campaign material
7 and activity emerged, it was clear that the evocations of the campaign were
8 designed not to rely on specific, ambitious, but realistic targets in the way that MPH
9 and Jubilee 2000 had been. Rather, these themes served as the aspirational focus for
10 the campaign, each framed with a more or less specific cause and effect. Stop land
11 grabbing to protect smallholders, invest and give aid to improve agricultural
12 productivity, reduce tax avoidance to improve revenues that could be invested in
13 agriculture, and make 'governments and investors to be honest and open about the
14 deals they make in the poorest countries that stop people getting enough food'.^{xvii}
15 These themes are presented with very vague causations, no specific demands and –
16 especially in the case of the final theme – stretch a clear sense of cause and effect.
17
18

19 Within assembly meetings, the coalition was theme-driven, not target-driven in
20 terms of its demands. The bulk of meeting content was oriented towards the
21 management of media (electronic and print) and public attitudes. As a result, the
22 meetings were mainly concerned with the processes and progress of coalition
23 building. The complex questions about campaign demands, and the causations
24 behind hunger and malnutrition were not mooted.
25
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27 The shortness and sweetness structured into the campaign makes sense from a post-
28 2010 campaign recovery point-of-view; but as a way to deal with the massive and
29 complex issue of hunger and malnutrition, it raises a very important issue. The
30 campaign's organisation and duration made it constitutively unable to address global
31 malnutrition and hunger in any meaningful fashion. The core issues relating to
32 hunger and malnutrition are at least as complex as those of international debt,
33 apartheid, and slavery and in each of those campaign areas, coalitions endured for
34 years and even generations. There is no amount of campaign success that can be
35 compressed into a six-month period that would come close to addressing global
36 hunger and malnutrition in any meaningful sense.
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39 EFIF was a coalition that was sensitive to the plurality of its coalition members but, in
40 the absence of the larger 'radical' NGOs, it worked through the larger and well-
41 resourced mainstream development NGOs. EFIF was both inclusive, open-ended, not
42 tied to any specific achievements, and de facto dominated by the large campaign
43 organisations. It was designed in a strictly time-constrained fashion that ensured it
44 did not collapse or lose energy. It worked well in generating a campaign coalition but
45 far less so as a vehicle to identify clear targets and exacting actions attached to them.
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49 *Adjusting expectations*

50 Ensuring success also required the construction of a strong policy and vision overlap
51 with government. The absence of contentious or adversarial content in the
52 campaign would make it highly likely that the campaign could be broadly positive
53 about government actions and, as a result, narrate the campaign as having had a
54 positive effect on government action.
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3 During the first open assembly meeting – and repeated throughout subsequent
4 meetings – a message was related that the Conservative government was amenable
5 to EFIF and that there was a real window of opportunity for the campaign. In the
6 words of the Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Working Group, Cameron was ‘saying
7 some really good stuff.’ This framing effectively removed the notion of an adverse
8 political environment from the campaign. One might suppose that NGO campaigns
9 often tag onto larger and more ‘official’ and governmental initiatives (Hilton et al.
10 2013), but in this case the window of opportunity afforded by the moments from the
11 Olympic ‘summit’ to the G8 meeting was narrow indeed and no explicit reflection on
12 this fact or the dangers of attaching hope to a political party strongly wedded to
13 neoliberal values can be found in any of the materials from the campaign or the
14 discussions within the assembly meetings.
15
16

17 The major NGOs in BOND were meeting with senior members of the Conservative
18 and Liberal Democrat parties as soon as possible after the election victory. In this
19 period, Cameron’s strategy for the Tories was based in what were at the time judged
20 to be relatively ‘liberal’ political ideas, revolving around wellbeing and the ‘big
21 society’. The Conservatives were also well aware that a certain kind of presentation
22 of international development had worked well for New Labour as a way to represent
23 a political aesthetic of national grandeur and moral purpose. Positive signals about
24 international development offered a fairly straightforward way to address the issue
25 coined by now-Prime Minister Theresa May, of being perceived as the ‘nasty party’.
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28 There was, in effect, a mutual desire by major campaign groups and the new
29 coalition government, to find a cohabitation within which both could claim a moral
30 virtue as progressive development actors, and an agenda was discovered to enable
31 this comity. ‘Hunger’ was the venue within which this was achieved. David Cameron
32 articulated his ‘golden threads’ of development: ‘stable government, lack of
33 corruption, human rights, the rule of law, transparent information’. The campaign
34 coalition interpreted this core directive within Cameron’s declared development
35 vision as positive and fairly easy to work with. One can readily see how it maps quite
36 extensively onto the four themes of EFIF. In none of the meetings I attended was
37 Cameron’s golden thread notion articulated in a critical fashion, in spite of its
38 obvious ideological and neoliberal facets.
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41 Cameron generated a strong formulation of both problem and solution in regards to
42 hunger that fulsomely fitted with a liberal and globalist Conservative worldview in
43 which well-meaning transnational corporations, supported by governments and
44 amenable scientists, would disseminate technologies, techniques, and financial
45 mechanisms that would engineer peasant households into petty entrepreneurs able
46 to upscale their own well-being. This agenda went under the rubric ‘solving
47 malnutrition and hunger through business and science’. The ‘science’ part of this
48 phrasing effectively meant corporately-owned technologies such as improved seeds,
49 fertilisers, and pesticides.
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52 EFIF reconciled itself to this vision. It invited Bill Gates to speak at its event and it did
53 not make any strong critical statements of Cameron’s vision for solving hunger. EFIF
54 ‘wished the leaders well’ in their meetings. Beyond the main stage performances,
55 the main event was the planting of a field of ‘windmill’ flowers to represent the
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3 number of children who died from malnutrition, an event that could hardly have
4 been more apolitical.

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6 As the G8 event approached, the campaign's messages on hunger and malnutrition
7 and the those of the Government came to overlap. Cameron's explicitly pro-business,
8 technocratic, and financialised model of change was devised within his government,
9 did not change, and was announced as the agenda for his leadership of the G8. It
10 was accompanied by a broad and open-ended EFIF coalition which was based on
11 thematic overlaps with government, broad aspirations rather than demands, and a
12 lack of critical positions on the Conservatives' vision of development. These
13 properties ensured that any outcomes from the G8 could feasibly look like success.
14

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16 In sum, 2013 saw EFIF briefly generate an effective international development
17 coalition in the teeth of inter-organisational trepidation and a broader political
18 environment defined by austerity and a shift to the Right in UK governance.
19 Inasmuch as one judges EFIF a success in managing a coalition that worked and did
20 not generate a problematic legacy, one has also to understand its failure to make
21 any kind of 'historic' progress in regards to hunger and malnutrition.
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24 CONCLUSION: POST-WRISTBAND BLUES

25
26 The EFIF campaign can be understood as a response by development NGOs to a
27 particularly challenging environment. In the teeth of a shift to the Right and a
28 recession, NGOs set out a coalition that had as its primary aim establishing the
29 beginnings of a modus vivendi in a new period. This did not translate a great deal
30 into new, strong, and ambitious campaign demands.^{xviii} But, its success can be
31 identified in its more internalised focus on making campaign coalitions based in a
32 relationship with government possible. This explains why the organisation of the
33 campaign was based in broad thematic aspirations that enjoyed a substantial
34 overlap with Government agendas that were devised by-and-large independently
35 from the development NGOs. It also explains why the campaign itself was highly
36 time-constrained, generalised, and articulated in ways that did not expect specific
37 outcome 'wins'.
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41 But, there is a downside to this. EFIF's legacy is slender indeed. It's public visibility
42 was not sufficiently strong to create a 'historic' brand in the way that Jubilee 2000
43 and Make Poverty History did. In the midst of the moderate financial commitments
44 of the G8 and the modality through which the 'hunger issue' is addressed by the
45 corporate-state nexus EFIF did not collate a clear set of policies, demands, or
46 political values to make a distinct contribution. The most obvious way in which they
47 could have done this would have been through some evocation of the notion of
48 'food sovereignty', but this term was closely associated with the more radical
49 campaign NGOs who removed themselves from the campaign. Food sovereignty
50 would also have generated clear light between the campaign coalition and the
51 Government. Contrastingly, one EFIF activity involved asking schoolchildren to write
52 a message to David Cameron about hunger on a plate. This led to a very nice photo
53 opportunity for Cameron on 7th June to pose outside Number Ten with a selection of
54 kids and accompanied by David Walliams.
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Individual development NGOs in the UK remain active and intellectually ambitious. Many of the leading NGOs in the EFIF coalition have ‘radical’ campaign foci that resemble the kinds of values associated with the food sovereignty movement or other radical campaign positions. This is not an argument that development campaigning is headed for the dustbin of history. What EFIF reveals is that there is a strategic tension between the desire for success and the risks of demanding ambitious change. In regards to the latter, it is difficult to see what prospects there are for large campaign coalitions that focus mainly on big intergovernmental summitry.

For Review Only

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34 ⁱ See for example [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it)
35 [releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it.](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it)

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37 ⁱⁱ There were – and there remain – diverging views on the outcomes of the G8. There
38 was a generally positive note concerning the commitments to write off debt to
39 highly indebted countries and to commit to increases in aid up to \$50bn by 2010.
40 There was debate concerning whether this was enough, or whether it would be
41 effective in reducing global poverty significantly. There was some confusion
42 concerning the relation between debt write-off and aid commitment. Regarding the
43 third issue, trade justice, there was a more concerted disappointment amongst
44 campaign organisations.

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46 ⁱⁱⁱ By the 2007 G8 meeting at Heiligendamm, many NGOs considered the G8 to have
47 failed to commit fully to the 2005 outcomes.

48
49 ^{iv} Although I will dispense with the quotation marks, it is important to note that the
50 notion of hunger is a heavily constructed political term more than it is a specific
51 calorific requirement. In the UK, it's normative content and the kinds of identities it
52 produces have tended to gravitate towards the charitable image of the famine victim.
53 This concern that hunger evoked old-fashioned charitable appeals was expressed on
54 numerous occasions during the EFIF coalition meetings.

55
56 ^v The BOAG (big overseas aid group) Chief Executives met with David Cameron
57 before EFIF was commenced (notes from coalition meeting, 16th November 2012).
58 BOAG consists of ActionAid, Oxfam, CAFOD, Save the Children and Christian Aid.
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^{vi} The BOAG campaign NGOs had been meeting informally since mid 2011. The author attended general assembly planning meetings throughout 2012 and 2013. Much of the information in this section derives from the notes of those meetings.

^{vii} The author attended this launch meeting.

^{viii} Like many of Cameron's attempts to disseminate 'big ideas', the golden thread notion was rather opaque and not especially prominent. In Cameron's words: 'you only get real long-term development through aid if there is also a golden thread of stable government, lack of corruption, human rights, the rule of law, transparent information.' One can see that this fits with the 'three Ts' and with facets of the EFIF agenda.

^{ix} N=476. The coalition expected 30,000 to attend, and some estimates were as high as 40,000. This did not reflect my own observations. The survey team distributed 3,000 surveys through a purposive sampling of one in ten and covered the entire field.

^x Bill Gates' relation to international development campaigning is controversial and, in the context of this article, revealing. See McGoey (2015).

^{xi} The Nutrition for Growth summit was protested by NGOs which had decided not to participate in EFIF.

^{xii} This is clear from EFIF's own collating of G8 media coverage.

^{xiii} From *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* respectively, both June 18th.

^{xiv} From research notes of the meeting held on 5th July.

^{xv} Notably here: War on Want and Global Justice Now (formerly World Development Movement).

^{xvi} The relationship between war and hunger is a common theme within livelihoods and famine research. See for example Keen (2008) Macrae and Zwi (1994)

^{xvii} Taken from <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/2013-01/enough-food-everyone-if>. I have directly quoted this last theme because it is difficult to paraphrase in a clear or concise fashion. I am not sure what it means.

^{xviii} It is worth noting that a broadly-read reflection on MPH that argued for the construction of 'positive deep frames' was absent throughout the campaign (Darnton and Kirk 2011). See also Hampson 2006.

Post-wristband Blues: the Mixed Fortunes of UK Development Campaigning under austerity and the Conservatives.

INTRODUCTION

2005 witnessed the rolling out of the Make Poverty History development campaign coalition. The general, but not unanimous, view was that Make Poverty History (MPH) made tangible headway on many of its demands. Member NGOs generally declared the campaign a success and the celebrity advocates that grabbed media attention spoke about historic victories. Seen in retrospect, this moment of success seems rather bathetic, the last great hurrah of a campaign logic that subsequently fell into abeyance. From 2006 onwards, individual campaign organisations each made a quieter and less celebratory post-mortem of the 2005 moment before returning to organisation-specific campaigning.ⁱ

There was a general understanding that large collaborative campaigns were unlikely to happen again and that some damage to its prospects had been wrought by the Make Poverty History campaign. As a result of economic recession from 2008, the meta-narrative of British politics shifted to crisis and austerity. In 2010, New Labour was replaced by a coalition government of Conservative and Liberal Democrat, in which the latter were dominant. This election outcome removed a key institutional relationship that development campaigners had come to rely on: a ruling party that shared many of the development norms of the campaign organisations themselves. Nevertheless, in 2013, a major national development campaign coalition was once again devised: the Enough Food If campaign (EFIF). This article explores the motivations and strategies that underpinned the construction of a campaign coalition in such adverse circumstances. The first section sets out the difficult legacy left by Make Poverty History before proceeding in the second section to consider the changed environment within which EFIF emerged. The third section looks at EFIF in some detail, paying particular attention to the ways in which it faced both the MPH legacy and the new political environment. The fourth section sets out an argument that the major logic of the campaign was to lock in a success narrative from beginning to end, over and above other strategic campaign aims, and in this sense to shake off the post-wristband blues of its time. Finally, the article concludes.

THE ROAD TO 2015

The Make Poverty History effect

Make Poverty History was, in a sense, the best of times and the worst of times for development campaigning. Its most convincing success was its ability to mobilise some level of awareness and engagement from large numbers of people. Reportedly, as many as eight million white wristbands were worn. The support base of the coalition expanded massively, a base that was also designed to give supporters an opportunity to 'migrate' into a specific campaign organisation. The demonstrations around the Gleneagles G8 Summit and media impact of the Live 8 concerts generated moments of media saturation in which it was difficult for anyone to avoid

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3 the campaign. The level of cultural endorsement from celebrities, media, and
4 politicians was exceptional.

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6 These features might be considered as intrinsic victories, ones that relate to the aims
7 of campaigning itself: public mobilisation, the growth of campaign organisations, the
8 legitimisation of their purposes. One can also argue that the campaign's extrinsic
9 purposes were achieved to a considerable degree. That is, the policy objectives of
10 the campaign were largely met.ⁱⁱ The G8 Summit led to commitments to aid and debt
11 reduction which, for some campaign coalition members, demonstrated the success
12 of MPH. Within the campaign, people had different expectations of what 'success'
13 might mean, but many – especially from the larger organisations – considered the
14 outcomes to be positive, at least in regards to aid and debt. The dominant metaphor
15 at the time was that a mountain had successfully been climbed but that this revealed
16 other peaks in the near distance.

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18 However, this metaphor was itself a symptom of the fact that MPH was not an
19 absolute success. The G8 would not make poverty history in any tangible sense. The
20 campaign messages throughout 2004-5 relayed a sense of epochal temporality:
21 making history by making poverty history; a momentous year in which the direction
22 of the future of poverty was to be decided by 'eight men in a room'. The campaign
23 logic was that this was a 'now or never' moment. The fact that, especially after July,
24 the campaign presented to the public a victory that would *not* make poverty history
25 but rather offer a significant step forward over the next few years if the G8 leaders
26 honoured their commitments generated significant anxiety within the coalition in
27 terms of expectation management and the extent to which the G8 had the political
28 will to fulfil its commitments as the years passed.ⁱⁱⁱ

29
30 Furthermore, for some coalition members, the commitments were *not* worth
31 celebrating; a 'whisper' rather than a 'roar' (Abugre 2005). The commitments of the
32 G8 were seen as not equal to the task of mass poverty reduction, and the
33 commitments that were made did not modify prevailing neoliberal development
34 practices and ideologies. As the campaign progressed towards the G8, some
35 coalition members had become so concerned about the closeness of the campaign
36 to New Labour that they left the coalition, judging that both the politics of the
37 campaign and the ability of New Labour to use it to boost their own legitimacy made
38 it effectively morally and politically bankrupt (Hodkinson 2005). Reports seeped out
39 as the year went on of considerable disagreement within the coalition.

40
41 As a result, as the dust settled on a campaign that ostensibly lasted a year but was all
42 but over by August, the public celebration of 'mission accomplished' dissolved into a
43 rather complicated, diffuse, and dour ratcheting down of the coalition as each
44 member reflected on the pros and cons of the endeavour and moved back into their
45 own silos with both positive and negative lessons from the coalition.

46
47 From 2005 to 2010, development NGOs maintained low-level networking and
48 information sharing, mainly through BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development),
49 the organisational hub for development NGOs. The NGOs continued to work within a
50 context that was still underpinned by a positive relationship between the larger
51 NGOs and the New Labour government. In other words, the fall-out of MPH was in
52 some degree calibrated by a government that remained positively-disposed to the
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3 mainstream development campaigning project. As a result, it was relatively easy for
4 large NGOs to transition out of MPH. Indeed, some took aspects of MPH's imagery
5 and discourse into their own unilateral campaigns and maintained the kinds of
6 working relations with government that were at the heart of MPH. This kind of
7 transition was enjoyed mainly by the large NGOs that led the campaign, especially
8 Oxfam, Christian Aid, Action Aid, CAFOD and Save the Children UK. A second distinct
9 group (notably War on Want and World Development Movement, now Global
10 Justice Now) spent this time moving into a more explicitly 'social movement' frame
11 which was considerably more cynical about New Labour.
12

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14 In retrospect, the five years after 2005 look like the six years before 2005. There was
15 a ruling party with an ideology that was sympathetic to the core norms of the
16 development campaign NGO community; there was a well-institutionalised and
17 resourced NGO sector in which each organisation had its membership, institutional
18 specificities, and networks; there were a series of organisation-specific campaign
19 issues that generated advocacy and fund raising in specific development areas
20 (Porteous 2008:12, 19).
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23 24 *International development, NGOs and New Labour*

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26 New Labour's relationship with the development campaign community defines this
27 period. The Labour party had campaign, social, and ideological roots in
28 internationalism and Third Worldism (Howe 1993). This is evident in its Fabian
29 politics, its connections with anti-apartheid (Bush 1999: 248 et seq., Fieldhouse 2005,
30 Vickers 2011), its links with labour unions that had solidarity connections with post-
31 colonial unions and movements, and with socially-progressive church organisations.
32 From 1997, New Labour condensed these variegated developmentalist associations
33 into a strong normative discourse around ethics and virtue in international relations
34 and development (Gallagher 2011); one component of New Labour's international
35 development ethics was partnerships with development NGOs.
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37
38 New Labour understood international development in what might be broadly
39 glossed as progressively liberal. Good governance, development partnership,
40 capabilities approaches, civil society and NGOs, and a socially-progressive market-
41 based economy were the pivots of New Labour's vision of a development future. The
42 UK's development NGOs fitted well into this vision as providers of resources, good
43 development partners, and friends of civil society. Both Government and NGOs
44 shared a strong desire to galvanise a pro-development constituency within the
45 British public (Biccum 2007, Manzo 2006). New Labour channelled significant
46 amounts of official development assistance through selected NGOs. It invested in
47 both research and public relations to promote the construction of a form of
48 knowledge based in a revived, ethical, and effective aid project in which UK NGOs
49 played a pivotal role. The creation and political focus on DFID embodied New
50 Labour's developmental intentions. From its origins, DFID took on something of a
51 campaign role itself: its foundational statement of intent *Building Support for*
52 *Development*, could easily have been on a major campaign NGO's website. Arch
53 celebrity campaigner Bono spoke at New Labour's 2004 party conference; Bob
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3 Geldof was asked by Blair to act as a celebrity-advocate for the Africa Commission
4 (Street 2012).

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6 This comity between development NGOs and New Labour was the political context
7 within which the rise and fall of MPH was managed, and it came to an end in 2010.
8 In the next section, we will map out the salient political changes that took place after
9 2010. We present these changes as a context within which another campaign
10 coalition emerged in 2013. Bearing in mind how inauspicious the circumstances were
11 for a post-MPH campaign coalition, we need to explore the features of the campaign
12 not only on their own terms but also as a response to a generally rather depressing
13 state of affairs for international development campaigning. Seen in this light, the
14 Enough Food If campaign is best understood as an attempt to re-define a *modus*
15 *operandi* and *vivendi* for development NGOs in a context significantly transformed
16 from that of the previous thirteen years.
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19 20 NEW GOVERNMENT

21
22 It is important to start with a note of moderation. It is not the case that the coming
23 to power of the Coalition government (or indeed the subsequent Conservative
24 government) represented any kind of totalising counter-revolution in development
25 policy (Clarke 2018: 25). Indeed, for many analysts on the Left, the short history of
26 Blair's New Labour and David Cameron's Conservatism was one of substantial
27 convergence. Both in terms of public image, leadership style, and substantive areas
28 of policy strategy, New Labour and Conservative policy shared a great deal in regards
29 to development and aid.
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32 New Labour reconciled itself to a non-socialist and broadly liberal policy agenda,
33 based in a faith that private business and socially-beneficial competition would
34 address the core concerns of the party: inequality and poverty (Porteous 2008).
35 Within this intellectual framing, international aid was largely articulated within a
36 neoliberal framework. One could see this in the Africa Commission Report (2005), a
37 report which fed into the Government's preparations for the G8 and engagement
38 with MPH (Brown 2006). DFID also embraced a vision of development through
39 support for competitive market-based growth and the facilitating of a positive role
40 for transnational corporations and unconstrained markets: making globalisation
41 work for the poor (Cammack 2001).
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44 In 2010, the Conservative party publically affirmed that it would commit to the 0.7%
45 GNP aid target which was previously a key aspiration of New Labour. Making this
46 commitment publically allowed the Tories a fairly cheap means of brand
47 decontamination (Heppell and Lightfoot 2012), emerging as it was from a public
48 image of sleaze and self-interest. Cameron's Big Society, 'golden thread' in
49 development, and quality of life conceptual orientations also fed into a development
50 vision that was moderately distinct but substantially similar to New Labour's.
51 Cameron encapsulated this concisely himself in his ideological orientation away from
52 One Nation Conservatism to One World Conservatism (Noxolo 2012: 33), calling the
53 British aid the 'best in the world' (Clarke 2018: 24). Both parties' orientations
54 regarding international development were fundamentally based in what Brown
55 (2009) calls the 'liberal bargain' of international aid: a vision of good governance,
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3 open economies, competitive markets, and a faith that liberal political sociability
4 would spread unproblematically into poor societies if all of the former components
5 were in place.

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7 The international component of Cameron's premiership also supported his advocacy
8 of a global neoliberal developmentalism. He accepted Ban Ki-moon's invitation to co-
9 Chair a UN High Level Panel on the post Millennium Development Goals (Seldon and
10 Snowden 2015: 481). The post-MDG planning got under way from 2010 as the
11 Coalition came to power and it was built on a sustained intergovernmental
12 institutionalisation of development and aid governance that commenced with the
13 Monterrey Consensus of 2002 (Wickstead 2015: 49 *et seq.*) and within which DFID
14 had been a key player. The international aid and development architecture
15 constructed throughout the new millennium provided a context within which any
16 internationally-focused leader within a broadly neoliberal ideological disposition
17 would find it amenable to continue this project, much in the same way as broader
18 contexts of left/social democracy tend to promote favourable attitudes towards
19 development aid (Chaney 2013, Therien and Noel 2000).

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22 Thus, there was no great shift in international development thinking by the Coalition
23 government. But, this did not mean that nothing changed. In the first place,
24 development campaign organisations were now faced with a political party that had
25 been culturally and ideologically distant from it. Few Conservative MPs considered
26 international development as a major policy issue and, compared with New Labour,
27 there was a weaker pro-aid constituency. Development NGOs simply did not have
28 good advocacy networks with Conservative MPs. All of the celebrity advocates
29 within the campaign NGO sector were broadly on the left and culturally anti-Tory.
30 The NGOs' policy positions on things like trade, climate change, and transnationals
31 were clearly more distant from Tory views than they were under New Labour for all
32 of the convergence at the heart of policy. This new environment was uncertain and
33 potentially adversarial.

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35
36 The Conservative party in Parliament and parts of its broader membership were
37 ideologically hostile to international development campaigning values, which had
38 been constructed out of a Fabian, socialist, and social-democratic Christian bundle of
39 values. This broader disposition – of overseas development aid being associated with
40 "liberal" and left-leaning politics – was virulently reinforced through the Right-wing
41 press connected to groups within the party, a fact that the Tory leadership were well
42 aware of (Cawley 2015 :547). The Conservative Party is, of course, a kind of coalition
43 itself. One of the divisions within Parliament is between a "hard" insular nationalism
44 that Thatcher encapsulated, and a more globalist neoliberalism that Cameron
45 certainly cleaved to. Within the Party, Cameron constantly had to manage a
46 politically virulent opposition to his global neoliberalism, something that was most
47 obvious in regards to the lightning rod that was the commitment to spend 0.7% of
48 GDP on aid (Clarke 2018: 26-27). In response to pressure to abandon the 0.7%
49 commitment, Cameron commented 'we won't make any new friends by dropping it',
50 a phrasing that suggests that he was reconciled to a degree of Parliamentary
51 opposition however he acted, something that connects well with his attitude
52 towards Eurosceptics within his own party after the MP rebellion in October 2011
53 (Shipman 2016: 7). It was at this point that the term 'dinosaurs' became currency to
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3 describe a Eurosceptic, anti gay marriage, and also anti-aid corpus within the party
4 which Cameron consistently opposed.

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6 Furthermore, in some ways, the Conservatives *have* shifted international
7 development strategy, although this has not been as publicised as perhaps it should
8 be. The core shift has been away from good governance and partnerships with aid
9 recipient states which was at the very heart of New Labour's strategy. In its place
10 there is a far stronger focus on private companies as key development partners
11 (Mawdsley 2015). The Conservative government has consolidated an aid model
12 based in the contracting of private companies. This was present during the New
13 Labour administration (Taylor 2012: 454), but there is also a more clear strategic
14 orientation by the Conservatives to present private companies as 'developmental'.
15 And, large amounts of DFID expenditure go on private company services. These
16 trends are extant in the sectoral spending of official development assistance away
17 from DFID and into other government departments (Manji and Cullen 2016).
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20 The increasing centrality of private companies in aid strategy goes beyond payments
21 to contracted private enterprises. Aid strategy has, in a sense, been "corporatised" in
22 that the kinds of knowledge and skills that private companies claim to have are
23 perceived as part of the international aid strategy itself. One can see this most
24 clearly in the new green revolution for Africa (AGRA) (Kaarhus 2011) in which
25 companies are expected to train, provide services, and contribute to the
26 reorganisation of smallholder agriculture. One can also see it in the providing of
27 technological and infrastructural services by large transnationals. Discrete projects
28 to promote microfinance, communications technology connectivity, the introduction
29 of new seeds, and training all involve private corporations as service providers,
30 knowledge holders, and aid recipients. The Conservative approach to development is
31 more concertedly 'corporate' in that business is seen as a *direct* agent for the
32 promotion of development, not just a source of capital which, according to most
33 economic models (and subject to the right policy environment), generate
34 developmental effects. We shall come back to this strategic reorientation later more
35 specifically in regards to EFIF's concern with hunger and malnutrition.
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39 The direction of movement under the Tories was concertedly towards a model of
40 funding private companies directly to do development work and in the process
41 celebrating this sector as the driver of change. The refocusing of aid away from
42 humanitarian and solidarity norms towards value for money and business case
43 norms might have served to mollify some within the Party who were sceptical of
44 Cameron's commitment to an international development agenda. Inasmuch as this is
45 the case, it posed a challenge to NGOs who had customarily focussed around the
46 activities of NGO, civil society, and partner government initiatives. Thus, from 2010,
47 NGOs were faced with a campaign sector context defined by a difficult post-MPH
48 legacy and a new and ostensibly less amenable government.
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51 And, of course, the shift in the British party system roughly overlapped with the
52 global economic crisis. This fed into the NGO sector in a way familiar to other
53 economic crisis moments previously: it generated a concern that fiscal austerity
54 would impact upon the aid budget, that rising unemployment and stagnant
55 disposable incomes would reduce charitable donations, and that the general public
56 mood would shift against aid because of a concern for the poor 'at home'. The rise of
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3 UKIP was explicitly based in arguments about massively reducing or abolishing aid,
4 laced with barely-disguised racism. The discourse of austerity that emerged after the
5 financial crisis generated an increased questioning of the value of aid expenditure.
6 Indeed, there was evidence that a majority of Britons did not favour ring-fencing the
7 0.7% commitment (Heinrich, Kobayashi and Bryant 2011: 68, 74).
8

9 Nevertheless Cameron's endorsement of 'One World' Conservatism opened the
10 door very slightly to a new working relation between international development
11 NGOs and the government. Against some currents within his own party and
12 somewhat against the austerity narrative his party enthusiastically embraced in most
13 areas, Cameron's leadership identified overseas development assistance as a
14 diagnostic of its social conscience. This rather marginal and protean development
15 within the Tories is vital to understanding the emergence of EFIF.
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19 ENOUGH FOOD IF

22 *A window of opportunity*

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24 Campaign coalitions offer an opportunity to understand the nature of campaigning
25 in a way that is especially revealing. Most obviously, one can explore the dynamics of
26 relations between individual campaign organisations because they are having to
27 work together formally as part of a single political project. Secondly, the campaign
28 coalition itself requires co-ordination, all manner of dialogue, the construction of a
29 shared discourse, and the establishing of an institution that manages, leads, and co-
30 ordinates the efforts of individual NGOs. Thirdly, campaign coalitions' core purpose
31 is to create a high-publicity action that strongly and publically engages with
32 government or other official development agencies. This is a kind of
33 "representational" economy of scale. As such, campaign coalitions offer a revealing
34 way to explore the place of individual development campaigns within a broader
35 British polity and public space. It is in this light that we shall explore the Enough Food
36 If campaign of 2013. EFIF emerged shortly after the changes outlined in the previous
37 section, a fact that raises key questions concerning the ability of development NGOs
38 to negotiate an ostensibly more adversarial and austere terrain.
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42 The Enough Food IF campaign became a coalition of over 200 NGOs, oriented around
43 issues of global hunger and malnutrition. In 2012, David Cameron hosted a post-
44 Olympics Hunger Summit in 2012, a 'summit' that was largely a
45 celebrity/sportsperson-endorsed expression of concern about global hunger,
46 claiming that this would be a major international issue for the Government leading
47 into its hosting of the G8 the subsequent year. This was a key marker of Cameron's
48 own commitment to neoliberal internationalism. ONE and Save the Children
49 attended and the summit spoke warmly about Cameron's commitment. The EFIF
50 coalition identified this moment as the 'open door' through which Britain's
51 development NGOs might find a revived role in the new political environment. It
52 marked an opportunity for major development campaign NGOs: a statement of
53 government openness to campaigning and a high-profile event in which 'hunger'^{iv}
54 would be a prominent focus.
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3 The large development NGOs with strong lobbying abilities have always sought the
4 ear of politicians. This was the case after MPH when these NGOs sought an audience
5 with Gordon Brown (and him with them) when he became Prime Minister; and it
6 was also the case when the Conservative Party came to power.^v The purpose of
7 these informal contacts was to secure a certain common ground between the
8 Government's agenda for the G8 and the kinds of campaign goals that the
9 development NGO sector might advocate. There was a symbiosis here in which a
10 ruling party enjoyed a 'halo effect' from publically supporting aspects of
11 development NGOs' campaigns, and NGOs could make claims to success based in
12 expectations that some of their 'asks' are informally assured as amenable to the
13 government.
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16 Thus, it seems reasonable to identify the beginnings of the EFIF coalition in 2012
17 when some NGOs were speaking with each other informally and also in
18 communication with the government, all around the notion of hunger which had
19 been identified as a strong starting position for 'detoxifying' the Conservative Party.
20 A broad agenda that would reflect a development coalition's common interests and
21 also have a reasonable chance of being supported in part by the UK government
22 could serve as a starting point for coalition building in earnest.
23

24 In October 2012, a BOND Annual General Meeting was held in which plans for a
25 coalition around food and hunger to focus on the G8 were mooted. At this point, a
26 group of prominent and relatively radical NGOs chose to remove themselves from
27 the coalition, expressing concerns about the focus on hunger and the apparent lack
28 of adversarialism concerning the Conservative-dominated government (interviews
29 War on Want, Jubilee Debt Coalition).
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32 33 *Finding common cause* 34

35 From November 2012 onwards, EFIF Assembly meetings rolled out a series of actions
36 to focus mainly on the UK-hosted G8 in June 2013.^{vi} Member NGOs reported on their
37 own actions, and the Organising Committee (OC) members shared information
38 about the broader strategy for the UK budget and the G8 'moments'. A set of four
39 core themes related to hunger were set out: tax, aid, land, and transparency. These
40 four were partly as the outcome of talks with Cameron, and partly broad and
41 inclusive enough to ensure successful coalition building as early meetings attempted
42 to draw diverse organisations in.
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44

45 The EFIF campaign was publically launched at Somerset House, London, on the 23rd
46 January 2013.^{vii} The event was focused on generating media attention. Its main
47 impact was through a high production value three dimensional film, beamed onto
48 the façade of the House. The main speaker in the film was Bill Gates. The invitees
49 were from EFIF campaign members, some celebrities, and people from the media.
50 The event itself made no attempt to convey the demands of the campaign, develop
51 an engagement with a broader public, or identify a core problem that needed
52 addressing beyond 'hunger' as a condition. It was, at its core, a means to generate a
53 motivated and aspirational coalition rather than a public awareness launch.
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3 In March, EFIF carried out a series of actions or 'stunts' to publicise its tax 'ask',
4 focused on the persistence of tax havens. This focussed around an intense tweet and
5 email operation, an 'elephant in the room' image campaign, and a series of George
6 Osborne 'rush mobs' in which campaigners wearing Osborne masks turned up in
7 public places for photo opportunities. Additionally, in April, the EFIF coalition
8 claimed a success in securing a commitment to achieving 0.7% aid expenditure.
9 However, because the Government did not commit to include the magic 0.7% as
10 legislation^{viii} for the Queen's speech and because this commitment had been
11 supported by Cameron repeatedly before the Budget, perceptions of a campaign
12 success were muted. The commitment to 0.7% and a general increase in DFID
13 expenditure had been ongoing since 2010. Nevertheless, in the April meeting, it was
14 presented as a campaign success.
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17 After April, EFIF focused on the G8 meeting to be hosted by the British government.
18 The G8 'moment' was conceptualised as a week-long period, commencing with a
19 large public assembly which aimed to coincide with Cameron's hosting of a Nutrition
20 for Growth pre-summit meeting. Following on from that date, smaller publicity
21 events would keep public attention until a smaller rally took place on the 15th in
22 Enniskillen to coincide with the G8 meeting. Between April and June, EFIF
23 propounded its four demands to be addressed by the G8. These were: a legislated
24 commitment to 0.7% of GNP dedicated to official development assistance; a move to
25 ensure international companies pay 'fair' levels of tax in poor countries; a halt to
26 'land grabbing' in poor countries; transparency in development aid and practice. It is
27 striking how (with the exception of land grabbing) these demands closely mirror the
28 Conservative Party's own development strategy, embedded in the golden thread^{ix}
29 notion mentioned earlier, but also Cameron's more recent 'three Ts' of transparency,
30 tax, and trade which had each become core parts of EFIF demands.
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34 Transparency and tax were foregrounded by the Conservative party at a time when
35 Cameron was still centrally concerned to introduce a more socially-minded image to
36 his party. This was a period when public attitudes towards government and big
37 business were relatively negative. There was not only concern about the fraud and
38 collusion by banks in the aftermath of the financial crisis and associated rescue
39 packages; this was also a period in which large companies like Amazon, Google and
40 Starbucks were revealed to be paying no or extremely little tax to the British
41 government. The Tory focus on tax and transparency and its connection to a morally-
42 positive international development campaign addressed the bad publicity emanating
43 from tax evasion within big business.
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47 *The Big If*

48 The London 'Big If' rally took place on 8th June. Attendees were invited to plant a
49 flower-windmill in a way that resembled a commemoration of a single death from
50 hunger. A pathway from this field to a stage with band and film clips brought people
51 into the main event. Geographically removed from the G8 meeting which was to
52 take place a week later, or the Cameron pre-G8 summit, the experience of the rally
53 was complex: a mixture of expressions of concern or lamentation about hunger;
54 sociability; spectacle; and in an indirect way an address to next week's meetings in
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3 Lough Erne. There was a sizable attendance from people who were already members
4 of development NGOs: in a survey carried out by XXXX, 67 per cent of respondents
5 identified as members of development organisations.^x
6

7 The assembly at Hyde Park coincided with Cameron's hosting of a Nutrition for
8 Growth Summit which had an overlapping agenda, based in a project to address
9 hunger through business and science. This was the epitome of the Conservatives'
10 DFID vision. Cameron's summit laid heavy emphasis on the role of corporate
11 technologies – this was the essence of the meaning of 'business and science'. This
12 meeting, held at Unilever House, was not mentioned throughout the day, although
13 Bill Gates, the major video speaker, propounded his usual messages about the
14 benefits of technology and big business.^{xi} On the 7th June EFIF staged a hand-in at
15 Number 10 of empty plates by schoolchildren with 'messages for leaders' written on
16 them which was aimed at the Nutrition for Growth summit.^{xii}
17

18 The Lough Erne G8 Declaration starts: 'Private enterprise drives growth, reduces
19 poverty, and creates jobs and prosperity for people around the world.' It then
20 proceeds to itemise an agenda that precisely overlaps with the Conservative
21 neoliberal development world-vision. The media generally reported on the G8
22 outcomes with an exclusive focus on Cameron: there was very little media attention
23 paid to EFIF beyond some unexplained imagery of EFIF visual stunts of G8 leaders as
24 chefs, or anonymous fat cats in a tax haven.^{xiii} The G8 did not commit to clear and
25 concrete measures to ensure transparency in tax reporting and to prevent tax
26 evasion, something that authoritative experts stated clearly and critically.
27 Nevertheless, the EFIF spokesperson spoke of a 'step in the right direction' and the
28 'right ambition'.^{xiv}
29

30 The loose and generalised connection between the EFIF assembly and the G8 made it
31 difficult to discern in any concrete way the effects of the EFIF campaign on the G8,
32 especially in light of the closeness of the agenda of EFIF to Cameron's own. Although
33 EFIF campaign managers were pleased with the profile afforded to the campaign in
34 the media, the content itself is less reassuring, based as it was on the association of
35 campaign images with a generally government-focused and uncritical reportage on
36 what were fairly moderate and vague commitments.
37

38 A final wrap-up meeting was held in July. The main content of that meeting was an
39 enthusiastically-delivered general assessment of the campaign by the Chair of the
40 Policy and Advocacy Working Group which awarded gold, silver and bronze to
41 general areas of the campaign's aims. This was delivered in a very positive fashion
42 and was not accompanied by any organised critical reflection. In place of this,
43 attendees were invited to write on post-its and pin them to boards under different
44 themes. The exact purposes of this exercise was not clear. The impression – at least
45 for this attendee – was that the primary purpose was to ensure positive feelings
46 about the campaign. The person reporting to the meeting on the overall
47 performance of the campaign declared 'we got every single thing!'^{xv} It is worth
48 bearing in mind that this meeting was of coalition members only; it was not
49 'outward facing' and did not require 'spin' for the purposes of messaging and brand.
50 In this context, it seemed clear that the meeting was driven strongly by a therapeutic
51 sense of ensuring positive closure to the campaign after the difficulties that had
52 defined the period from 2006 to 2013.
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3 Throughout the campaign, EFIF's policy aims were flexible and broad. They revolved
4 around vague causal premises. There was no clear idea of how the campaign or
5 indeed the G8 might arrest 'land grabbing'. An early emphasis on biofuels early on
6 was de-emphasised. The issue of tax reform rose in importance, in spite of an
7 opaque causation with hunger and malnutrition which seemed to boil down to an
8 expectation – naïve by any analytical standards – that increased tax revenues from
9 FDI would create larger resource for investment in agriculture. Furthermore, the
10 strong emphasis on smallholder farming and local technological change that came
11 from early meetings and the small member organisations of the campaign was lost.
12 Through the Tories and the G8, the 'solving hunger through business and science'
13 and new Green Revolution corporate-state project garnered highly publicised
14 commitments of resource.
15

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17 The fact that the campaign took care to establish campaign aims which did not
18 require specific targets of achievement connected to metrics or discrete policies
19 does not only raise questions about the way one might evaluate campaign success; it
20 also opens up a deeper analytical question about how success and failure are
21 constructed. In essence, EFIF was set up *not* to fail. The demands it made were
22 sufficiently broad and integrated into Government initiatives as to make it possible
23 to put a positive spin on practically any outcome from the G8 in terms of
24 commitments to address hunger and malnutrition. The breadth, generality, and
25 creeping moderation of EFIF's demands necessarily left space for those who wished
26 it to declare success. This might be considered not so much as a 'failure' of the
27 campaign to get certain things achieved, but rather as a *strategy* elaborated within
28 the specific conditions of the time. We will now explore other ways in which this was
29 so.
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34 CONSTRUCTING SUCCESS

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36 Success for EFIF was framed in a specific way. The framing of success was not
37 strongly oriented towards the policy achievements and resource commitments
38 emanating from the campaign's pressure on the G8 which, we have argued, was
39 difficult to discern. Success in terms of G8 action was, at best, broadly implied,
40 partial or affirmed rather than demonstrated. The concrete outcomes of the
41 campaign were only positive in the sense of possibly leading to some action by G8
42 states in areas that had already been identified by the British government as
43 possible areas for action. The G8 (which saw global hunger as one issue amongst
44 others) did not make strong clear commitments for action in any case. Since 2013,
45 those who drove the EFIF campaign have not followed up or campaigned to ensure
46 that the areas of success have been realised. It is very obvious that, to date, little has
47 been achieved in reducing mass hunger and malnutrition and what success has been
48 achieved can hardly be accounted for by G8 agency.
49
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51 But there was very positive *affect* in the wrap-up meeting which put a kind of seal on
52 a campaign that had worked well enough to establish a kind of besieged *modus*
53 *operandi* for coalition campaigning: strategically cautious, aware of the difficulties of
54 coalition building, and in some sense therapeutic for an NGO sector that was looking
55 for a sense of renewal in hard times. Principally this message was directed towards
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3 those within the coalition itself. Although entirely subjective, this observer was
4 struck by how much time and energy was spent in assembly meetings talking up the
5 project itself in ways that seemed to border on motivational speaking.
6

7 Enough Food If did not achieve a brand or legacy in the way that Band Aid, Jubilee
8 2000, or Make Poverty History did. Even the most sympathetic reading would not
9 claim that EFIF had a big impact on British government development practice. It did
10 not become part of Britain's 'ribbon culture' (Moore 2010).
11

12 Although there was broad and positive media coverage of the campaign's 'event'
13 high spots, there was less media reporting of mission accomplished or success. There
14 was no high profile media event to relate the campaign's successes to the general
15 public. The campaign coalition's main success comes from its achievements in
16 organising a campaign coalition, establishing a relationship with government, and re-
17 energising its existing members during a politically depressing period. This kind of
18 success derived from strategic decisions made by the coalition's managers.
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22 *The EFIF campaign: short and sweet?*

23 The campaign itself was effectively six months long. Aware of how MPH had tailed
24 off after the G8 and that coalition member commitment had waned, EFIF focused on
25 the G8 summit in June and then held a wrap-up meeting for coalition members in
26 July. As noted, the wrap-up meeting was overlain with a 'success' message which
27 was not strongly evidenced and left no space for clear critical reflection. There was
28 no 'next steps' moment either, although an evaluation consultancy was
29 commissioned (Tibbett and Stalker 2014).
30
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32 The first campaign meeting was in camera. Some campaign organisations attended
33 this first meeting and then left the coalition on the grounds that it reproduced the
34 moderate and (in their view) apolitical strategy that came to dominate MPH.^{xvi} In this
35 sense EFIF had, by its first meeting open to all organisations, defined itself around
36 the 'BOAG' NGOs and without the larger 'radical' NGOs. This had the effect of
37 reducing the political tensions that had for a time pervaded Make Poverty History.
38

39 The first open general assembly of EFIF (16th November 2012) commenced with
40 some scene-setting addresses from those in the coordination team. There was a
41 strong affective content in these addresses that aimed to produce an affirmative and
42 encompassing feeling in the venue. One key speaker related how good it felt to be
43 back together again, implicitly referencing the sense of break-up left by MPH. Even
44 in this first general meeting, there was a strong framing of the campaign around
45 what one speaker called 'ending well' and 'celebrating'. This is, of course, entirely
46 understandable at the start of a project to build a coalition. But, it was also
47 noteworthy that there was no sense of contention (Tarrow 2005), uncertainty,
48 struggle, or opposition upon which a mobilisation might be constructed. One
49 representative who asked if hunger and malnutrition could be meaningfully
50 addressed in the absence of demands to end the 'war on terror' was pointedly
51 excluded, although the points he made were quite reasonable.^{xvii}
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55 Beyond the '0.7', was no specific target setting, identification of a basket of specific
56 policy 'asks' from G8 governments, or clear identification of problem of hunger. The
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3 four themes of investment, land, tax, and transparency were announced as the
4 orientations of EFIF. As the assembly meetings proceeded and campaign material
5 and activity emerged, it was clear that the themes of the campaign were designed
6 not to rely on specific, ambitious, but realistic targets in the way that MPH and
7 Jubilee 2000 had been. Rather, these themes served as the aspirational focus for the
8 campaign, each framed with a more or less specific cause and effect. Stop land
9 grabbing to protect smallholders, invest and give aid to improve agricultural
10 productivity, reduce tax avoidance to improve revenues that could be invested in
11 agriculture, and make 'governments and investors to be honest and open about the
12 deals they make in the poorest countries that stop people getting enough food'.^{xviii}
13 These themes are presented with very vague causations, no specific demands and –
14 especially in the case of the final theme – stretch a clear sense of cause and effect.
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17 Within assembly meetings, the coalition was theme-driven, not target-driven in
18 terms of its demands. The bulk of meetings' content was oriented towards the
19 management of media (electronic and print) and public attitudes. As a result, the
20 meetings were mainly concerned with the processes and progress of coalition
21 building. The complex questions about campaign demands, and the causations
22 behind hunger and malnutrition were rarely mooted.
23

24 The shortness and sweetness structured into the campaign makes sense from a post-
25 2010 campaign recovery point-of-view; but as a way to deal with the massive and
26 complex issue of hunger and malnutrition, it raises a very important issue. The
27 campaign's organisation and duration made it constitutively unable to address global
28 malnutrition and hunger in any meaningful fashion. The core issues relating to
29 hunger and malnutrition are at least as complex as those of international debt,
30 apartheid, and slavery and in each of those campaign areas, coalitions endured for
31 years and even generations. There is no amount of campaign success that can be
32 compressed into a six-month period that would come close to addressing global
33 hunger and malnutrition in any meaningful sense.
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36 EFIF was a coalition that was sensitive to the plurality of its coalition members but, in
37 the absence of the larger 'radical' NGOs, it worked through the larger and well-
38 resourced mainstream development NGOs. EFIF was both inclusive, open-ended, not
39 tied to any specific achievements, and de facto dominated by the large campaign
40 organisations. It was designed in a strictly time-constrained fashion that ensured it
41 did not collapse or lose energy. It worked well in generating a campaign coalition but
42 far less so as a vehicle to identify clear targets and exacting actions attached to them.
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46 *Adjusting expectations*

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48 Ensuring success also required the construction of a strong policy and vision overlap
49 with government. The absence of contentious or adversarial content in the
50 campaign would make it highly likely that the campaign could be broadly positive
51 about government actions and, as a result, narrate the campaign as having had a
52 positive effect on government action.
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54 During the first open assembly meeting – and repeated throughout subsequent
55 meetings – a message was related that the Conservative government was amenable
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3 to EFIF and that there was a real window of opportunity for the campaign. In the
4 words of the Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Working Group, Cameron was 'saying
5 some really good stuff.' This framing effectively removed the notion of an adverse
6 political environment from the campaign. One might suppose that NGO campaigns
7 often tag onto larger and more 'official' and governmental initiatives (Hilton et al.
8 2013), but in this case the window of opportunity afforded by the moments from the
9 Olympic 'summit' to the G8 meeting was narrow indeed and no explicit reflection on
10 this fact or the dangers of attaching hope to a political party strongly wedded to
11 neoliberal values can be found in any of the materials from the campaign or the
12 discussions within the assembly meetings.
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15 The major NGOs in BOND were meeting with senior members of the Conservative
16 and Liberal Democrat parties as soon as possible after the election victory. In this
17 period, Cameron's strategy for the Tories was based in what were at the time judged
18 to be relatively 'liberal' political ideas, revolving around wellbeing and the 'big
19 society'. The Conservatives were also well aware that a certain kind of presentation
20 of international development had worked well for New Labour as a way to represent
21 a political aesthetic of national grandeur and moral purpose. Positive signals about
22 international development offered a fairly straightforward way to address the issue
23 coined by now-Prime Minister Theresa May, of being perceived as the 'nasty party'.
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25
26 There was, in effect, a mutual desire by major campaign groups and the new
27 coalition government, to find a cohabitation within which both could claim a moral
28 virtue as progressive development actors, and an agenda was discovered to enable
29 this comity. 'Hunger' was the venue within which this was achieved. David Cameron
30 articulated his 'golden threads' of development: 'stable government, lack of
31 corruption, human rights, the rule of law, transparent information'. The campaign
32 coalition interpreted this core directive within Cameron's declared development
33 vision as positive and fairly easy to work with. One can readily see how it maps quite
34 extensively onto the four themes of EFIF. In none of the meetings I attended was
35 Cameron's golden thread notion articulated in a critical fashion.
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37
38 Cameron generated a strong formulation of both problem and solution in regards to
39 hunger that fulsomely fitted with a liberal and globalist Conservative worldview in
40 which well-meaning transnational corporations, supported by governments and
41 amenable scientists, would disseminate technologies, techniques, and financial
42 mechanisms that would engineer peasant households into petty entrepreneurs able
43 to upscale their own well-being. This agenda went under the rubric 'solving
44 malnutrition and hunger through business and science'. The 'science' part of this
45 phrasing effectively meant corporately-owned technologies such as improved seeds,
46 fertilisers, and pesticides.
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48
49 EFIF reconciled itself to this vision. It invited Bill Gates to speak at its event and it did
50 not make any strong critical statements of Cameron's vision for solving hunger. EFIF
51 'wished the leaders well' in their meetings. Beyond the main stage performances,
52 the main event was the planting of a field of 'windmill' flowers to represent the
53 number of children who died from malnutrition, an event that could hardly have
54 been more apolitical.
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3 As the G8 event approached, the campaign's messages on hunger and malnutrition
4 and the those of the Government came to overlap. Cameron's explicitly pro-business,
5 technocratic, and financialised model of change was devised within his government,
6 did not change, and was announced as the agenda for his leadership of the G8. It
7 was accompanied by a broad and open-ended EFIF coalition which was based on
8 thematic overlaps with government, broad aspirations rather than demands, and a
9 lack of critical positions on the Conservatives' vision of development. These
10 properties ensured that any outcomes from the G8 could feasibly look like success.
11

12 In sum, 2013 saw EFIF briefly generate an effective international development
13 coalition in the teeth of inter-organisational trepidation and a broader political
14 environment defined by austerity and a shift to the Right in UK governance.
15 Inasmuch as one judges EFIF a success in managing a coalition that worked and did
16 not generate a problematic legacy, one has also to understand its failure to make
17 any kind of 'historic' progress in regards to hunger and malnutrition.
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20 21 CONCLUSION: POST-WRISTBAND BLUES 22

23 The EFIF campaign can be understood as a response by development NGOs to a
24 particularly challenging environment. In the teeth of a shift to the Right and a
25 recession, NGOs set out a coalition that had as its primary aim establishing the
26 beginnings of a *modus vivendi* in a new period. This did not translate into new,
27 strong, and ambitious campaign demands. But, its success can be identified in its
28 more internalised focus on making campaign coalitions based in a relationship with a
29 less amenable government possible. This explains why the organisation of the
30 campaign was based in broad thematic aspirations that enjoyed a substantial
31 overlap with Government agendas that were devised by-and-large independently
32 from the development NGOs. It also explains why the campaign itself was highly
33 time-constrained, generalised, and articulated in ways that did not expect specific
34 outcome 'wins'.
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37 EFIF's legacy is slender indeed. It's public visibility was not sufficiently strong to
38 create a 'historic' brand in the way that Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History did.
39 In the midst of the moderate financial commitments of the G8 and the modality
40 through which the 'hunger issue' is addressed by the corporate-state nexus EFIF did
41 not collate a clear set of policies, demands, or political values to make a distinct
42 contribution. The most obvious way in which they could have done this would have
43 been through some evocation of the notion of 'food sovereignty', but this term was
44 closely associated with the more radical campaign NGOs who removed themselves
45 from the campaign. Food sovereignty would also have generated clear light between
46 the campaign coalition and the Government. Contrastingly, one EFIF activity involved
47 asking schoolchildren to write a message to David Cameron about hunger on a plate.
48 This led to a very nice photo opportunity for Cameron on 7th June to pose outside
49 Number Ten with a selection of kids and accompanied by David Walliams.
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51

52 Many individual development NGOs in the UK remain politically active and
53 intellectually ambitious. Some of the leading NGOs in the EFIF coalition have 'radical'
54 campaign foci that resemble the kinds of values associated with the food sovereignty
55 movement or other radical campaign positions. Indeed, a major response to MPH
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3 was to reflect on possible campaign strategies that were *more radical* in many ways.
4 The key report here, *Finding Frames* (Darnton and Kirk 2011),^{xix} was read by many in
5 leadership positions within large development NGOs just before the moment that
6 the EFIF campaign commenced. Its core argument was that more medium-term
7 cognitive shifts in what international development meant were required in order for
8 development campaigning to escape from well-entrenched public attitudes
9 concerning famine and charity. The report emphasises justice and equality rather
10 than charity and poverty (Kirk 2012). It also argues that broad and shallow public
11 appeals are immanently constrained in their ambition, and that focussed and deeper
12 engagements are likely to be more politically forceful. Seen in the context of *Finding*
13 *Frames* and the influence that this report had, EFIF's contrived success seems all the
14 more concerning because its strategic orientation shifted campaign politics away
15 from the Report in spite of the latter's popularity and stepped-up ambition. In the
16 case of EFIF, perhaps the costs of success outweighed its benefits.
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14 ⁱ See for example [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it)
15 [releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it.](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/05/make-poverty-history-and-g8-promises-was-it-all-really-worth-it)

16 ⁱⁱ There were – and there remain – diverging views on the outcomes of the G8. There
17 was a generally positive note concerning the commitments to write off debt to
18 highly indebted countries and to commit to increases in aid up to \$50bn by 2010.
19 There was debate concerning whether this was enough, or whether it would be
20 effective in reducing global poverty significantly. There was some confusion
21 concerning the relation between debt write-off and aid commitment. Regarding the
22 third issue, trade justice, there was a more concerted disappointment amongst
23 campaign organisations.

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25 ⁱⁱⁱ By the 2007 G8 meeting at Heiligendamm, many NGOs considered the G8 to have
26 failed to commit fully to the 2005 outcomes.

27
28 ^{iv} Although I will dispense with the quotation marks, it is important to note that the
29 notion of hunger is a heavily constructed political term more than it is a specific
30 calorific requirement. In the UK, it's normative content and the kinds of identities it
31 produces have tended to gravitate towards the charitable image of the famine victim.
32 This concern that hunger evoked old-fashioned charitable appeals was expressed on
33 numerous occasions during the EFIF coalition meetings.

34
35 ^v The BOAG (big overseas aid group) Chief Executives met with David Cameron
36 before EFIF was commenced (notes from coalition meeting, 16th November 2012).
37 BOAG consists of ActionAid, Oxfam, CAFOD, Save the Children and Christian Aid.

38
39 ^{vi} The BOAG campaign NGOs had been meeting informally since mid 2011. The
40 author attended general assembly planning meetings throughout 2012 and 2013.
41 Much of the information in this section derives from the notes of those meetings.

42
43 ^{vii} The author attended this launch meeting.

44
45 ^{viii} The commitment became law in 2015.

46
47 ^{ix} Like many of Cameron's attempts to disseminate 'big ideas', the golden thread
48 notion was rather opaque and not especially prominent. In Cameron's words: 'you
49 only get real long-term development through aid if there is also a golden thread of
50 stable government, lack of corruption, human rights, the rule of law, transparent
51 information.' One can see that this fits with the 'three Ts' and with facets of the EFIF
52 agenda.

53
54 ^x N=476. The coalition expected 30,000 to attend, and some estimates were as high
55 as 40,000. This did not reflect my own observations. The survey team distributed
56 3,000 surveys through a purposive sampling of one in ten and covered the entire
57 field.

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59 ^{xi} Bill Gates' relation to international development campaigning is controversial and,
60 in the context of this article, revealing. See McGoey (2015).

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^{xii} The Nutrition for Growth summit was protested by NGOs which had decided not to participate in EFIF.

^{xiii} This is clear from EFIF's own collating of G8 media coverage.

^{xiv} From *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* respectively, both June 18th.

^{xv} From research notes of the meeting held on 5th July.

^{xvi} Notably here: War on Want and Global Justice Now (formerly World Development Movement).

^{xvii} The relationship between war and hunger is a common theme within livelihoods and famine research. See for example Keen (2008) Macrae and Zwi (1994)

^{xviii} Taken from <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/2013-01/enough-food-everyone-if>. I have directly quoted this last theme because it is difficult to paraphrase in a clear or concise fashion. I am not sure what it means.

^{xix} See also Hampson 2006