

2008 campaign to eradicate UK poverty

Vision

A just and fair society, free from poverty in all its forms.

Objectives

- To challenge poverty in the UK with a view to positively changing public attitudes;
- To secure the commitment of all major political parties to deliver on their existing commitment to end child poverty by 2020 and to extend this goal to ending poverty across all the generations in the UK by 2020.

Policy Platform

The campaign will draw on fundamental human rights principles of equality, dignity and respect for everyone living in the UK, at all life stages, having:

- A decent, adequate income
- The right not to be marginalized or excluded from society
- Equal opportunities and fair access to services
- Neighbourhoods that secure health and wellbeing

Policy messages

The campaign will develop a limited number of iconic top level policy messages, that balance the need to retain the widest possible support across the sector, with the need to identify some specific and measurable policy asks to give more substantive content to the call on parties to sign up to the overall goal of 'ending poverty.' For illustrative purposes, these could potentially include some or all of:

- Adequate incomes for all: Commitment to raise all incomes to agreed minimum income standards 'from cradle to grave' by 2020.
- Equal access to basic rights: Commitment to ensure access to basic incomes and services for all within the UK (including migrants/refugees/asylum seekers)
- Fair access to services: Commitment to tackle excess costs of being poor, including unequal/ discriminatory access to goods and services.
- Affordable homes and decent neighbourhoods: Commitment to long-term investment required to achieve affordable housing and decent neighbourhoods

Approach

The campaign will be an umbrella mobilisation; it will not duplicate work that is already being done. There are many organisations and networks already working on various aspects of the big problem of 'poverty' – by bringing these efforts together, the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts. The campaign will strengthen its member organisations, not detract from them. The campaign will be framed within a language on "poverty" that all members can agree on and will ensure no groups living in the UK who suffer poverty are excluded. The campaign will personalise poverty for the public. It will aim to hold those with power to account and highlight the structural causes of poverty.

The need for a coordinated campaigning approach

The key communications and mobilising challenges and rationale for coordinated campaigning approach across the sector (and beyond) include:

- To create and communicate positive messages about how the problem of poverty, whilst being significant, can be solved, and the public can help.
- To highlight real life stories and create powerful narratives, which communicate the reality and impact of poverty on wider quality of life issues – not just incomes.
- To overcome the fragmentation of current anti-poverty campaigns, which are strong on specific groups (eg children) but lack an overall campaign narrative.

Timetable of events

The campaign will be focussed on 12 months of activity in the run up to the next General Election, which is anticipated will take place in May/June 2009. The year will be designed to achieve maximum profile and engagement with supporters, civil society groups and the wider public. Key events will provisionally include:

- **January/February:** Formal launch of campaign nationally and “Hear our voices”: 100 poverty “hearings” all over the country, where people in poverty come together to present the “human face” of poverty and help bust the myths surrounding poverty. This forms key part of campaign evidence.
- **May/June:** “Tap up your MP”: mass constituency lobby, where constituents arrange to visit their MPs to discuss the campaign and urge them to back it in Parliament. Launch of bite sized campaign manifesto widely distributed.
- **October 18th:** “Free from Poverty rallies” - in at least 12 key cities, and local outposts too, people encouraged to take part in symbolic action
- **February 2009:** Major end protest at Parliament – e.g. a major rally starting somewhere symbolic (e.g. the poorest local authority in England), which moves on to high profile London point where a celebrity rally is held (e.g. Trafalgar Square) and then picks up more protesters for a final march to Parliament.

Organisations participating in discussions to date

Age Concern	Depaul Trust	Royal College of Nursing
Anti-Poverty Network Cymru	Disability Alliance	Save the Children
ATD Fourth World	End Child Poverty	Scottish Poverty Alliance
Barnardos	Fabian Society	Shelter
British Institute of Human Rights	Fawcett Society	Sustain
Cardinal Hume Centre	Help the Aged	Trades Union Congress
Childrens Society	Housing Justice	TUC Unemployed Workers Centres
Church Action on Poverty	Joseph Rowntree Foundation	TGWU
Church of England	Muslim Council of Britain	Unison
Church Urban Fund	Nat Pensioners Convention	UK Coalition Against Poverty
Citizens Advice	NCH	Urban Forum
Citizens Organising Found ⁿ	One Parent Families	YWCA
Child Poverty Action Group	Oxfam UK Poverty Programme	Zaccheus 2000 Trust
Crisis	The Refugee Council	

NB: This only indicates organisations have participated in exploratory discussions. No organisations have yet been formally asked to sign up to support the campaign.