

A CASE STUDY: OXFAM INTERNATIONAL'S *MAKE TRADE FAIR* CAMPAIGN AND  
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT THEORY

By

MEREDITH ASHLEY TUCKER

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To those who want to make this world a better place through fair trade

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By

Meredith Ashley Tucker

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This qualitative report provides a case study of Oxfam International's Make Trade Fair campaign in order to assess its use of international public relations theory such as the relationship management theory and the extent to which this theory is followed by an international nonprofit organization in practice. This was a unique area to test public relations theory as done through campaigning by a nonprofit organization. Two research questions were set forth upon examination of the theoretical literature: (1) How well does the Oxfam case reflect current trends in international public relations theory and practice, specifically the relationship management theory, and (2) What can other international nonprofits learn from the Oxfam case?

In order to answer the two research questions the researcher used a qualitative case study approach using interviews with Oxfam MTF employees and various information subsidies. After transcription of interviews and the coalescence of documents, the researcher conducted pattern matching to look for the presence of the two models being examined in the relationship management theory – Ledingham's SMARTS model and Hon and Grunig's six dimension model.

By contrasting relationship management theory models with Oxfam's behavior in its MTF campaign, the researcher was able to answer the first research question and conclude that Oxfam

does closely follow this established public relations theory through the two stipulated models. The researcher was also able to answer the second research question by offering advice or learning points that other nonprofits and/or public relations professionals working in similar environments can take away from the Oxfam MTF campaign case study. The two models of management practice were able to provide insight into the relationship Oxfam had and still retains with the various targets in the MTF campaign.

Ledingham's SMARTS model offered a process to manage relationships, and upon examination from this model the researcher concluded that Oxfam's relationship to its targets was and still is extremely strategic in nature. Each target served a specific purpose in reaching Oxfam's ultimate goal of ending unfair trading rules and regulations. Hon and Grunig's model provided a way to measure Oxfam's relationship with its targets through its six dimensions, and this model really let on to a more private and welcoming side of Oxfam as an organization and showed that some of its greatest strengths include the trust, commitment, and satisfaction it shares with its campaign targets as well as its glowing reputation as a frontrunner in global issues like poverty, trade, aid, and climate change. Based upon the findings and implications discussed in this case study, the researcher feels that the two models examined could be appropriate models for the discovery and testing of relationship management theory

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

For effective operation, their [non-profits] must be kept as spotless as possible; like corporations they must constantly monitor their environments, maintain proper relationships with governments and publics of countries in which they operate and be prepared to handle crises.

- Dennis Wilcox et al. (1986, p. 376)

As the Internet continues to make the world smaller and more accessible, non-governmental organizations have become increasingly influential in world affairs, and in order to be more operationally effective, these large, international nonprofit organizations are increasingly turning to public relations practices (Seitel, 2004). The Internet has re-energized the non-governmental organization (NGO) world because for minimal expense they can spread their views, causes, and information across the globe (Seitel, 2004). Additionally, more and more nonprofits are expanding from a aid-only agencies to full service advocacy and activist organizations as well.

Although, there is no doubt that public relations plays a significant role in the international nonprofit and NGO (non-governmental organization) world, a vast body of literature and understanding on the topic is still inadequate and in its infancy. Nonprofits often pay insufficient attention to public relations and the literature largely ignores its functions (Kelly, 2000). Kinzey (1999, p. 7) addresses this issue when saying, “The concept of applying the same strategic public relations methodology used in business to the nonprofit world has experienced limited discussion thus far.”

Similarly, Goerke agrees that public relations has largely been ignored and overlooked in the nonprofit world (2003). “It [public relations] is an ideal and cost-efficient way of lifting organizational awareness,” says Goerke (2003, p. 323) of public relations in the nonprofit sector. Its strategies and tactics can also be used by nonprofits to enhance reputation, aid in the

dissemination of information, complement other marketing and communications plans, and contribute to fund-raising success (Kinzey, 1999).

Undoubtedly, large international nonprofits operate similar to typical business and communications corporate models in many instances. In essence, they are large businesses, and for them to operate most efficiently and effectively they must follow these models in international business and communications. Large nonprofits are essentially large corporations and they experience a high level of competition; there is a need for individual organizations to prove themselves to be credible and worthy of support from donors (Kinzey, 1999). Kinzey believes that the time has come when nonprofits can no longer rely on their past achievements or the “goodwill of the public” and must now focus on a more strategic and business-like approach (1999, p. 7). This approach implements agenda-setting, benchmarking, and ongoing evaluation, and once a strategy is developed, nonprofits should use it further in the creation of marketing and public relations plans (Kinzey, 1999).

### **Oxfam International: A Case Study**

This study focuses on a particular campaign from Oxfam International – the Make Trade Fair (MTF) campaign, with particular reference to Oxfam’s work in the United States and how it will and has affected developing countries around the world. The study focuses on the positive impact of a public relations approach by an international organization as it relates primarily to external communication. This campaign was chosen because it is unique to most international nonprofits in that most do not have large public relations and advertising budgets like their corporate counterparts. However, Oxfam International used creative and innovative methods to counter this deficiency in its campaign objectives, and its example can be a useful case study for future organizations in similar situations.

Oxfam is at the forefront of a worldwide movement to make trade fair. “Trade generates incredible wealth, and links the lives of everyone on the planet. Yet millions of people in poor countries are losing out,” says Oxfam (Oxfam America, *About the Campaign*, 2008, para. 1). Why? “Because the rules controlling trade heavily favor the rich nations that set the rules,” reports Oxfam (Oxfam America, *About the Campaign*, 2008, para. 1). Rich countries and powerful corporations have captured a disproportionate share of the benefits of trade, leaving developing countries and poor people worse off. Oxfam believes that trade rules should be judged on their contribution to poverty reduction, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability (Oxfam America, *About the Campaign*, 2008). Therefore, Oxfam and its Make Trade Fair campaign are working hard to make sure that countries, especially the most powerful, change the rules and way in which they trade.

Unfair trade robs poor people of a “proper” living, and keeps them trapped in poverty by rigged trading rules such as dumping, market access, forced liberalization, labor rights, and Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) explains Oxfam (Oxfam America, *Trade Rigged Rules*, 2008). Dumping is when rich countries dump subsidized produce on developing countries, therefore driving down the price of local produce which leads to devastating effects on the local economy. For example, U.S. farm policies pay U.S. cotton farmers to grow more cotton than is needed domestically, and the surplus is ‘dumped’ on the world market, driving down prices. Therefore, “while the average cotton grower in the U.S. can make almost a million dollars a year, the average cotton farmer in Africa struggles to make \$300 – and must cover all family needs such as food, healthcare, and education” (Oxfam America, *Trade Rigged Rules*, 2008, para. 1). Market Access is concerned when rich countries limit and control poor countries’ share of the

world market by charging high taxes on imported goods. As a result, many poor countries can only afford to export raw materials, which give far lower returns than finished products.

Oxfam explains forced liberalization by saying, “rich countries have long used the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and aggressive bilateral trade deals, to push open the door of poor countries’ markets to a flood of cheap products but now rich countries plan to use the binding rules of the WTO to kick that door down altogether” (Oxfam America, *Trade Rigged Rules*, 2008, para. 1). Labor rights are a part of the problem as companies’ demands for faster, more flexible, and cheaper production in their supply chains led to the undermining of labor standards. Lastly, a regional free trade agreement removes all barriers to trade and foreign investment, meaning that poor economies are not allowed to use import tariffs to protect their growing industries or their farmers from floods of cheap imports (Oxfam America, *Trade Rigged Rules*, 2008).

Oxfam’s MTF campaign focuses on world trade, a powerful force for reducing poverty. The MTF campaign calls on decision makers and governments to make fair trade part of the solution to poverty. To achieve this, Oxfam’s global campaign pursues (Oxfam America, *About the Campaign*, 2008):

- The end of wealthy nations dumping subsidized crops on the world market, so small scale farmers can compete in a fair marketplace.
- The opening of wealthy markets to the poorest countries.
- The creation of trade agreements that reduce poverty in developing countries, and allow them to build up their economics while protecting their food supply.

Overall, Oxfam sought to meet three main objectives during its campaign. The first, awareness and education, deals with creating a mass awareness among Oxfam’s various targets and educating them to the reality of unfair trade. Second, Oxfam seeks to have its targets participate and engage in the campaign through a variety of ways. Third, and most ambitious,

Oxfam hopes that through the two previous objectives unfair trading rules and regulations will be eliminated in favor of poor farmers in developing countries.

Oxfam International is a confederation of 13 organizations working together with over 3,000 partners in more than 100 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice. With many of the causes of poverty global in nature, the 13 affiliate members of Oxfam International believes it can achieve greater impact through collective efforts (Oxfam America, *Who We Are*, 2008). Oxfam International seeks increased worldwide public understanding that economic and social justice is crucial to sustainable development (Oxfam America, *Who We Are*, 2008). It strives to be a global campaigning force promoting the awareness and motivation that comes with global citizenship while seeking to shift public opinion in order to make equity the same priority as economic growth. It has affiliates located in the United States, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Spain, Ireland, New Zealand, and the Netherlands (Oxfam International, 2007).

### **Purpose Of Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine how well Oxfam International has applied established public relations models and theories within the context of their MTF campaign and to provide guidance to future scholars and practitioners in the field of public relations for large international nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, the study seeks to provide a “best practices” for nonprofit practitioners working for causes of this nature. The intention is that this body of work will make a contribution to the literature and knowledge of a relatively new combination of practices, at least as suggested by current literature on the matter.

Ultimately, this study contrasts theory with behavior. First, through a thorough literature review the researcher developed an understanding and grounding in significant theories and models in the practice of international public relations. Then this background was used to

compare the actual actions and behaviors of Oxfam International and their campaign process and outcome to international public relations theories and models.

Furthermore, this study can provide an actual case that can be referenced and reflected upon for future discussion and instruction. It can serve as a benchmark and example for organizations faced with similar situations and resources. For students and teachers, this case can be a valuable learning tool to provide a real world example of functioning public relations in a large-scale international nonprofit organization. Also, it can serve to show the role of information diffusion campaigns in raising awareness for social development projects. Likewise, it can show the role of partnerships and fundraising with reference to social development projects.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

We believe that the body of knowledge of international public relations is so young that it is very important to have descriptive accounts of public relations practice from individual countries. But we also believe that it is equally important for this body of knowledge to be able to help predict the best way to practice public relations in a particular country or region. It is best done by identifying relationships between public relations and other relevant variables.

- Krishnamurthy Sriramesh and Dejan Vercic,  
The Global Public Relations Handbook (2003, p. xvii)

Now let's look at some of the literature that has influenced international public relations theory, research, and practice. Marshall McLuhan coined the term "global village" back in the 1964, and he couldn't be more accurate in this description (McPhail, 2006). Communication technology is rapidly making our world smaller and smaller as what happens in one part of the world is experienced across the globe and practically witnessed first-hand through online media and television. The actions of organizations and individuals are felt instantly and irrevocably by people all over the world. Because of this burgeoning globalization, multinational corporations, international non-profits, NGOs, and government bodies must be sensitive to how their actions can affect people of different cultures in different geographic locations (Seitel, 2004). This is where the role of international public relations comes into play.

In today's world, almost every business is international in some respect and the global market is increasingly accessible. With today's state of modernization, a continental view of public relations, informed by social-science and sociological understanding helps illustrate a need for viewing the profession within other various disciplines and fields (Yannas, 2005). Furthermore, public relations has moved toward a more international emphasis in agency work with the U.S. no longer the central focus of public relations activity (Neff, 1991). Thus, constructing a global model will be a challenge as most countries look to the U.S. for public

relations models (Neff, 1991). “Public relations has been caught up in the drive to internationalize business,” says Timothy Coombs (1995, pg. 1). This growth in international business provides more cross-cultural encounters; thus, leading to the rapid growth in international public relations or cross-cultural public relations (Yun, 2006).

Joe Epley, former Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) President, identified three explanations for increased interaction among organizations and publics across the globe which has consequently lead to the need for international public relations (Seitel, 2004). They include the: (1) The growth of communications technology has increased the dissemination of information relating to products, services, and lifestyles to the world which has created a global demand. (2) The formation of multinational trading blocs that have realigned economic power and brought global consumers and producers closer together. (3) Around the world various peoples are coming together to pursue common goals like reducing poverty and population growth, protecting the environment, fighting terrorism, and combating disease, particularly the HIV/AIDS virus (Seitel, 2004).

In establishing the need and reasons for the practice of international public relations it is important to define what public relations is in itself. Public relations has traditionally served the following three functions: to control publics, to respond to publics, and to achieve mutually beneficial relationships among all the publics served by an institution (Newsom, 1993). It controls publics by directing what people think and how they act in order to fulfill the needs or wants of an institution, and it responds to publics by reacting to developments, problems and/or initiatives of others (Newsom, 1993). The third function of achieving mutually beneficial relationships is gained by fostering harmonious exchanges among institutions and their various publics (Newsom, 1993).

More specifically, international public relations can be defined as the planned and organized effort of a company, institution, or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with the publics of other nations (Wilcox, Ault & Agee, 1986). It can also be viewed as a practice within individual countries (Wilcox et al., 1986). Wakefield notes that what is practiced in the name of international public relations can vary from simple hosting or promotions to diplomacy and strategic relationship building (1996). Grunig has defined it as “a broad perspective that will allow [practitioners] to work in many countries or to work collaboratively” with people from various other countries (1992, p. 23). Further, Wakefield suggests that the only genuine international practitioners are those who “understand how business is done across national borders” and perform within that context (1996).

Through its conception and evolution, international public relations has seen an increased tendency for specialization within the field as well as a separate role for international public relations within the infrastructure of the organization. Until the mid-1960s, public relations sought generalists informed in many areas of practice and now the profession has moved to many practitioners having focused in a single specialty and becoming extremely competent within that specialty (Morley, 1998). Likewise, it is not uncommon to find a separate role of the international public relations manager within organizations (Morley, 1998). This is often due to differing qualifications, international experience, home market pressures, and wariness in foreign markets to name a few (Morley, 1998).

A 1995 survey conducted by Timothy Coombs regarding theory and research in international public relations and whether it is keeping pace with the international needs of practitioners revealed a very slow place for the internationalizing of public relations research. Thus, he has proposed three critical areas that need to be discussed and addressed. They include

the failure to internationalize, the need for integrative frameworks, and possible ways to examine interactions (Coombs, 1995). Although over ten years later many of these issues have been more carefully addressed, it is important to see the lineage of this relatively new and growing field.

As economies and technologies are continuing to develop worldwide, the demand for a knowledge of language and culture in public relations as well as a greater sensitivity to cultural differences is increasing. Bonita Neff, over ten years ago, called for the inclusion of culture in global public relations models. The role of culture in a global model is critical since cultural values affect the communication process (Neff, 1991). His proposed global model features a communication emphasis which is integrated, a cultural experience, and a need for greater knowledge in specialty areas (Neff, 1991).

Similarly, Zaharna describes the skill of cultural “in-awareness” that is developed within the field of intercultural communication and is applied to international public relations to understand culture’s impact on the communication function of public relations (2001). The goal of cultural in-awareness is to show hidden cultural assumptions and expectations that plague international public relations and to allow the exploration of national and cultural differences between clients and practitioners in a “systematic and non-threatening manner” (Zaharna, 2001).

In order to give light to these hidden cultural assumptions and expectations, Zaharna presents a three-tiered framework based on a country profile, cultural profile, and communication profile (2001). The country profile provides a broad outline of what may be feasible within a particular country while the cultural profile speaks to what may be effective in that country (Zaharna, 2001). The communication profile then further enhances “cultural generalities by delineating culturally-based communication behaviors that underlie common public relations practices” (Zaharna, 2001, p. 8). It is important to note that this approach

advocates profiling the cultural background of both the client and the practitioner as a means for heightening awareness (Zaharna, 2001).

Globalization and Cross-Cultural Theories have also had an impact on the practice of international public relations. The previously mentioned “global village” is now ever present, but some argue that while globalization is occurring, homogenization and integration is not (Wakefield, 1996). At the same time divergence/convergence is an ongoing debate: unifying the world exaggerates differences, resulting in conflict, competition, and uncertainty (Wakefield, 1996). Wakefield says that this argument creates a need for adaptive structures, formative research, and conflict resolution in public relations practice (1996).

Culture includes the notion of “collective programming” which distinguishes one group from another and Hofstede’s cultural dimensions of individual/collective, power distance, risk avoidance, and masculine/feminine traits (Wakefield, 1996). Wakefield also draws on Sriramesh and White (1992), who assert that “culture is communication, and communication is PR” (Wakefield, 1996). These cultural theories demonstrate a need for an open systems approach, employee diversity, and global/local coordination (Wakefield, 1996).

### **Public Relations For The Nonprofit Sector**

First, let’s take a look at some of the current literature that describes using public relations practices in nonprofit organizations. In the *Global Public Relations Handbook*, Ana Tkalac and Jurica Pavicic note that “all positive social roles, along with criticism and problems, create space for the implementation of international public relations” (2003, p. 496). Moreover, they remark that public relations in a sense could be a catalyst or help to create positive international NGO practices and serve as an impediment to negative practices (2003). It is important to note that the terms “NGO” and “nonprofit” have often been used interchangeably. Nonprofit organizations can include museums, universities and hospitals, for example, all focused on services with

sporadic engagement in advocacy. NGOs, however, are significantly dedicated to advocacy says Paul (2000).

Gemmill and Bamdidele-Izu (2002) say in society NGOs and nonprofits should have one of the most prevalent roles in these five areas of practice: information collection and dissemination, policy development consultation, policy implementation, assessment, and monitoring and advocacy for environment justice. All of these areas can be benefited and enhanced with the use of public relations research, objectives, programming, and evaluation techniques. Similarly, modern society involves intense media scrutiny, and all NGOs and large nonprofits are dependent upon the support of the public (Tkalac & Pavicic, 2003). Tkalac and Pavicic (2003) state that because these organizations are placed in the middle of various social, political, and economic trends that they must have high-quality management and good public relations.

Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2000) address this altered climate for public relations practices for NGOs and nonprofits by defining five major trends in the area: the introduction of marketing and management concepts in communications strategies, the development of information technology and its implications, the use of advertising in public relations programs, the need for the adaptation of a public relations curriculum, and a constant increase in public relations standards in non-profit organizations. They discuss further examples such as management by objectives, widened communication selectivity, paid advertising, skill qualities, and expectations of professional public relations providers (2000). Nonprofits must overcome many challenges that the average organization may not have to focus on as much. Because of their positions, nonprofits must maximize resources and recognize the importance of partnering. All of these trends

show the importance of public relations practices with relation to large, international non-profit organizations.

Cutlip et al. also outline what public relations in most nonprofit organizations aim to do. The functions of public relations are common among most nonprofit organizations; however, tactics and the level of sophistication of practice vary greatly by organization (Cutlip et al., 2000). The five functions of public relations in nonprofit organizations include (Cutlip et al., 2000, p. 526):

- Gain acceptance of an organization's mission.
- Develop channels of communication with who the organization serves.
- Create and maintain a favorable climate for fundraising.
- Support the development and maintenance of public policy that is favorable to an organization's mission.
- Inform and motivate key organizational constituents (employees, volunteers, trustee, etc.) to dedicate themselves and work productively in support of an organization's mission, goals, and objectives.

### **A Closer Look At International Public Relations Models And Theory**

Keeping in mind public relations growing application in the nonprofit world, we can first start by explaining some basic and core principles to public relations models in general. This will provide a foundation for further explanation. Scholars have recognized four main models of public relations. They are press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical (Calcote, 2000).

Practitioners that adhere to the press agency model use one-way communication to provide audiences with only positive publicity while hiding negative information (Seitel, 2004). The public information model uses persuasive one-way communication to provide truthful messages with philanthropic motives, for example anti-tobacco public information campaigns

(Seitel, 2004). The two-way asymmetrical model uses feedback from appropriate publics to create persuasive messages to manipulate the behavior of the publics (Seitel, 2004). Lastly, the two-way symmetrical model uses two-way communication to achieve mutual understanding with publics (Seitel, 2004). This model is thought to be the ideal model, and it is used to negotiate mutually acceptable resolution to conflicting interests (Grunig, 1992).

These four models have been very useful in the research and practice of public relations to date; however, they have only primarily been tested in Anglo countries (Calcote, 2000). However, Grunig and Grunig et al. have tested the models in other countries (India, Greece and Taiwan) and discovered two other guides for public relations practice – the personal influence and cultural interpreter models (Grunig, 1992). Practitioners who use the personal influence model seek to establish personal relationships with key people in the media, government, and/or political and activist groups (Calcote, 2000). Many of these practices, like seeking official favors, are considered unethical in most nations (Calcote, 2000). The cultural interpreter model is used by multinational firms with little experience in the country in which they are operating, and such firms and organizations need people that understand the culture, language, customs, economic, and political environment of the local country (Calcote, 2000). Personal influence and cultural interpreter models can be used as variations or components of the main four models previously illustrated.

Two distinct worldviews in public relations have also been identified, the asymmetrical and the symmetrical worldview, which helps to better define the last two models of the four described above. World views are a set of images and assumptions about the world that are shaped by a person's culture, beliefs, and value systems and international public relations

practice is very much affected by practitioners' world views (Calcote, 2000). An organization with an asymmetrical world view has the following characteristics (Grunig, 1992):

- Internal orientation (organizational members do not see organization as outsiders see it).
- Closed systems (one-way flow of information).
- Efficiency and control of costs are more important than innovation.
- Elitism.
- Conservatism (change is undesirable and the status quo is preferred).
- Tradition is valued.
- Central Authority.

Conversely, an organization with a symmetrical world view holds the following characteristics (Grunig, 1992):

- Interdependence.
- Open systems (open to input, receptive in information from the organization's publics).
- Moving equilibrium (the relationship between the organization and its respective publics is constantly changing and the organization is trying to find an equilibrium; such organizations use environmental scanning to analyze changing relationships).
- Equity.
- Innovation.
- Decentralized management.
- Conflict resolution through negotiation.

The communications theories of Pat Jackson have also been employed and earned respect in public relations theory (Seitel, 2004). His public relations communications models have emphasized setting clear strategic goals and identifying key stakeholders (Seitel, 2004). One of his models consisted of a five-step approach to stimulate behavioral change that included chronologically building awareness, developing a latent readiness, triggering event, intermediate behavior, and lastly, behavioral change (Seitel, 2004). Additionally, other communications theories about Internet communication and how it changes the ways and speed at which we

receive messages are important to public relations (Seitel, 2004). There is an unprecedented “diffusion” of the Net as a communications tool that spans cultures and geographies (Seitel, 2004).

Two theory positions are important in the foundation and evaluation of public relations models – normative and positive theories. One must ask whether the models provide a normative or a positive theory of public relations, and if they provide a positive theory, whether the models describe accurately what practitioners should actually do (Grunig, 1992). A normative theory defines how things should be or how some activity should be carried out, and in effect, it must show that only if an activity strictly follows the theory guidelines will it be effective (Grunig, 1992). Positive theories are often used to understand problems whereas normative theories are used to solve problems (Grunig, 1992). “Good in theory but not in practice” is very relevant to normative theory because although a theory may be logical it may not be realistically practical or implementable (Grunig, 1992). Grunig and colleagues believe that the two-way symmetrical model should be a normative model for public relations and that it describes how excellent public relations should be practiced.

On the other hand, positive theories are descriptive theories and they describe phenomena, events, and activities as they happen (Grunig, 1992). They do not tell how to but simply describe why. They can be evaluated in part by whether or not they correspond to or reflect reality (Grunig, 1992). If public relations is not practiced as described by the models, the models would not be a good positive theory (Grunig, 1992). Thus, if the theory is not good in describing actual practice it could not be good in theory, and the “good in theory but not in practice” label would not apply.

With a firm grounding in the four basic models, world views in public relations and normative and positive theory positions we can begin to look at the theory that will be explored in this study, the Relationship Management Theory.

### **Relationship Management Theory**

Maintaining and building relationships is one of the primary functions of public relations as has already been visited. Ledingham (2003) gives four major developments in public relations that signifies the emergence of this relational perspective. They include the following (Ledingham, 2003, p. 182-83): (1) recognition of the central role of relationships in public relations, (2) reconceptualizing public relations as management function, (3) identification of components and types of organization-public relationships, their linkage to public attitudes, perceptions, knowledge and behavior, and relationship measurement strategies, and (4) construction of organization-public relationship models that accommodate relationship antecedents, process, and consequences.

The literature contains many examples and approaches to organization-public relationships; however, it generally agrees on at least the following points (Ledingham, J.A., 2001, p. 288):

- Public relations is rapidly moving away from its traditionally narrow focus on message creation and dissemination and toward a broader view of the field as a goal-oriented, problem-solving management function.
- Relationship management can serve as a useful concept for the study and practice of public relations, and organization-public relationships can provide a framework for programmatic accountability; and
- There is a need for agreed-upon methods of measuring relationship quality, as well as for a general theory of public relations, grounded in the relational perspective, that explains how public relations functions and that provides a basis for predicting the behavior of organizations and publics alike.

Ledingham defines his theory of relationship management as (2003, p. 190):

Effectively managing organizational-public relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organizations and publics. “The building and sustaining of organization-public relationships requires not only communication, but organizational and public behaviors, a concept central to the relationship management perspective,” says Ledingham (2003, p. 194). Additionally, loyalty, satisfaction, and expectations are all central to the organization-public relationship. If the ultimate goal of public relations is to build mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics, then measuring the outcomes of those relationships provides an important indicator of public relations’ effectiveness (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998).

Traditional public relations literature focused on communication to influence and manipulate key publics, and now researchers are acknowledging relationships as the appropriate framework for public relations theory. Because communication is a strategic tool within this relational perspective, communication practices like making press releases, reports, and speeches help to build and maintain organization-public relationships (Ledingham, 2003).

After identifying 17 dimensions important to interpersonal, marketing, and other types of relationships, Ledingham and Brunig (1998) organized five dimensions including trust, openness, involvement, investment, and commitment. Trust means doing what an organization says it will do, and openness involves sharing the organization’s plans for the future with public members. Involvement implies that the organization is involved in the welfare of the community, and investment is the organization actually investing in the welfare of the community. Lastly, commitment is the organization being committed to the welfare of the community (Ledingham & Brunig, 1998).

This sort of relational basis formed the foundation for SMART (scan, map, act, roll-out, track), a more recent model of relationship management in public relations developed by Ledingham. SMART is a five-step process model of public relations that “articulates antecedents of relationships found in the organization-public system (scan), recommends appropriate planning strategies (mapping), suggests methods for pre-testing, programming, and campaign elements (act), provides a platform for campaign implementation (roll-out), and recommends methods for evaluating public relations impact over time (track)” (Ledingham, 2001, p. 288). More recently, Ledingham has added an “S” to the end of SMART to stand for steward which means to adjust programs/operation accordingly.

Similarly, Hon and Grunig (1999) also provide a model to measure organization-public relationships consisting of six dimensions: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, communal relationship, and exchange relationship. Control mutuality is the “degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another.” Trust is defined as “one party’s level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party.” More specifically trust deals with issues of integrity, dependability, and competence. Satisfaction represents whether one party feels favorably towards the other. Commitment is defined as “the extent to which each party believes and feels the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote.” Communal relationship refers to the extent to which parties in a relationship give benefits to each other because they are concerned for the other’s welfare, and lastly, an exchange relationship exists when one party gives benefits to the other because the other gave benefits in the past or expects to do so in the future (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3).

Literature on public relations as relationship management takes concepts from a variety of disciplines such as mass media, interpersonal communication, inter-organizational behavior,

social psychology, marketing, and management. Therefore, several models of organization-public relationships exist. However, this study only focuses on Ledingham's SMARTS model and Hon and Grunig's Six Dimension approaches. Both models are very timely and have built upon and learned from predecessors' relationship management models; thus, they offer some of the "latest" models to be explored and evaluated empirically. Furthermore, the SMARTS model offers a process to manage an organization-public relationship with specific steps while Hon and Grunig's approach concerns the dimensions to describe this organization-public relationship.

### **Conclusion**

A useable theory of international public relations should provide a framework with which to assess and evaluate the performance of Oxfam International's MTF campaign. After reviewing the literature, the researcher has chosen the Relationship Management Theory in order to provide this framework. Furthermore, it is especially interesting and novel to apply this theory to a nonprofit organization not always traditionally associated with public relations.

With the literature examined in mind, the following research questions have been set forth for this study:

**RQ1:** How well does the Oxfam case reflect current trends in international public relations theory and practice - specifically the Relationship Management Theory?

*A.) How well does it reflect the SMARTS model?*

- a) Scanning?
- b) Mapping?
- c) Acting?
- d) Rolling-out?
- e) Tracking?
- f) Stewarding?

*B.) How well does it reflect the Hon and Grunig model?*

- a) Control Mutuality?
- b) Trust?
- c) Satisfaction?
- d) Commitment?
- e) Communal Relationship?

f) Exchange Relationship?

**RQ2:** What can other international non-profits learn from the Oxfam case by answering RQ1?

By answering these questions, the researcher essentially contrasts theory with behavior. In the next section, details of the methodology explain how the study seeks to answer these research questions.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This section provides further information on the qualitative case study approach as well as certain sources and methods of analysis of importance to this case study of Oxfam International's MTF campaign. It also provides a method to assess an organization's use of public relations and campaign evaluations. It makes clear how the intended methodology, sources, analysis, and evaluation of this case study will be conducted.

### **The Qualitative Case Study**

Case studies can be conducted using the principles of the qualitative method: describing, understanding, and explaining (Tellis, 1997). Similarly, Yin notes that although case studies can be used for exploratory purposes, the approach may also be used to test explanations for why specific events have occurred (Yin, 1981). Furthermore, Yin (1981) says that case studies can also be used to test or generate theories. Weerd-Nederhof (2001) describes a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

Case studies in themselves are not an actual "method" but rather an approach consisting of several different and variable methods. Creswell (1998) defines a case study as an exploration of a "bounded system" or a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. It is a "bounded system" because it is bounded by time and place and the case being studied can consist of a program, an event, an activity, or individuals. The context of the case involves situating the case within its setting which can be a physical setting or the social, historical, and/or economic setting. The focus of the case may be that because of its uniqueness or it may be on an issue or issues, with the case used

instrumentally to illustrate the issue (Creswell, 1998). In this instance, the case being studied is Oxfam International's particular campaign within its particular timeframe as designated by Oxfam International, and it is being studied because of its uniqueness and also to illustrate the case as an example for future practice. Furthermore, because case studies use multiple sources they give multiple perspectives to analysis.

There are two basic types of case study designs: the single-case design and the multiple-case design (Yin, 1981). Because this study is only focusing on one particular campaign the study will be using the single-case design. Single cases are used to confirm or challenge a theory, or to represent a unique or extreme case (Yin, 1994). This is precisely, what the researcher intends to do with this study – to contrast behavior with theory and to present a unique case to large, international nonprofit organizations. Just as this study seeks to contrast behavior with theory, the researcher also wanted to simply provide a case that can be evaluated on not only theoretical models but by modern public relations standards.

As previously indicated, one of the most prominent features of the case study is its employment of multiple sources. Yin (1994) notes six sources of evidence in case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. Creswell (1998) also identifies listing observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports. Other sources noted by Yin (1981) include more specifically: face-to-face interviews with key informants, telephone interviews with other informants, agency records, project documents and memoranda, illustrative materials (i.e. – newsletters and other publications that form part of an organization's history), and on-site observations. It is important to note that Yin believes not all sources are relevant for all case studies (Yin, 1994).

Archival documents can consist of service records, organizational records, organizational publications and press clips, lists of names, survey data, and other similar records. Interviews are one of the most crucial sources of information in a case study, and there are many forms possible: open-ended, focused and structured, or survey. Direct observation is when a field visit is conducted during the case study, and it is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied. Participant-observation makes the researcher an active participant in the events being studied, and lastly, physical artifacts can be tools, instruments or other physical evident that may be collected during the study as part of a field visit (Tellis, 1997).

Lastly, Yin provides information that case studies must include. First, in order to be of significance, case studies must be unusual or of general public interest or include underlying issues nationally important, in theoretical terms, or in policy/practice terms; also, they can provide both as a means to significance. Case studies must also be complete. They must include all relevant sources including contrary sources. Further, they must display sufficient evidence. It is less about volume and more about persuasiveness. Finally, case studies must be engaging. They should be interesting and read like a story (Yin, 1994).

### **Validation Of The Case Study Approach**

The case study in itself is a form of triangulation. The need for triangulation arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the procedures (Tellis, 1997). However, this is done by using multiple sources of data as the case study does (Yin, 1994). Yin (1981) points out the important of balance with relation to sources however. The presentation of facts and interpretations should be balanced so that different perspectives are presented in the case (Yin, 1981). Construct validity can also be called into question for qualitative research. The case study in particular because of its potential to subjectivity by the researcher (Tellis, 1997). However, Yin (1994) proposes three solutions to counteract this: using multiple sources of

evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having a draft case study report reviewed by key informants. External validity deals with knowing if the results are generalizable beyond the specific case (Tellis, 1997). However, Yin indicates that the generalization of results, from either single or multiple designs, is made to theory and not to populations (Yin, 1994).

Rather than statistical random sampling as done in quantitative research, key informants and players in the campaign are of most importance and relevance. When sampling, qualitative researchers maximize access to the phenomenon they are studying and select cases in which it is most evident say Morse and Richards (2002). There is no formula for determining sample size in qualitative inquiry thus the number of participants chosen will be determined by the quality of the participants' experiences, the ability of the participants to reflect on and report their experiences and the requirement and their overall knowledge of and importance to the Oxfam International's campaign. All data collection methods will cease once saturation is reached and indicators of saturation include a comprehensive and complete picture of the Oxfam International campaign.

### **The Evaluation Of A Public Relations Campaign**

In addition to analyzing and examining the practices of Oxfam International MTF campaign with reference to the Relationship Management Theory of public relations, it is also important to evaluate and assess the campaign by traditional public relations standards. During any planning process in a public relations campaign practitioners set measurable objectives for a specified time period so that they may see if these numbers and/or percentages are achieved post-campaign. Most strikingly and basic to evaluating a campaign is simply seeing if you meet your objectives that you set out from the beginning during the planning process.

Newsom et al. (1993) name two types of evaluations that occur in a public relations campaign: monitoring and postmortems. Monitoring refers to keeping an ongoing look and

system for all major campaign activities. Monitoring makes it possible to implement needed changes during the campaign instead of thinking “I wish I had of done that” when it’s over. “Monitoring is important in a campaign because you may need to change directions, reallocate resources or redefine priorities to achieve your objective,” say Newsom et al. (1993, p. 483). Postmortems include formal research that answers whether objectives were achieved or not achieved. An organization needs to establish what “missed the mark and by how much.” It answers questions like: what worked, what didn’t and why, what was accidentally a success, what could have been done better and so forth (Newsom et al, 1993). Thus, a postmortem is applicable to Oxfam’s campaign.

It is important to evaluate several results in this formal research process. These results include the impact on publics, the effect on the organization’s goals and mission, the effect on the attitudes of publics toward the organization and their perception of it, and the organization’s financial effects, ethical stance and social responsibly. Most importantly though, Newsom et al. note that changing behavior is one of the most important benchmarks to evaluate public relations campaigns. Typically the campaign starts at the awareness level and the purpose is to create awareness and eventually to get a certain action (Newsom et al, 1993).

In the same way, Cutlip et al. (2000) define the process of evaluating program planning, implementation, and impact as “evaluation research.” Rossi and Freedman outline the basic questions in evaluation as the following (1993):

*1.) Program conceptualization and design*

- What is the extent and distribution of the target problem and/or population?
- Is the program designed in conformity with intended goals; is there a coherent rationale underlying it; and have chances of successful delivery been maximized?
- What are the project or existing costs and what is their relation to benefits and effectiveness?

2.) *Monitoring and accountability of program implementation*

- Is the program reaching the specified target population or target area?
- Are the intervention efforts being conducted as specified in the program design?

3.) *Assessment of program utility: impact and efficiency*

- Is the program effective in achieving its intended goals?
- Can the results of the program be explained by some alternative process that does not include the program?
- Is the program having some effects that were not intended?
- What are the costs to deliver services and benefits to program participants?
- Is the program an efficient use of resources, compared with alternative uses of the resources?

“Evaluation research,” a program evaluation for each stage of the campaign process, includes: preparation, implementation, and impact. To assess the preparation state one must look at the quality of message and activity presentations, the appropriateness of the message and activity content, and the adequacy of background information base for designing the program. During the implementation stage one looks at the number of messages sent to media and activities designed, the number of messages placed and activities implemented, the number who receive messages, the number of activities, and the number who attend to messages and activities. Lastly, to assess the impact stage you look at the number who learn message content, the number who change opinions, the number who change attitudes, the number who behave as desired, the number who repeat behavior, and lastly, social and cultural change (Cutlip et al., 2000).

Public relations evaluations are most often done on the implementation stage and this approach typically involves counting numbers of publications printed, news releases distributed, stories placed in the media and readers, viewers, or listeners (both potential and actual). Yet this

can sometimes be flawed as even the most effectively made materials can have no chance of impact if they are not available to or seen by the intended publics say Cutlip et al. (2000).

Lastly, with regard to evaluating fundraising, Cutlip et al. (2000) provide four principles of fundraising for non-profit fundraising campaigns: preparation, committee work, publicity, and campaign operation. In the preparation stage the five essentials to a successful campaign are a strong case, effective leadership, conscientious workers, prospects willing and able to give, and sufficient funds to finance the campaign; these five essentials should be examined very carefully before outlining a campaign strategy. Also in preparation, committee and publicity work should be mapped out in advance as well was the cost of the campaign, within reasonable limits. All campaign activities should be given a time limit with deadlines as well at this stage (Cutlip et al, 2000).

The second principle, committee work, says that the originating group, a committee or board of directors, should be a representative body. Strong leadership is important, the effectiveness of the group depends on how individuals accept responsibility, and the activity of the originating group determines the activity of all subordinate groups. Additionally, committees are better at critiquing than creating says Cutlip et al. They suggest that before asking any group for ideas on a plan of action or for suggestions on a list of prospects, each member of the group should be given a copy of the plan (Cutlip et al, 2000).

The third principle, publicity, says that the first objective is to sell the idea and the second to sell the means of its accomplishment. Publicity materials should appeal to both emotions and intellect and they all must have continuity and must proceed from the general to the specific. Quality is very important for materials, and publicity should always be positive and play up elements of strength. Lastly, campaign operation, says a campaign should not only solve

immediate financial needs but should lay a foundation for future campaigns. Also, solicitation should proceed in the following six steps: listing, rating, assignments, cultivation, canvassing (why, where, who, what and how), and follow-up. Moreover, campaigns should periodically reach a climax and should be conducted under a steady and constant pressure and sense of urgency. The four tests for effectiveness of campaign operations are: quality, quantity, cost, and time. Campaign impact is judged by success or failure in achieving the campaign objectives and the overall goal (Cutlip et al, 2000).

### **Methods Of The Oxfam International Campaign Case Study**

For this case, the study used the following traditional case study sources: extensive interviews with key MTF campaign informants and various external information subsidies. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed with key informants within Oxfam International that played a key or significant role in the campaign process. This includes project/campaign managers or anyone else with significant knowledge of the campaign itself. The interviews were both focused and structured with detailed questions developed in advance.

Those providing their insight from Oxfam included the Brian Rawson, the MTF Campaign Organizer, Vicky Rateau, the MTF Campaign Manager for the U.S., and Laura Rusu, a Senior Press Officer from Oxfam that worked a significant amount on the MTF campaign. The researcher had anticipated interviewing at least five key informants; however, due to the availability of Oxfam employees and time constraints only three interviews were able to be conducted. Yet on a positive note, when approaching Oxfam staff for interviews all said these three individuals would be the top people to speak with regarding the MTF campaign. All interviewees are considered ‘upper-level’ in terms of involvement in the campaign; thus, they were able to provide both the broad and specific details needed to assess the campaign from a theoretical standpoint and did not get too weighed down in tactical issues.

Both Rawson and Rusu have been working for Oxfam, and consequently on the MTF campaign, for the past four to five years. Rateau has worked for Oxfam largely since 2001. Rusu has a background in media relations and is based out of Oxfam's Washington D.C. office. Rawson is based in Oxfam's main headquarters in Boston yet overseas campaign leaders and student leaders all over the U.S. in key areas. He also is in charge of managing Oxfam's MTF efforts with regard to the Coldplay tours. When Rawson began working for the campaign in 2003 as a Campaign Organizer his focus was largely fair trade coffee issues, and later this focus shifted to staffing, mobilizing, and tour organizing.

Rateau's has a background in social justice organizing and advocacy (public policy). When asked if she had any public relations experience, she replied by saying, "organizing is public relations" and listed public speaking, facilitating workshops, doing trainings and training for trainers, and recruitment for a membership organization. As MTF was a very global campaign, Rateau, MTF Campaign Manager, was involved with two primary things: sitting on the managing committee for the international campaign and managing the U.S. piece of it which "was a coordination of what needs to happen behind the scenes for the campaign," says Rateau.

In addition to the human side of inquiry through interviews, this case study also employed the use of external information subsidies. It was the initial plan of the researcher to include internal campaign documents; however, Oxfam does not allow these materials to be released externally. Information subsidies that were examined included press releases, accountability reports, research reports, briefing notes, media clips, media coverage, brochures, campaign toolkits, WTO and Farm Bill publications, and other similar external campaign materials from Oxfam International.

Total information subsidies published by Oxfam included a total of 46. This number included two research reports, two Oxfam publications, eight briefing papers and notes, and 34 press releases (see Appendix A for information subsidy titles and authors). Media coverage examined included 1,460 hits on the Google News Archive. The majority of these information subsidies focused on U.S. campaign efforts and its effects on developing countries worldwide. Generic MTF campaign materials from Oxfam like its initial research report focused on how all developed countries were affecting the fair trade climate. The Google News Archive included stories related to U.S. trade policy, WTO trade policy, and global MTF news from all continents except Australia and Antarctica.

### **Analyzing The Data**

The examination of the data consisted of theoretical “pattern matching” and an evaluation of the campaign from a public relations standpoint. Pattern-matching is a major mode of analysis, and this type of logic compares an empirical pattern with a predicted one (Tellis, 1997). Internal validity is enhanced when the patterns coincide (Tellis, 1997). This study looked for patterns within all of the sources to see if Oxfam International follows major international public relations and models.

On the practical public relations side, this study provides adequate evaluation data to show the outcome of the campaign such as Oxfam’s ability to meet campaign goals and objectives. Furthermore, the study engages in explanation building which stipulates a set of causal links and a time-series analysis which specifies steps or preconditions for an event. The study also provides a comprehensive campaign timeline and a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis in the beginning so that the reader is fully knowledgeable of the case at hand and sees where Oxfam International stands going into the campaign so as to judge the organization’s decisions and success.

In summary, the case study approach was combined with interviews to examine and evaluate the two research questions that the researcher has set forth:

- **RQ1:** How well does the Oxfam case reflect current trends in international public relations theory and practice? Specifically the Relationship Management Theory.
- **RQ2:** What can other international non-profits learn from the Oxfam case?

## CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

This chapter is intended to address and show the results from data gathering and analysis – or in other words – what did the researcher find? It begins with a campaign timeline, a SWOT analysis of Oxfam and the MTF campaign, an analysis of media coverage from the campaign, and lastly, a section on theoretical findings. This chapter solely addresses what happened in the campaign both empirically and with regard to relationship management theory.

### **Timeline**

The following is a timeline of the Make Trade Fair campaign starting in 2001 and ending in 2008. The timeline is an overview of the MTF campaign's events and clearly outlines the campaign and the many obstacles it has had to face along the way. All events are broken up by year and month and in some cases, exact date. Information for the timeline was derived from Oxfam's external documents such as press releases, research reports, annual reports, and briefing notes as well as interviews with key MTF campaign informants.

#### **2001**

*November 2001* – In a meeting in Doha, Qatar, rich countries committed themselves to a 'development round' of multilateral trade negotiations. Bold pronouncements were made on the need to work for a fairer distribution of the benefits from trade, and for measures to strengthen the links between trade and poverty reduction.

*May 2001* – Oxfam America begins to set the stage by sponsoring a delegation of seven union members and labor activists from Tennessee to meet with community organizations and labor unions in Mexico. They held discussions about the impacts of the NAFTA on Mexico's poor and working class.

## 2002

*March 2002* – Oxfam publishes “Rigged Rules and Double Standards – trade, globalization, and the fight against poverty,” a research piece that sets the foundation for the need for fair trade based on policy, trade, and economic research. This research piece, consisting of nine thorough chapters, outlines the basic trade principles that Oxfam seeks in the MTF campaign, and it is this research that is the backbone of the campaign. It is made downloadable to the public on the Oxfam website.

*April 11, 2002* – Oxfam officially launches the world-wide MTF campaign in Hong Kong by crushing a shipping container emblazoned with various trade injustices that Oxfam fights to abolish. Within hours of the Hong Kong debut, events were held in 25 cities including Brussels, Dublin, Geneva, Mexico City, San Salvador, and Washington D.C. These events ranged from press conferences and symposiums to a rock concert in London’s Trafalgar Square including Coldplay.

With the debut, Oxfam urges participation. They invite the public to their website and to join in the fight and send President Bush and email, urging him to support fair trade rules. “Start educating yourself and others about the ways in which our government, powerful international institutions, and multinational corporations need to change their ways of working,” says Jennifer R. Wilder of Oxfam in the spring 2002 *Oxfam Exchange*, a bi-yearly report focusing on Oxfam’s efforts.

*Post Campaign Launch* – Coldplay is an initial supporter of MTF from its inception as Chris Martian traveled with Oxfam to the Dominican Republic and Haiti in 2002 where he saw firsthand how unfair trade rules affected the lives of the people there. Since his travels, Coldplay has included a trade message on their album and “Chris has been a brilliant advocate of the campaign – talking about trade in interviews, wearing the MTF t-shirt, and promoting the

campaign at concerts, and as a result, Chris and his band have done a remarkable job of bringing in trade issues to an entirely new audience,” says Ben Brandzel of Oxfam.

*November 2002* – Oxfam America assists key citizen organizations make their concerns known about the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) at a meeting of trade ministers and negotiators in Quito, Ecuador. If the FTAA is to move forward, the U.S. Congress would likely vote on it in late 2005 or early 2006. It had currently been negotiated by government representatives in closed meetings, which resulted in little press in the U.S. Oxfam has assisted these civil society groups that have had minimal opportunities to gain access to the FTAA negotiations and draft documents, and have been sidelined in the formulation of an agreement that has the potential to profoundly change many aspects of their lives.

## **2003**

*April 2003* – Oxfam publishes briefing note that the U.S. continues to deny the significance of its export subsidy programs, which Oxfam calls not only hypocritical but also a major obstacle to agricultural subsidy reform through the World Trade Organization (WTO).

*Spring/Summer 2003* – Oxfam promotes MTF during Coldplay U.S. tour. In the summer Oxfam fielded over 150 volunteers at 14 concerts across the country and collected over 10,000 postcards calling on President George Bush to stop dumping cheap, subsidized exports on poor countries.

*June 2003* – Oxfam uses a Sacramento conference with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agency for International Development, and State Department as an opportunity to spotlight unfair trade practices by participating in a rally and march. Oxfam MTF campaign organizer Brian Rawson and CHANGE Leader Ephraim Freed handed out green cotton candy while educating the public about U.S. cotton dumping and its effects on Africa’s cotton farmers. For many at the rally it was their first time learning about dumping and its effects on farmers.

*August 2003* – Oxfam publishes the briefing note, “Dumping Without Borders: How US agricultural policies are destroying the livelihoods of Mexican corn farmers.” It explains how the Mexican corn sector is in acute crisis because of the influx of cheap subsidized corn imports from the U.S. and how action is required at the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun to end agricultural dumping.

*September 4, 2003* – Oxfam campaigners and African farmer representatives call for an end to destructive cotton subsidies at a demonstration held in front of the National Cotton Council in Washington, D.C. The event was highlighted by Uncle Sam dumping sacks of cotton on a map of Africa, and the presence of two visiting West African representatives from a regional network that represents small farmers, including cotton producers, Jacques Bonou of Benin and Ibrahima Coulibaly of Mali.

*September 7, 2003* – Oxfam America joins FARM AID, among many others, and releases a joint statement that calls for healthy environment, sustainable food supply, and fair markets for farmers. The statement aimed at U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and other elected officials and fair trade advocates.

*September 9, 2003* – Chris Martin and Jonny Buckland of Coldplay will deliver the *Big Noise* petition to WTO Director General Supachai Panitchpakdi. It is comprised of voices and signatures from all over the world totaling more than three million people calling for fair trading rules. The *Big Noise* was mobilized to a great degree through its online e-mail campaigns.

*September 2003* – Oxfam releases a briefing note opposing the U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). Oxfam believes that the same rules being negotiated in the WTO and FTAA – requiring liberalized trade in agriculture, deregulated investment, and

decreased access to intellectual property – will reduce Central American governments’ abilities to make trade work for development goals.

*September 2003* – Prior to the WTO meeting in Cancún, Oxfam delivers all collected postcards to President Bush.

*September 2003* – WTO’s Fifth Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico – world trade ministers meet to start a new phase in the Doha ‘development round.’ Oxfam, as well as visiting West African farmer representatives ask WTO members to dismantle cotton subsidies and compensate poor countries for losses. It is pointed out that almost none of the promises made at Doha in 2001 have been honored, and this could be the last chance for rich countries to deliver. Doha declarations are re-affirmed yet no major moves are made

## **2004**

*May 8, 2004* – World Fair Trade Day is celebrated by gathers in Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Washington D.C., as well as many other cities around the U.S. Participants enjoy concerts, fairs, speakers, and over events in celebration of the continued growth and progress of the Fair Trade movement.

*June 2004* – Oxfam publishes a briefing paper in response to the WTO’s ruling on U.S. cotton subsidies. The WTO concluded that the EU and U.S. have used loopholes and creative accounting to continue dumping products on world markets – practices that are hurt developing countries and are in violation of WTO rules. The U.S. will undoubtedly appeal the ruling; however, Oxfam calls on the U.S. to acknowledge and remedy the trade-distorting effects of its cotton programs by implementing the panel’s ruling in a fair and expeditious way.

*August 2004* – Americas Social Forum in Quito, Ecuador. Thousands signed up to support fair trade and joined Oxfam’s ongoing *Big Noise* petition, which includes about five million.

Groups gathered demanded that Latin American governments oppose agreements with the U.S., such as CAFTA, that dump subsidized commodities onto the world market.

*September 2004* – U.S. government announces its intention to rejoin the International Coffee Organization (ICO), the international forum for coffee trade policy and production.

Oxfam America had strongly urged the U.S. to rejoin the ICO through its MTF campaign

## **2005**

*January 2005* – Malian singer and guitarist Habib Koité has joined Oxfam to protest U.S. policies that dump commodities on poor countries. Koité is using his 33-city U.S. concert tour to help educate Americans about the plight of struggling farmers in his home country of Mali.

*January 2005* – Habib Koité has joined other celebrities such as Alanis Morissette, Michael Stipe, Colin Firth, Youssou N’Dour and Chris Martin in MTF campaign photos. The released photos show cotton and other subsidies being ‘dumped’ on their heads to symbolize the plight of farmers facing unfair competition from American counterparts.

*March 2005* – Oxfam America unites with its Central American partners to send representatives to Washington, D.C. to lobby face-to-face against the DR-CAFTA, a regional trade agreement between the U.S. and Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. In addition to providing direct support to the Central American groups, Oxfam America also fosters connections between U.S. farmers and farmers in other countries, such as farm visits, around policy debates like CAFTA.

*April 2005* – Burkina Faso’s film festival is held in its capital of Ouagadougou. In the biennial gathering of Africa’s most notable movie stars, directors, musicians, and comedians, volunteers and celebrities promoted MTF and the *Big Noise* petition. Billboards graced the capital to encourage signatures, and the MTF also printed all the tickets to the festival’s screenings, ensuring over 216,000 film enthusiasts were exposed to the campaign. The current

number on *Big Noise* is roughly around 6.5 million after the 58,126 signatures collected at the festival. There were press stories about the MTF campaign and the *Big Noise* signature drive in major newspapers in Ouagadougou and across West Africa, as well as on Radio France Internationale and the BBC.

*April 2005* – Oxfam America invites a delegation of farm representatives to Washington, D.C. late in the month. They met with staff members of 20 House and Senate members, all of whom were undecided on DR-CAFTA and said they appreciated hearing the perspectives of farmers who will be directly affected by the trade agreement.

*June 30, 2005* – Cotton farmers from across Africa convened in Maputo, Mozambique to join the global movement to stop agriculture policies that are depressing world cotton prices. The event marked the start of a new regional campaign led by Oxfam America and its partners in Mozambique.

*August – September 2005* – Coldplay promotes MTF during their “Twisted Logic” tour. During the 36-date tour, before each concert, Coldplay shows a brief video on the suffering caused by bad trade policies and the potential for trade reform to lift millions out of poverty. The video calls on concert-goers to sign the *Big Noise* petition by using their cell phones. To this date the number is at 7.7 million for the petition. Oxfam is preparing to give the petition at the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference in December in Hong Kong.

*August 2005* – In an extremely close vote, DR-CAFTA was passed by the U.S. Congress. The narrow passage showed two things says Oxfam: Americans do not universally support such free trade agreements, and there is widespread concern about the welfare of those who stand to lose in global trade.

*September 16, 2005* – To raise support for fair trade Oxfam brings the MTF Road Show across the country to major U.S. cities. At the MTF Road Show participants can sign the *Big Noise*, sample Fair Trade Certified coffee, watch video shorts, listen to audio testimony from West African cotton farmers, and have their photo taken while ‘getting dumped’ in cotton, rice, or corn like the celebrity sponsors.

*November 3, 2005* – The U.S. Senate votes no 53-46 to an amendment introduced on the Senate floor by Senator Charles Grassley and Byron Dorgan would have capped farm payments at \$250,000 and eliminated the loopholes that have allowed mega-farms to collect more than \$1 million in subsidies.

*November 2005* – In preparation for the upcoming WTO negotiations in Hong Kong, Oxfam publishes a briefing paper *Africa and the Doha Round – Fighting to keep development alive*. The paper explains Africa’s dire need for changes in trade policy as it stands to lose the most and be most affected by trade policy than any other continent. Now is the time for Africa calls Oxfam.

*December 2005* – Oxfam creates a delegation to send to Hong Kong as part of the MTF campaign. Three more international celebrities lend their voices to the *Big Noise* petition, now at almost 18 million signatures – Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal, singer Angelique Kidjou, from Benin, and Chinese rock star Anthony Wong are among the delegation. The *Big Noise* is presented around the world to trade ministers and delegations en route to the Hong Kong and is presented to Pascal Lamy, Director General of the WTO on December 12.

*December 13-18, 2005* – WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong.

## **2006**

*January – April 2006* – Coldplay is championing the MTF campaign during the second leg of their “Twisted Logic” tour. Some ways to take action include volunteering at a concert,

signing up to the *Big Noise*, buying a MTF t-shirt, listening to Chris Martin's public service announcement, or to view Oxfam's Flickr photosets from the MTF Roadshow.

*February 2006* – Oxfam begins new outdoor advertising ad campaign. The logo of a plump O propped up by the sturdy X and the tag line “more than relief” seeks to educate and inform the U.S. public about how they have helped make the world a better place and the role they can continue to play by being a part of Oxfam. This should additionally help the profile of the MTF campaign. After purchasing billboard space in November of 2005 there was such a positive response that Oxfam wanted to see if they could get pro bono placements, and the Outdoor Advertising Associate of America lined up donors willing to give Oxfam highly visible space. Such space includes billboards in New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, California and Minneapolis.

*May 2006* – Since the WTO ruled that the U.S. had broken international trade rules by handing out millions of dollars to U.S. cotton producers each year, the U.S. government has taken minimal steps to reform its policies points out Oxfam.

*May 2006* – Late in the month U2 front man and Oxfam celebrity Bono toured Mali, winding down a nine-day trip to Africa focused on aid, trade, and debt relief. On May 22, NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams followed Bono, traveling with the organization DATA, as he met with cotton farmers to talk about agricultural subsidies and how they affect cotton prices for Africa.

*July 19, 2006* – Oxfam America President, Raymond C. Offenheiser, publishes letter to members of Congress urging them to vote no on US-Peru Free Trade Agreement as it would be bad farmers, access to medicines, and sustainable development in Peru.

*July 2006* – Late in the month, the head of the WTO announces that the Doha “Development Round” of trade talks between rich and poor countries is suspended. Five years of haggling and debate delivered nothing short of failure says Oxfam. Doha fell short, but Oxfam supporters helped make history by changing the terms of the debate. Regardless, Oxfam MTF campaign will continue. Upcoming: campaigning again FTAs with Peru and Thailand and campaigning to reform agriculture subsidies that lead to dumping in 2007’s Farm Bill.

*August 2006* – Oxfam’s Jim French kept a journal during his recent trip to West Africa with other U.S. farmers and it is published to the public. He accounts what he saw and learned while on his trip.

*October 2006* – Oxfam partner organizations in the Andean region speak out against the FTAs. The partners have shared their messages with the press, built up grassroots efforts to activate civil society, and directly engaged with the government.

*October 2006* – Oxfam partner organizations in the Andean region bring their insights on the U.S.-Peru FTA to Washington, D.C. and speak directly with U.S. Representatives and congressional staff about how the agreement could impact Peru.

## **2007**

*January 31, 2007* – U.S. Agricultural Secretary Mike Johanns announces a proposed revision of the current Farm Bill, which could result in a decrease of the most trade-distorting forms of domestic support. Congressional reactions to the Johanns proposal are neither supportive nor very critical. The current Farm Bill in place from 2002 is set to expire in September of this year.

*February 14, 2007* – U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means Hearing on the U.S. Trade Agenda is held. Oxfam America President Raymond Offenheiser speaks in regard to the WTO and the Doha Development Round as well as FTAs.

*March 2007* – Oxfam publishes briefing paper “Signing Away The Future – How trade and investment agreements between rich and poor countries undermine development.” Driven by the U.S. and EU, these agreements impose far-reaching rules that place severe restrictions on the very policies developing countries need in order to fight poverty argues Oxfam.

*September 2007* – Oxfam speaks out against the Farm Bill through their website, brochures, publications, and e-mails.

*October 2007* – Oxfam promotes Fair Trade Month (October). Oxfam pulls together some resources for anyone interested in learning more about global trade, where to purchase Fair Trade products, or how participants can start their own grassroots campaign. Participants can get involved by adopting a local supermarket, organizing their community to become a Fair Trade Town, or creating a film about their personal commitment to Fair Trade.

## **2008**

*May 2008* – After a long and drawn-out Farm Bill reform the bill is finally passed by Congress. Oxfam criticizes the leadership of the U.S. Congress for missing the opportunity to shift subsidies from wealthy farmers to the poor and others in need, and subsequently finalizing a Farm Bill that continues the broken status quo. Instead, the U.S. Congress actually expands government farm subsidies in the 2008 Farm Bill and reinstated cotton subsidies previously ruled illegal at the WTO.

*May 9, 2008* – Oxfam President, Raymond Offenheiser, publically addresses the outcome of the Farm Bill. “Faced with a mounting food crisis at home and abroad, Congress had the opportunity through the Farm Bill to shift funds from wasteful agricultural subsidies for large scale farms to food aid to meet the needs of the poor, but instead, Congressional leaders settled on a bill that will continue to be costly to taxpayers, undermine our rural economy, damage our trade relationships, and hurt the world’s poorest farmers,” says Offenheiser.

*July 1, 2008* – Oxfam publishes a detailed press release that explains what happened with the Farm Bill. In the release, Oxfam explains what the Farm Bill calls for and how it fell short, what areas they gained progress in, how the media reacted to the attention to subsidies, as well as Oxfam’s other accomplishments such as the addition of volunteer groups like Oxfam Action Corps and the Farm Bill Action Team.

*July 2008* – Late in the month, as trade ministers from around 35 countries gather, the WTO holds a week of talks in Geneva for what is billed yet again as a last-ditch attempt to forge a Doha trade deal. Yet, this time around the WTO is forced to deal with the 2008 U.S. Farm Bill. On the subject, Oxfam publishes the briefing note “Square pegs in round holes: How the Farm Bill squanders chances for a pro-development trade deal.”

*July 2008* – The WTO trade talks in Geneva break down, and it is considered yet another missed opportunity. The reported breakdown of world trade talks was caused by rich countries offering too little and making unreasonable demands in return says Oxfam. Particularly controversial among issues was the Special Safeguard Mechanism, designed to allow poor countries to protect their small farmers against agricultural import surges. Oxfam states that developing countries are not to blame and until there is a better deal on the table, they should stand their ground.

*October 16, 2008* – World Food Day. Oxfam releases new report, “Double Edged Prices,” explaining how poor farmers in developing countries have not benefited from higher food prices, due in part to flawed trade and agricultural policies that have made them vulnerable to recent food price shocks. “Double Edged Prices” calls on all governments, donors, and agencies to learn lessons from the crisis, including the importance of investing in agriculture, reforming

trade policy to help insure greater food security, and designing social protection systems that protect the poorest.

*October 17, 2008* – Oxfam applauds the enactment of legislation that extends and improves U.S. trade programs that help developing countries. President Bush signs the legislation on this date, which would have expired otherwise. This is the practice of extending preferential duty-free market access to imports from developing countries as a means of stimulation economic growth and poverty reduction.

As voiced by campaign informants there is not a clear start and end date to the MTF campaign as making trade more fair is always a concern at hand. All campaign informants agree, however, that what is shown is the meat and peak of the campaign and that it is presently winding down in late 2008 as Oxfam is turning its attention to other issues such as climate change as well as waiting for a new administration in the White House. “We will still continue to work on trade.....much more behind the scenes and less of the public engagement piece of it,” says Vicky Rateau, the MTF Campaign Manager.

Interestingly, the campaign informants all expressed the nature of the campaign as coming in pulses or peaks of action. As there were no official set dates for actions, like most public relations campaigns are arranged, the MTF campaign took opportunities such as trade negotiations and meetings to focus their strategies and tactics around. “It [MTF campaign] was kind of a multi-headed monster if you will,” says Oxfam Senior Press Officer, Laura Rusu. Furthermore, Rateau explained, “It’s not so much based on time but the opportunities to influence that turned the timeline of the campaign.” This points out the difference in the nature of campaign planning from a public relations standpoint in comparison to non-profit campaigning - which is largely centered around lobbying, advocating, and raising awareness.

As of writing time, Oxfam continues to advocate and work on influencing trade policies though not necessarily the MTF campaign anymore, although making trade fair is still the desired end result. When asked if they are in an evaluative stage in MTF, Rateau responded by saying, “Well, I think the evaluation stage has probably been going on for a couple of years.”

### **SWOT Analysis**

Before diving straight into campaign goals, tactics and theoretical analysis, a SWOT analysis of Oxfam and its situation with the MTF campaign helps to give a solid foundation of the situation at hand. A SWOT analysis explains the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Oxfam as an organization and the MTF campaign had and will have to approach and assess. A SWOT analysis helps to keep the bigger picture in mind when focusing on smaller campaign details.

Most notably, one of Oxfam’s biggest strengths is its reputation. Its reputation is based on years of working for global problems to help the poor, hungry, and disadvantaged of the world. When donors give to Oxfam they are assured that they are contributing to a noble cause and an organization that is just and ethical as well as fully capable. Oxfam has worked its way to the top tier of large, international relief and not-for-profit agencies, and its name is synonymous with excellence among those working in the same arena.

With the value of Oxfam’s reputation and name comes the added value of its many partners and affiliates around the world. Not only is Oxfam a partner to many organizations domestically working for the same cause, but it also shares many of its efforts with organizations working in countries all over the world. For almost each initiative Oxfam pursues in another country, it has at least a handful of local grassroots organizations partnering with Oxfam to increase its visibility, reach, and message not only just locally but around the globe.

In the same way that Oxfam's profile is inherent with strengths, the very nature of work also lends the organization to weaknesses as well. Like any good business, a profit is necessary to keep the organization running and prosperous. As a not-for-profit organization, Oxfam relies solely on donations and fundraising in order to carry out its work. Because of this Oxfam must work extra hard and set aside additional time, resources, and manpower to achieving this goal.

Additionally, and most prominent of its weaknesses, Oxfam is trying to fight the extremely complicated and intrinsic global problems of poverty, trade, and human rights among various natural and man-made disasters. No one can disagree that this is quite a tall order for any organization seeking to rectify such problems, and there is no once and for all solution. These sorts of problems create hard to define parameters and gray areas and in some ways can almost be looked at abstractly. Similarly, such problems have hard to define parameters of success compared to traditional public relations measurable goal and objective setting.

These weaknesses, also give Oxfam many opportunities at the same time. Oxfam and those that work with the organization can't necessarily fix all of the problems of the world by waving a magic wand, but there is the opportunity to make a problem a little bit better than before. Every little bit counts and surely doesn't go unnoticed to the hungry and disadvantaged. Oxfam has the opportunity to engage people to get up and help out in their own way to make a difference whether it is by donating to the cause, educating people in their own area, or calling their elected officials. In the case of the MTF campaign specifically, Oxfam has the opportunity to reduce global poverty by influencing the public and those that negotiate trade laws to take into account the welfare of people in developing countries.

Additionally, MTF campaign manager Vicky Rateau explained the opportunity for advocacy for Oxfam, "The campaign [MTF] was brand new or I should say campaigning was

new for Oxfam America when the MTF campaign was introduced. And so it was an opportunity to do more advocacy around issues – systemic issues that we thought were important, and so it was a way to help increase the brand awareness and the recognitions of Oxfam’s approach to these very complex problems.” Therefore, Oxfam not only has the opportunity to change the world so to speak, but also to increase brand awareness and thrust its roots into advocacy from a more micro-organization standpoint.

From a threat standpoint, Oxfam’s MTF campaign is approached in a manner of attacking certain pieces and problems as they come – like a trade negotiation for example. This manner makes it hard for Oxfam to forecast threats until it is almost immediately affected by them. Not knowing the nature and outcomes of upcoming trade negotiations leaves the organization deciding its specific approach only after waiting on the response of another party. Although Oxfam can prepare for both sides of the argument, they can never fully know what will come out of each set of trade negotiations until they are complete, and Oxfam constantly has to re-evaluate its efforts and what to do next.

Another threat Oxfam must deal with in the MTF campaign is the issue of how to get Americans (and in general other peoples in rich/developed countries) interested and engaged in something or someone abroad that they don’t know or have never seen. How can Oxfam take trade negotiations and make them not only interesting but applicable to the American public, for example. Oxfam must answer why the cause of fair trade should be important and how it affects the American public.

### **Analysis Of Media Coverage Of The MTF Campaign**

The analysis of media coverage section seeks to shed light on the type and amount of coverage generated by the campaign with reference to key messages, the campaign as a whole, and more micro-focused to events such as particular trade negotiations – the peaks of the

campaign. Although a multitude of information and coverage is available in regard to trade reform, only those sources mentioning Oxfam's name will be considered appropriate to the analysis.

### **From The Horse's Mouth**

Oxfam Senior Press Officer, Laura Rusu, described the media coverage of the campaign as a whole to be very positive, and it showed how many reporters came to see Oxfam as a player in the trade game and as a good source of analysis of information about negotiations by their inquiry to Oxfam's perspective on trade issues. "We focused on a number of different kinds of media anywhere from entertainment media with celebrities that Lyndsay had worked with to the really, wonky, inside-baseball type media here in Washington such as *Inside Trade* or congressional quarterlies and dailies," says Rusu. "So I would say that we had enormous success."

Rusu also explained the key messages the MTF campaign wanted to get across in its coverage to the public as well as trade negotiators and government employees. "Well, the key message for us was obviously that fair trade – international trade, if fair, can help pull people out of poverty," says Rusu. This message was then catered to a specific audience by trying to make it appeal to their interests and position in the debate says Rusu.

Vicky Rateau, MTF Campaign Manager (U.S.), characterized the media coverage of the campaign by its effectiveness. "It [the coverage] was probably most effective for two things. One – for the engagement and awareness building of Oxfam's campaign in international trade, and two – it cut through the spin and intransigence of rich countries by really honing in on what the interests were....honing in on the fact that rich countries weren't listening to developing countries at all in these international negotiations," says Rateau. "It was a way for us to cut through the spin coming out from governments and helped address the power dynamics."

The media coverage can also be characterized around major negotiations Oxfam was lobbying – WTO talks in Cancún and Hong Kong and the U.S. Farm Bill. As the Farm Bill came later in the campaign game it seemed to gain the most coverage. Oxfam reports in July 2008 that nearly 300 media stories carried their messages supporting farm policy reform. Additionally, their reputation as a thought-leader through new research and publications on the effect of U.S. farm subsidies on poor farmers in Africa was burnished as such pieces drew the attention of experts and journalists from outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*.

“A few years ago, people outside of Washington, D.C. beltway and agriculture circles didn’t know much about agriculture reform and the Farm Bill’s effect on poor farmers in other countries. But thanks to the joint movement around Farm Bill reform, more than 500 editorials calling for change were published by newspapers from *The New York Times* to *The Chattanooga Times Free Press*,” says Oxfam in a July 2008 press release. “Oxfam America’s efforts were featured in more than 300 news stories in outlets from National Public Radio to *The St. Cloud Times*, and in addition.....a multimedia slide show, posted on YouTube and distributed to constituents, was viewed about 4,700 times.”

### **Media Coverage Of MTF**

Based on an exploratory search of the Google News database, Oxfam’s MTF campaign had a total of 1,460 hits ranging from media sources in London to Ethiopia to Birmingham, Alabama. Most sources came from print media; however, there was also ample online/website and academic/journal coverage. Figure 4-1 shows the total media hits in the Google News database for the campaign from 2001 to 2008. As one can see, the campaign received most coverage between 2002 and 2007.

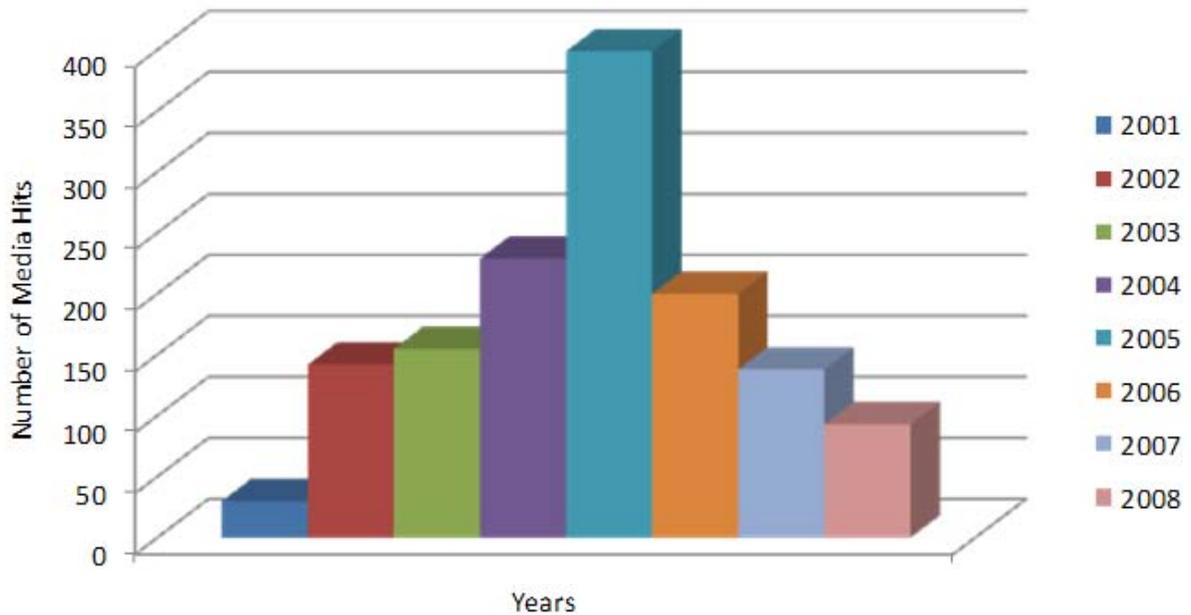


Figure 4-1. Google News Media Hits for MTF Campaign

A qualitative analysis revealed that prior to 2002, most coverage consisted of the Oxfam name in conjunction with fair trade topics such as coffee, fair trade days, and eco-shopping as Oxfam provided expertise on such topics. The MTF campaign was officially launched in 2002, which generated 142 hits. Most stories in 2002 focus on the launch of the campaign itself, what the campaign is, and what it calls for as well as Oxfam being a leader among fair trade issues. In 2003, the hits increase to 155 and include stories about what the MTF campaign is and how it is doing, Free Trade Agreements, and a focus in other countries on local partners that Oxfam is working with – for example, INCIDIN Bangladesh and Bela in Bangladesh, India. Additionally in 2003, stories highlight MTF’s role in the Glastonbury Festival, the Big Noise petition, and Coldplay’s support of the campaign – for example, Coldplay Rocks for Farmers, a story from MTV.com. There is little mention of the WTO Cancún negotiations directly in headlines although it is mentioned in many stories toward the end.

The year 2004 yields 229 media hits including topics such as the Big London Charity Live Event for MTF, Africans and the *Big Noise* petition, the U.S. appeal of the cotton ruling from the WTO, the EU and WTO on sugar, an Oxfam music website in Britain, and lots of features of people and communities in developing countries that are affected by dumping and subsidies from the U.S. and EU. As shown in Figure 4-2, the year 2005 has the most coverage of all other years with a total of 399 total media hits. Overwhelmingly, the WTO trade talks in Hong Kong are the topic at large. Other reoccurring topics include how the EU is blamed for stalling trade talks and the band Snow Patrol’s addition to the MTF campaign cause.

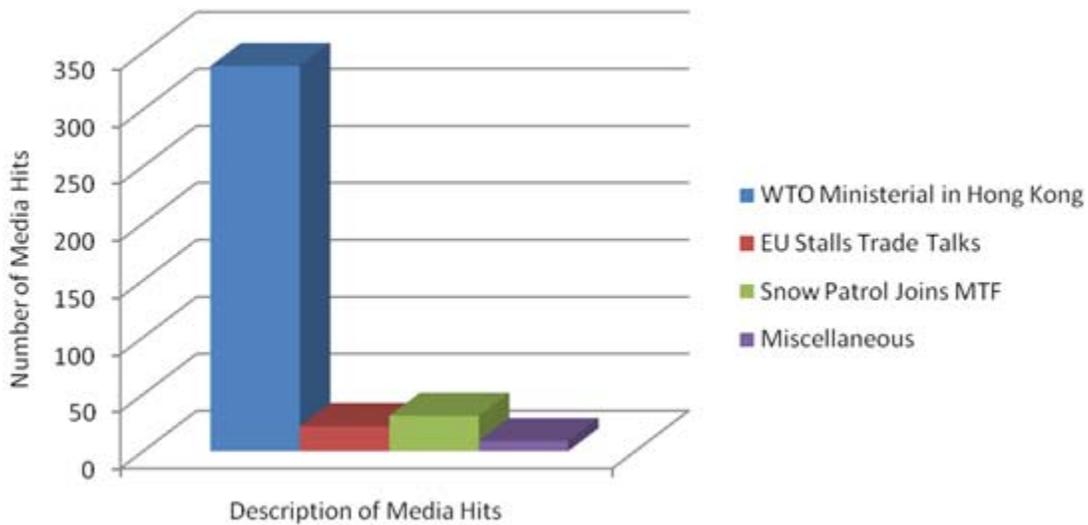


Figure 4-2. Description of Media Hits in 2005

Media coverage starts to decline in 2006 with 200 hits. Most of the 2006 articles focus on Coldplay’s role in MTF – delivering the *Big Noise* petition in Hong Kong, winning a Grammy, and their new album and tour. In 2007, MTF gets 138 total hits mostly regarding Coldplay, what MTF is, and a little on the upcoming U.S. Farm Bill. Continuing the decline, in 2008 there are 93 hits focusing on Oxfam celebrities and how the celebrities have helped to champion the fair trade cause and the campaign.

## Analysis Of Media Coverage

Based on the hits from Google News many conclusions can be drawn. First, in regard to key messages, all articles examined featured the key messages that Oxfam sought to get across to its targets. Regardless of the main topic or headline of the article, all mentioned the need for fair trade and what exactly this meant. Most of the time this was at the end of the article as the trade situation was explained and who Oxfam is and what it stands for. Also mentioned at the end of every article examined was a way for readers to get involved – whether it be through the *Big Noise* petition or by visiting Oxfam’s website to learn more about unfair dumping and trade rules.

Second, the breadth of coverage was vast as many stories were not only in the U.S. and EU – but also all over the world in Central and South America, Asia, and Africa. Topics discussed MTF issues relevant to the local communities as well as the stance of other players in the trade game. Based on a sample of 100 hits from across the seven-year timeline of 1,460 total hits, Figure 4-3 shows the world distribution of news stories covering the MTF campaign.

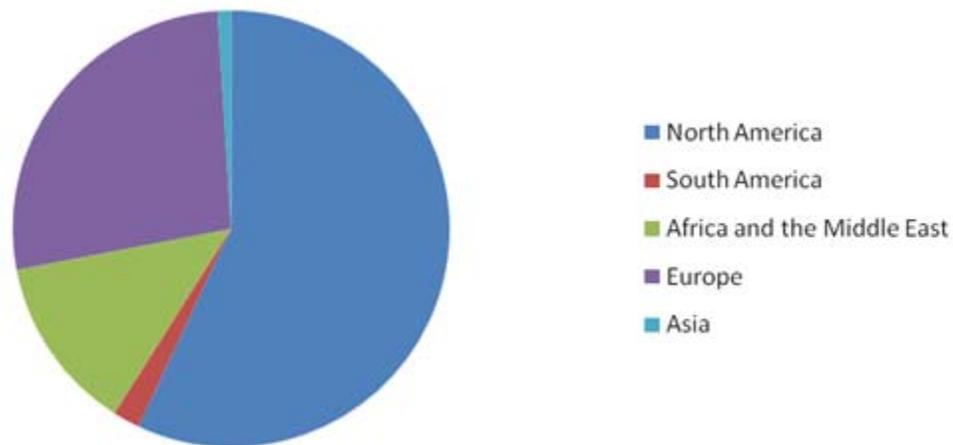


Figure 4-3. Break-down of Total Campaign Media Hits by World Regions (based on a sample of 100)

Lastly, one can see the majority of coverage was centered around the year 2005 – right in the middle, as campaign informants really consider MTF a working campaign from 2002 to 2007 with outside years being the build-up and decline of ongoing policy and reform. Peaks in coverage were largely in part due to trade negotiations and celebrities (i.e. – new albums, tours, pictures, etc.).

### **Theoretical Findings**

This section addresses the results from the data analysis only and does not include a discussion or implications of the findings. Such information can be found in the following chapter. Data analysis and pattern matching was conducted through the use of interviews from key informants in the MTF campaign as well as external documents from Oxfam such as research reports, briefing notes, press releases, and brochures.

Recall from the literature review that Ledingham defines his theory of relationship management as (2003, p. 190): Effectively managing organizational-public relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organizations and publics. Loyalty, satisfaction, and expectations are all central to the organization-public relationship. *If the ultimate goal of public relations is to build mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics, then measuring the outcomes of those relationships provides an important indicator of public relations' effectiveness* (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998).

The findings from the relationship management theory pattern matching is divided into two sections – one for each model. Further, each model's section is divided by the different processes and dimensions. Pattern matching consisted of a coding scheme using numbers and letters. All interview transcriptions and documents were analyzed, and whenever a model's attributes were present, it was coded with a number and letter corresponding to the particular

process or dimension. For example, a response indicating how trust was established with Oxfam's targets was coded as 2-B.

### **SMARTS Model**

The SMARTS model from Ledingham offers a process to manage an organization-public relationship with the specific steps of scanning, mapping, acting, rolling-out, tracking, and stewarding. Through the examination of these steps in the MTF campaign, the nature of the relationship between Oxfam and its publics/targets can be further explained.

### **Scan**

The "S" in Ledingham's SMARTS model stands for "scan." Scan is defined as articulating antecedents of relationships found in the organization-public system. Key MTF informants were asked if Oxfam completed a preliminary analysis or scan of its targets and if so, what this process entailed.

Oxfam's Senior Press Officer, Laura Rusu, explained the campaign evolved as a response to global poverty problems and the Doha Development negotiations, and in doing so they had to scan what sorts of things were already out there that addressed such issues. "It was interesting because there were a lot of NGOs out there – organizations that focus on *free trade* – and they are out there saying that free trade is the best for poverty and for really frankly, everybody while there are organizations out there that say that globalization is bad for poor people, that WTO is pretty much evil, that the World Bank is evil," says Rusu.

Because of Oxfam's inspection of other free-trade advocating organizations it was able to see where its message and ideas would fit into the debate. "We kind of struck this nice balance of saying that free trade is not good, but trade globalization is here to stay and what we need to do in order to help the poorest people is to make sure that they get something out of international trade – that they get something out of globalization," says Rusu.

Oxfam MTF Campaign Manager Vicky Rateau also noted the importance of examining other similar development organizations but in another manner. “We also looked at other development and humanitarian organizations and other like-minded groups, mainly think-groups and other social justice groups and identified what might be the issues that bring them on board that help us achieve what we need to within MTF campaign, but would also be of some interest to them and might be beneficial to their own advocacy work,” says Rateau. In addition to scanning similar organizations, Rateau also explained that Oxfam looked at their own donors and supporters in an effort to understand what would engage them and inspire them. Oxfam wanted to engage them in international issues and get them more involved in advocacy and was looking for the appropriate tactics and tools to help their donors and supporters out.

Scanning was also done in terms of identifying obstacles or opportunities with developing countries affected by unfair trade rules and regulations – an important public that Oxfam was seeking to give voice and recognition to. “Well, there were several features identified as either being obstacles or opportunities for developing countries under the umbrella of trade, so these issues were identified by a research and policy team....and consultations with our partners,” tells Rateau.

Oxfam MTF Campaign Organizer Brian Rawson responded to the question by saying, “the more sophisticated scan was really more about general support for Oxfam – you know who our supporters were – that’s where we were able to get down to more demographics. For the MTF campaign itself, I don’t think we did a really comprehensive demographic survey. We basically built upon what organizing resources we already had.” As a the campaign organizer, Rawson was in charge of bringing people into the campaign, and for this Oxfam’s target was generally the under-35 age group, notably building on the student groups and activists that Oxfam already

had under its wing. “So I mean in short the answer is ‘no.’ We didn’t do a sophisticated study or survey, but we had some idea of where our work was already resonating,” says Rawson.

## **Map**

The “M” in Ledingham’s SMARTS model stands for “map.” This is defined as recommending the appropriate planning strategies after a scan of targets has been completed. Key MTF informants were asked how Oxfam planned campaign objectives to tailor to its targets. As Rateau explained identifying key issues with regard to developing countries and trade, the next step is the process is moving key decision makers on the issues. This would include decision makers from particular countries that hold a lot of power in trade negotiations or other similar power dynamics on an international level. “Media staff and organizing staff looked at....how do we engage who needs to be engaged in this campaign in order to move on these issues, and the strategies were developed from there,” says Rateau.

When Rusu was asked about mapping efforts in the MTF campaign she focused on targeting rich countries and their governments – a target that Oxfam was not only trying to inform but move to create an action. “A huge percentage of our effort was targeting rich country governments such as the EU, Canada, the U.S.....and how do you target rich country governments or any country for that matter? The people raise awareness among constituents and they call up their members of congress, their senators, or call on the President to do the right thing,” says Rusu.

In order to achieve the objectives of awareness and action among rich country governments and trade officials, a wide variety of tactical methods were used both directly and indirectly to the targets. “Depending on time or the specific event sometimes it was about raising awareness in a particular district to get lots of people to call their member of congress or sometimes it was as simple as taking an ad out in a congressional publication – therefore,

speaking directly to members of congress and to their staff. It was also, for example, having Chris Martin from Coldplay record an ad that was heard and ran on Clear Channel radio stations across the U.S. calling on people to call President Bush,” says Rusu.

When Rawson was asked he referred to the target market of those under-35 that he was seeking to engage in the campaign. For them, the objectives were about awareness and participation in the campaign. In order to tailor these objectives to the young age group, Rawson felt that Oxfam’s previous work among student organizations was important to build on because “it was really clear that that issue [fair trade coffee] was a great resonant issue with the student population in college,” says Rawson.

“Secondly, we had the band Coldplay support the MTF campaign so it was kind of a no-brainer if we wanted to get a huge number of signatures we should try to leverage their U.S. tour as much as possible.” Rawson felt it worked nicely with the under-35 crowd. Furthermore, Brian discussed the photo campaign where different celebrities posed for photos with commodities dumped on their heads to send the message of fair trade. Rawson said that the agency that helped to put the photos together suggested the photos would work especially well with the under-35 age group in addition to people above that age range.

## **Act**

After scanning the target publics and mapping campaign objectives to tailor to each of the targets, the third step – act – suggests methods for pre-testing, programming, and campaign elements. For this step interviewees were asked how much materials and information was produced for the target publics – basically, how much information was out there and available.

Rusu discussed Oxfam’s message testing as key messages in Virginia were much different than those in Chicago. Messages were in a sense pre-tested and then reformulated. “It took a really long time to really go out there with the message and to see what works, what doesn’t and

to see where the voids are...to see what the level of interest is and if people are interested at all,” says Rusu. “That kind of messaging thread we used with reporters, we used in ads, electronic communications with our constituents, and E-actions,” says Rusu.

Rateau explained quite literally about Oxfam’s materials. “There was definitely a lot of materials out there. A lot on the web – I mean on the web it was information about the issues, policy papers that people could read, the flagship book written by a lead Oxfam researcher on the various issues, and what we were pursuing in regards to each unfair trade rule that was identified.” Additionally, Rateau mentioned the abundance of information available to support engagement of people who wanted to be activists on international trade. “Organizing kits, things they could use to set up, engage other people, or run efficiently on their own with some videos or clips of things to download,” says Rateau.

On top of the more serious natured materials, Oxfam also created campaign materials that were more “Hollywood” or flashy as celebrities from around the world carried the MTF message. They were aimed to gain a wider, broader level of awareness. “There were campaign materials that were out there just to help raise awareness like celebrity posters and ads, little gimmicky things that could be handed out to draw somebody’s attention to a piece of paper that had much more substance on it,” says Rateau.

Rather than literal materials, Rawson answered in terms of Oxfam’s influence and voice across the country. For example, Coldplay’s various tours in support of MTF visited over 60 U.S. cities at a time, and the MTF message was a part of every concert. Furthermore, Rawson explained that Oxfam also had a targeted effort where they had located field organizers – Minnesota, Kansas, Virginia, the Northeast, Los Angeles, and Chicago. However, mostly in those areas the messages and information were more tailored to specific rural farm populations.

“We were reaching out to people with agrarian interests, people living in more rural areas,” says Rawson. Additionally, Oxfam had the Oxfam Action Corps volunteers and many student activists groups in colleges all over the country.

From the researcher’s standpoint, the internet seemed to be where the MTF campaign laid its foundation for materials. Archives provided any user with countless policy papers and research reports, press releases, what to do to help, and activist kits. The Oxfam and MTF websites had an abundance of information. As far as materials released outside of the internet, the largest focus was around celebrities with the dumping photos, videos, and Coldplay related materials. For members of the public not familiar with fair trade, these celebrity-related materials proved to be the most invasive form of information by Oxfam. Otherwise, supplemental materials were in relation to a specific event, like World Fair Day, or a specific congressional member, like one in favor of Farm Bill reform.

### **Roll-out**

Rolling-out, the next of Ledingham’s steps provides a platform for campaign implementation. Interviewees were asked how the release and implementation was aimed to get the attention of the targets. Responses largely discussed what sorts of things increased the profile of the campaign and what sorts of messages were aimed to get the attention of targets. For example, Rateau mentioned, “There were a lot of things done to just increase the profile of the campaign like the engagement of celebrities around these dumping photos.”

Celebrity engagement certainly helped to increase the profile of the campaign profoundly. Most notable, the continued support and advocacy of Coldplay helped to put fair trade on the map for music fans across the world. “Before each concert, Coldplay shows a brief video on the suffering caused by bad trade policies and the potential for trade reform to lift millions out of

poverty,” says a July 2005 Oxfam press release. “The video calls on concert-goers to sign the Big Noise petition by using their cell phones to send a text message.”

In addition to Coldplay’s efforts to raise awareness and the dumping photos, the MTF campaign was also promoted by other celebrities like Bono of U2 and at events such as the 2005 Burkina Faso film festival – one of the largest and most prestigious in Africa. In the end of 2005 many celebrities such as Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal and Chinese rock star Anthony Wong gathered to support the Big Noise and deliver the petition to the WTO during its ministerial in Hong Kong.

Also important to the release and implementation is the type of messaging Oxfam employed. In order to get the attention of Congressional targets for example, the message was framed to their interest. Rusu explains how a member of congress might not be interested in international trade or in agricultural issues but he could be very much interested in security issues. So in that case Oxfam would make the argument that trade could very well be a security issue – that poverty could be a security issue and so forth. Furthermore, how to actually frame the message of fair trade to the general public was very important too. “Frankly, trade policy is not a very exciting topic so we had to be really creative in order to get people to give us a couple of seconds to have them really think about what trade policy is and what it could be and how it can help or how is it integral or not integral in the social justice issues that they care about,” says Rusu.

Both Rateau and Rawson discussed the use of MTF’s national organizers and field organizers and their role in getting the attention of Oxfam’s targets. National organizers broadly supported the concert outreach, worked more to educate people about the issues, and worked with key allies. They were very much broad-scale oriented. Field organizers “were placed in

strategic locations – places that we wanted to build up our membership base or want to build a base in which we could engage them in direct advocacy around international legislative initiatives,” says Rateau. “They were the ones who reached out to groups, identified top leaders, helped to facilitate that direct advocacy between people who wanted to get involved in the campaign and members of congress and their offices.”

## **Track**

The fifth step in the SMARTS model stands for “Track.” Tracking recommends methods for evaluating public relations impact over time. Key informants were asked if they evaluated their efforts to reach their market throughout the duration of the campaign. Additionally, tracking was strongly attached to the sixth step, “steward” as by tracking the campaign efforts, Oxfam often had to adjust their tactics and how to best reach their targets. This section addresses if and how Oxfam tracked such efforts in the MTF and the next section any modifications they made have made to the campaign based on this tracking.

For example, in Oxfam’s 2007 June Accountability Report, a section was dedicated to the evaluation of Oxfam’s many ongoing campaigns including MTF. An evaluation of MTF was carried out in 2005-2006 states its report, and “it led to significant shifts in our campaigning model,” says Oxfam. This model shift is discussed next in the “steward” section. Therefore, there is evidence of evaluation of the campaign from a macro-level. Furthermore, in conjunction with the MTF campaign, Oxfam also created other campaign evaluation goals that can be used with any of Oxfam’s work such as a new Partnership Policy, the MEL system (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning), and a Complaints policy.

“Over the next three years, the MEL system will enable us to assess our performance and more clearly demonstrate programme impact,” says Oxfam’s Accountability Report. “It will be a key tool for stakeholders to hold us accountable for supporting change in the lives of poor

people.” The MEL system includes program/campaign monitoring reviews, country learning reviews, qualitative global indicators to measure impact over time, a revised policy on evaluation, and additional learning reviews to target specific areas as work such as livelihoods, gender, and HIV/AIDS.

Likewise, the Complaints Policy was implemented in Autumn of 2007, and is monitored and reviewed as part of Oxfam’s normal program reporting. The Complaints Policy seeks to provide more accountability in campaigning and includes promoting four aspects: 1.) participation and involvement of allies and partners, 2.) monitoring and evaluation to get feedback from stakeholders and external targets on the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of campaigns and modifying campaigns accordingly, 3.) transparency (put all campaign briefing papers, reports, and major evaluations on website as well as progress reports), and lastly, 4.) investigating and responding appropriately to complaints from the public or those Oxfam challenges.

When asked about tracking efforts, Rawson responded by saying, “We were evaluating our efforts as we went with an intention to course-correct along the way.” In the same manner, Rusu and Rateau both noted how they would monitor different tactics and targets and adjust their strategies accordingly. “Yes, there was constant evaluation and changing with regard to tactics and activities, but the basic premises of the campaign never changed,” says Rateau.

Rusu also added the importance of on-going evaluation through polling of the MTF campaign organizers. “We had pretty regular, informal weekly meetings with our organizers and huddled from time to time where we did exactly that [on-going evaluation],” says Rusu. “We evaluated what’s working, what’s not working, what messages are most compelling with our constituents and with members of congress and also where we needed to do a bit more work to

develop that.” Thus evidence shows Oxfam was not only monitoring and evaluating on a macro-level but a micro-level as well.

### **Steward**

After evaluating campaign efforts along the way, Ledingham’s sixth and final step, “steward,” regards the adjustment of programs and/or operations accordingly based upon evaluation. Questions to key informants addressed whether this was an occurrence due to evaluation of the MTF campaign. Many of the responses and evidence for stewarding came in response to tracking efforts done by Oxfam, and in fact, stewarding was an important part of Oxfam’s campaign process for MTF.

For example, as previously mentioned in the 2007 Accountability Report, an evaluation of MTF was carried out in 2005-2006 and it led to two significant shifts in Oxfam’s “campaigning model.” The first shift regards the recognition that global campaigning on international agreements (such as the Doha Development Round) needs increased support for partners’ national campaigns to ensure that international policy change is translated into real benefits for poor people and not captured by elites. The other shift relates to supporting more home-grown national campaigns on economic justice issues and complementing these with global campaigning on international policies that prevent changes at the national level. These lessons from MTF have not only changed the MTF approach but also changed the approach Oxfam is using for its Stop Climate Poverty campaign where Oxfam will put greater emphasis on global-national links, and devote more resources to national campaigning.

Likewise, Rateau noted that “when the campaign started it was very much top-line in terms of what needed to be done, but we realized that in order to move things that there was quite a bit of work that needed to happen at the national level in developing countries, and we couldn’t just have one story that everybody can use or one kind of example to use or mobilize around.” She

explained that Oxfam had to make the campaign relevant to each domestic contact. For example, for trade in Chile the focus was on the flour industry while in East African nations it was on cotton and in Mexico on corn and so forth.

Similarly, Oxfam learned that during MTF their focus on targets had to be changed from broad-level to a much more narrow focus in order to get results. “Initially when the campaign started off, it was very top-level and very broad,” says Rateau. “It was always identified as the trade negotiator, the U.S. trade negotiator or the President, and over time it became much more specific and focused on members of congress that could help influence or shape U.S. trade policies.”

Rusu responded to the steward question by discussing how Oxfam learned the importance of human behavior/innateness through re-examining and evaluating their efforts. One of the struggles of the campaign was getting Americans to care about someone on another continent, thousands of miles away that they would never meet and that was getting hurt because of American policies Rusu explained. “In order to do that, in accordance with human behavior, if we support anyone its someone closest to us – physically or otherwise,” says Rusu. “So we certainly never wanted to put American farmers and poor farmers in other countries on the same balance because despite their knowledge or awareness of how unfair these programs are they will want to help American farmers, and that’s not the dichotomy we wanted to create.” Rusu went on the explain how they would have to adjust their approach by saying “it was raising that level of awareness and learning that you know we couldn’t just keep the U.S. part of the picture just completely out. We couldn’t just shut out farmers in other countries, but in fact, we had to connect all of the dots in order to give Americans an accurate picture about what is happening, but also to make it as compelling for them as possible.”

Rawson responded by discussing the Oxfam Action Corp and his role in recruiting volunteers and signatures for the *Big Noise* petition. For example, in response to the recognition that Oxfam needed to be more geographically specific and have a sustained effort in target areas Rawson created the Oxfam Action Corp. Additionally, as Oxfam shifted from global trade talks to U.S. legislation, a big global petition was no longer as relevant to U.S. legislation; therefore, Rawson changed his work and focus to have an emphasis on training key volunteers and activities in the ten strategic cities.

### **Hon And Grunig's Model**

Recall that Hon and Grunig's model further provided a way to measure organization-public relationships through its six dimensions: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, communal relationship, and exchange management. Through the examination of these dimensions in the MTF campaign, the nature of the relationship between Oxfam and its publics/targets can be further explained.

### **Control mutuality**

Control mutuality is the "degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another." Campaign informants were asked to explain how they believed that the MTF campaign influenced its target markets. Rusu answered from both the perspective of the public at large and her main targets as a media officer: the U.S. government and most importantly, the U.S. trade representative. "I think we had a great success in getting out there and talking to people about the fairness of the international trading system, specifically the fairness of American policies and their effects on poor farmers in developing countries," says Rusu. "Usually Americans don't really care about farm policy; it's usually just farm state people that write it and benefit from Farm Bill policies," Rusu later explained about MTF's level of

influence. “So I think we can claim quite a bit of success in helping contribute to a national movement of awareness as to what farm policies are and how they are problematic.”

When asked about control mutuality, Rateau responded with numerous illustrations of influence. For example, she felt that one of the first illustrations of MTF’s influence related to coffee. Oxfam’s effort to promote fair trade coffee certification created more engagement by the coffee producers and farmers in international trade policies concerning the pricing of coffee, and furthermore, created direct contact with consumers which contributed to a huge increase in fair trade consumption. “So the combining of different approaches or strategies to help raise awareness about fair trade certification and how consumers could directly engage with more producers,” says Rateau.

Likewise, Rateau gave two more examples in terms of impact on institutions or things that MTF made a difference – the Doha Round negotiations and the FTAA free trade agreement. The Doha Round negotiations referred to the voice and acceptance that Oxfam and MTF helped to give to developing nations in the WTO talks. “For many, many years the dynamic that had been set up is many developing countries that are being bullied or forced to accept such that they didn’t want in order to get or to be able to secure concessions that would help their economy,” says Rateau. “So through a campaigning effort that involved both civil society groups and governments throughout the countries as well as the constituents in rich countries that hold most of the power in international negotiations, the developing country voices became much, much stronger.”

In terms of the FTAA, Rateau felt that Oxfam’s MTF helped to highlight to both civil society and legislators in the U.S. what kind of unfair trade policies existed in the FTAA and what the impact would be on communities in developing countries in South and Central

America. Its major influence was not only awareness, however. In the 2003 FTAA ministerial in Florida talks were halted because of the influence of the MTF campaign on FTAA unfair trade rules.

When Rawson was asked he gave many examples of influence including discussion related to globalization, structural change on the local and national levels of developing countries, as well as public debate around the Farm Bill. In terms of globalization Rawson explained how in the late 1990s there was a growing awareness and opposition to globalization. He believed that the MTF campaign made the discussion around globalization much more specific and practical and not lost in the otherwise vast concept. “I think it [MTF] provided a practical entryway into the topic of globalization,” says Rawson. Moreover, he felt that MTF changed the discourse – thus, providing a voice and discourse around globalization that was solution-oriented if trade was made fair rather than just opposing or not opposing the system of globalization. Rawson also felt that it provided a pathway forward for people that wanted “to get to work, roll up their sleeves, and start working on some solutions.”

Related to structural change on local and national levels in developing countries Rawson gave an example of a Kenyan farmer he spoke with. Before Kenyan locals would petition local agencies and government for issues with crop price, but after MTF’s education and awareness of how the Kenyan situation was linked to fair trade across the globe the farmers knew better where to direct their efforts. “So one thing our campaign did in that context was public education among farmers to understand that there is a wider political context that’s global, that the rules are being set globally and that they’re unfair and that there needs to be additional strategies for success,” says Rawson. “That was an important structural change for that industry [tea] in that

country [Kenya], and I think similar learning was taking place in a lot of different countries where we were conducting our work whether it was Bangladesh or India or Ethiopia.”

Third, Rawson felt that MTF had a very important influence on changing the public debate around Farm Bill subsidies. “We had the media...the mainstream media – the most influential papers around the country seemed to have an emerging consensus that the farm subsidies needed to be reformed,” says Rawson. “So I would say we not only made a fantastic inroad into the public debate around Farm Bill, I think we won it. I think if you look at how the newspapers came out and so forth, we won the debate in the public.”

Campaign materials also provided insight into the influence MTF had on its targets. In summary, the following topics and areas of influence were found across brochures, press releases, campaign flyers, briefing notes, research reports, and Oxfam’s website. Such topics included how MTF contributed to the rise of developing country negotiating blocs, how rich countries have been forced to include development concerns as part of the discussion around trade issues, how trade negotiators must consider the impacts of their decisions on poor people, and how in July of 2006 more than 20 million people had signed the *Big Noise* petition.

## **Trust**

The next of Hon and Grunig’s dimensions is “trust.” It is defined as “one party’s level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party.” More specifically, trust deals with issues of integrity, dependability, and competence. Campaign informants were asked how they believed that trust was established with their target markets through examples.

Rateau felt that third-party validators and Oxfam’s own donors and supporters were examples of trust. Third-party validators being people/organizations that were easily recognized helped a great deal she felt. Also, Oxfam’s primary audience being its own supporters and donors could feel linked to the communities through engagement. Likewise, a March 2005 press

release highlights the partnerships of Oxfam with El Salvador's FUNDE, Guatemala's CIDECA, and Nicaragua's Centro Humboldt as they meet with U.S. legislators to fight the DR-CAFTA.

The use of partnerships is another clear way to establish trust and credibility with targets, especially in developing countries that may not be familiar with Oxfam and its mission.

Another example of trust was echoed by the involvement of communities in developing countries. Local organizations and peoples in developing countries had to trust Oxfam, its policies, its ideas, and its suggestions in order to move forward in the fight against unfair trade. "I think the fact that many communities who got involved in these issues in developing countries was a big deal," says Rateau. "To me it meant that they trusted what the proposals were in order to tackle this issue."

Rawson felt trust was established through similar outlets. Like Rateau, he noted the use of a third-party validator, specifically Coldplay. "Obviously having the band's support win's trust immediately," says Rawson. "If the band was for it then their fans were for it by in large." Additionally, if one is looking at students he felt that Oxfam's history of trainings with student leaders across various campuses and the work that they do on campus "establishes a reputation for Oxfam and that establishes trust." Also, in rural American farming organizations Rawson felt trust was very hard won over by MTF's field organizers.

In regards to the issues of trust with this farming community, the topic of exchanges between West African farmers and heartland farmers came up. They were "some of the most fruitful, most productive projects of the whole Farm Bill at work," says Rawson. These exchanges helped to form a great deal of trust, union, and bond between the farmers and provided to be a fabulous learning experience, especially for the heartland farmers. "The connection that farmers were able to make across cultural and language barriers was really strong

because they all related very much to working the earth, to being dependant on the weather, to the insecurities and the unpredictable nature of farming,” Rawson explains. “They could really relate to whether the tools were rudimentary hand tools or whether they were sophisticated combines and machinery, they related to the fundamental job of the farmer working the land and managing risk and insecurity and that was huge.”

When Rusu was asked about trust she replied by discussing constituents and the media. She felt that when she came to work for Oxfam four years prior it already had the luxury of a strong support of constituents that knew and trusted the organization. Additionally, since Rusu focused on media relations, her job was to build trust among the reporters. “So if they needed something they could come to us for quick analysis, a timely analysis of what was going on in the different debates whether it was at the WTO negotiations or in the Farm Bill negotiations in congress,” says Rusu. “They [reporters] knew that we were not just a player, but that we had something to offer.”

Rawson too reiterated this perspective. He felt that Oxfam was seen as “having a place” in the debate and altruistic – meaning that Oxfam didn’t necessarily have self-interest or was looking to serve its own interests. “I think we were seen as rising above the fray,” says Rawson. “We aimed to be credible in our facts and statistics. I think that came across well, and I think we enjoyed exposure in the media and good relationships with the media because we were seen as a reliable resource.”

### **Satisfaction**

The next dimension, “satisfaction,” represents whether one party feels favorably towards the other. The questions asked related to satisfaction regarded the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that campaign informants felt from those participating in the campaign and also costs/benefits of participation.

Both Rusu and Rateau brought up the *Big Noise* petition when asked about satisfaction. They felt that it showed both numbers and commitment to the cause of fair trade and also went beyond Oxfam's expectations. "Not to mention, most of that list was repeatedly engaged in different actions; they would go from coffee to working on free trade agreements to working on subsidies to working on access to medicines," says Rateau. "Also, another example – I think the fact that many communities who got involved in these issues in developing countries was a big deal. To me it meant that they trusted what the proposals were in order to tackle this issue."

From the many reports and accounts of talks with farmers in West Africa for example, it is clear how hopeful and optimistic the farmers are just because Oxfam is interested in their welfare. In terms of satisfaction it appears that changing legislation or unfair trade is only the "icing on the cake" as the farmers are very happy to at least be heard and have citizens around the world concerned about them. These farmers as well as small scale governments and trade representatives from developing countries, are very pleased that they now have a meaningful and serious voice in trade negotiations and legislation regarding trade subsidies such as the Farm Bill.

Central American farmers also shared the same sentiment. Victorio Valerio, president of the National Federation of Rice Producers (FENARROZ) in the Dominican Republic, met with other farmers from his region to speak with U.S. House and Senate members in an effort to show them how the DR-CAFTA would send hurtful subsidies to be dumped on the farming industry. In a May 2005 Oxfam press release, Valerio spoke about his satisfaction with Oxfam. "We greatly appreciate everything Oxfam is doing to unify the various actors in the struggle to stop DR-CAFTA, and defend the interests of the poorest parts of the world," Valerio says.

When Rawson was asked about satisfaction levels he commented on the image and feel of the campaign by saying that “people loved it.” He felt the look, feel, and slogan of the campaign was something people very much identified with. “It was cool. It looked good. It sounded strong, and it was a positive proclamation of what we wanted to have happen,” says Rawson. “It wasn’t protesting.” Yet, Rawson further explained that maybe not everyone participating in MTF was completely satisfied because of the outcome since Oxfam didn’t necessarily achieve what it had fundamentally set out to achieve – to make trade fair. “Hopefully they felt satisfied with their role and their work with Oxfam and were ready to continue the fight,” says Rawson.

### **Commitment**

Commitment refers to the “extent to which each party believes and feels the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote.” Key informants were asked to tell about the level of commitment from the MTF campaign – both from Oxfam’s standpoint and its targets. Key informants were able to show substantiation for commitment both when asked directly and throughout other conversations. It was very clear both through interviews and document analysis that Oxfam is very deeply committed to the many global issues it works for and advocates. To Oxfam it is not simply a job on the line but the lives and welfare of the disadvantaged and disenfranchised.

Commitment is very prominent through Oxfam’s relentless efforts to never give up and keep fighting. Rusu commented on Oxfam’s long-lasting work to show its level of commitment. She felt that as a humanitarian organization for a number of years, Oxfam has been committed to helping those across the world in need as well as searching and advocating for the proper solutions. Even despite set-backs along the way Oxfam has continued and will continue to fight poverty and injustice. Rateau also reiterated this sentiment and felt that Oxfam would go for “as long as it takes” to eradicate poverty through fair trade. Looking at the campaign timeline is

another indicator of commitment as it begins in 2001 and continues on to present day in 2008. Even prior to MTF, Oxfam was setting the stage to fight poverty through its other efforts.

“We’ve evolved from purely providing aid to people in need, but also we realized that unless the global system does not change ultimately it is going to be a constant issue of band-aids rather than actually making large scale change happen that would be permanently good for poor countries and poor people around the world,” says Rusu. “Oxfam decided that they needed to put a lot of resources behind making large-scale change happen, particularly from a trade perspective given that they firmly believe that trade, if done right, if done fairly, if the system of international trade is fair, then it could very well help pull many people out of poverty across the world.”

Both Rawson and Rateau also spoke about commitment in terms of the public and participation in the MTF campaign. They both cited the *Big Noise* petition and how it was never expected to grow so large and how many of the people that had signed the petition were engaged in the campaign in other ways. To them, support and engagement from their donors, supporters, and campaign participants demonstrated commitment. Rawson particularly noted the level of commitment from Oxfam’s student activists across the country. This was an area that he worked closely in and felt these students continuously showed un-wavering support for MTF and its initiatives.

Another example of commitment was echoed through the many exchanges between the heartland farmers, farmers from West Africa and Central and South America, and U.S. legislators and trade officials. These exchanges showed the great length that the farmers would go in order to change unfair trade laws and in the case of the U.S. portion, their willingness or openness to a new approach. When Fabián Saavedra, a rice farmer from Nicaragua, was invited

to come to Washington to speak out against the proposed DR-CAFTA, he jumped at the opportunity. “If DR-CAFTA passes, the poor people in my village will be pushed into extreme poverty,” says Saavedra in a May 2005 press release. “We have to work together to stop this from happening.

Lastly, evidence of Oxfam’s commitment also comes from journal entries by Jim French, an Oxfam employee that kept a journal during his trip to West Africa with other U.S. farmers. French, along with other members and farmers spent a week traveling across the area advocating and educating local communities and governments. In one entry French recalled a lesson learned by his Senegalese friend, Dr. Thiendou Niang. “He reminded us [Americans] that we lived in the world where any decision that is made will affect all other nations. This is true whether that decision involves technology, finance, sociology, or culture,” says French in an August 2006 press release publishing his journal. “We come from the most powerful and wealthy nation on earth.” This revelation really exemplifies Oxfam’s commitment to helping remind those in wealthier countries how their actions in turn affect the rest of the world.

### **Communal relationship**

The next dimension, “communal relationship,” refers to the extent to which parties in a relationship give benefits to each other because they are concerned for the other’s welfare. Key informants were asked how they felt that Oxfam and MTF improved its target’s welfare, including those not immediately affected by trade regulations. Outside of obvious gains and strides in creating awareness around unfair trade to rich country governments and developing countries, Oxfam also had a profound affect with education and engagement as highlighted by the key informants and document analysis.

In terms of the welfare of farmers, although not all battles were won MTF can still claim many successes. Its ability to raise awareness and put developing countries at the heart of trade

negotiations has no doubt set the stage for future talks. Furthermore, MTF was able to help some parts of legislation like the Farm Bill. “As for people in the U.S. heartland who do have a role in farming, I think that some of the incremental gains made in the Farm Bill will come back and be a benefit to some of those,” says Rawson.

“I think over time we got people more deeply engaged, so it wasn’t just signing a petition,” says Rateau. “It was figuring out what they could do in their own communities or around their campus to get other people involved. I think the deeper engagement that just kept people involved in the campaign on a long-term basis or throughout the entire campaign – that would be a good example of it [improving welfare].” Of course in order to stimulate this engagement Oxfam had to provide tools from training and materials to forums for idea exchange in order to necessitate long-term engagement.

Awareness and education was a key piece of how Oxfam felt MTF improved its target of the public at large – whether it be supporters, legislators, students, or just anyone that wanted to participate and learn about fair trade practices. “I think anytime the public is well-informed about our policies it’s a win,” says Rusu. “Whether or not the policy changes; in fact, in the Farm Bill it didn’t change – we lost that fight. But anytime that you raise awareness and anytime that the public is more informed it really increases the chance of change happening the next time around and that’s what we were really hoping for.”

Rawson spoke of the benefits one feels as being part of a cause and making a difference in terms of improving welfare. “The payoff for someone who gets involved as a volunteer or as an activist is that they feel like they helped make the world better for those in poverty and those in the most vulnerable situation,” says Rawson. He wants the volunteers and others involved in MTF to feel like they are proud to be a part of the Oxfam family and that they are just as much

part of the fight as the campaign organizers. “Hopefully they feel like they helped win some games, they feel like they learned a lot in the process, learned about the issue, and then feel like they are a part of Oxfam and a part of the work that we do,” remarks Rawson.

### **Exchange relationship**

The last dimension of Hon and Grunig’s model, “exchange relationship,” exists when one party gives benefits to the other because the other gave benefits in the past or expects to do so in the future. Key informants were asked how they felt Oxfam’s past actions/future initiatives and promises have played a role in the outcome of the MTF campaign. This dimension is naturally very much associated with Oxfam’s reputation and it being a nonprofit, humanitarian organization.

All informants agreed that Oxfam’s long-standing reputation and past actions and initiatives have helped to give credibility and leverage to the MTF campaign. This was spoken both directly and echoed through description of Oxfam’s history as a humanitarian organization and its drive over the years to end poverty. “I think that Oxfam has a reputation that is really solid and gave us credibility to be in this,” says Rawson. “I think people have known us for a long time, understand that we deal with poverty and hunger issue, and therefore, food and farming is of course an important part of the food question.”

In terms of past actions/future initiatives, Rateau felt that Oxfam’s impact or influence on key decision makers and institutions played a role in the outcome of MTF. She felt that because Oxfam had a solid networking system among U.S. legislators and government officials it was able to get the message across in a much more timely and effective manner. The message about free trade wasn’t coming from a “nobody” but rather an organization that had established itself as one of the most knowledgeable and premier sources for world trade information.

Additionally, Oxfam's past actions and reputation greatly helped the fundraising cause. Specific fundraising was done for MTF, and without a solid name and the Oxfam brand behind the cause the undertaking could have been much more daunting. "The budget for the U.S. piece was about a million and a half dollars," says Rateau about MTF in the U.S. A recognizable brand, flawless reputation, and noble cause makes fundraising of this large nature a possibility.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss what the findings mean in relation to the theoretical body of knowledge on international public relations theory, specifically the Relationship Management Theory. Furthermore, the discussion chapter relates what the findings mean to public relations and nonprofit professionals working in similar areas and campaigns. This chapter seeks to answer the question: why are these findings significant? It also addresses the two research questions set forth by the researcher. This discussion chapter includes a discourse around three parts: theoretical implications of the findings, evaluation of MTF from a public relations standpoint, and what other international nonprofits and organizations practicing public relations can learn from the Oxfam case.

### **Theoretical Implications Of Findings**

The relationship management theory of public relations provides a framework with which to assess and evaluate the performance of Oxfam's MTF campaign and to provide useful and exclusive information for professionals working in similar professions and on similar cases. This section will address RQ1: How well does the Oxfam case reflect current trends in international public relations theory and practice – specifically the relationship management theory? Each sub-category of RQ1 is reported. By examining the relationship management theory within the context of Oxfam's MTF campaign, theory is contrasted with behavior.

### **SMARTS Model**

Ledingham's SMARTS model offers a process to manage organization and public relationships. This model was followed by Oxfam's MTF campaign more loosely than the later Hon and Grunig model. In terms of public relations campaign planning, execution, and evaluation, the nature of the campaign subject and the Oxfam's unique position as a nonprofit

can explain why this model was not always followed to the fullest extent. Furthermore, Oxfam as an organization followed its own systems of planning and evaluation that differed from traditional public relations processes in that the campaign did not always have an expiration date, and objects set forth were not always measurable.

In terms of the first step in the process, Oxfam did participate in varying degrees of scanning its targets; however, perhaps not to the sophisticated degree that many public relations and marketing practitioners complete. Yet, some degree of scanning is absolutely necessary for nonprofits to understand the climate, environment, and players they must work with. From analysis of the scanning step, professionals can take away the importance of understanding the entire breadth and history of the issue to be solved, such as unfair trade. Oxfam had to not only understand all of the players in the game, but also all of the actions that had occurred that resulted in the current trade system.

This step also highlights the importance of scanning what other similar organizations are doing. By doing this an organization is able to see where it and its mission fits into the bigger picture of the issue and solution. In addition, since partnerships are very common among the nonprofit community this is a good opportunity to recruit like-minded organizations and learn from their previous work and initiatives. Scanning also allows the organization to predict future threats and obstacles. In a campaign situation that seeks to raise awareness in order to create the action of advancing legislation like MTF, some degree of scanning is absolutely necessary.

The following step, mapping, was closely followed as Oxfam had a very strong grasp on all of its targets from farmers in West Africa, to U.S. trade representatives, to members of the WTO. This step recommends the appropriate planning strategies and objectives to tailor to target markets. Mapping emphasizes the importance of using a thorough understanding of the

targets to then creatively develop what objectives and then strategies will best relate to the targets and bring about the goals set forth. For organizations like Oxfam working with very abstract and global issues like poverty and climate change this can be quite challenging. As reiterated by MTF key informants, it is essential to be creative and draw attention.

The third step, acting, refers to pre-testing, programming, campaign elements, and the amount of materials and information available. Professionals can learn from MTF the importance of a variety of materials and information, especially in conjunction with the internet. A variety helps to cater to the many targets as MTF had very differing targets from farmers, to legislators, to the average American public. The availability and amount of information on an organization's website is imperative if the campaign is centered around public engagement like MTF. If the organization seeks to get people engaged then it must provide adequate materials and make them easy to follow and understand. Plus, providing information of this nature online, results in a minimum cost for a maximum audience.

Also, in association with acting, the MTF campaign emphasized the potential of having spokespersons and third-party validators. This is especially effective for campaigns associated with topics like MTF or other similar topics like public health, the environment, or social justice issues. The band Coldplay and other celebrities were able to use their status to encourage people to learn about unfair trade issues and to help in any way they could. Furthermore, if chosen appropriately, these spokespeople are able to relate to a very wide variety of people in many locations and countries which is ideal for international campaigning of this nature.

The next step, rolling-out, refers to the release and implementation of the campaign and how it is aimed at getting the attention of targets. Like the acting step, this step also emphasizes the importance of things that can increase the profile of the campaign as well as messaging tips.

Celebrity engagement was a huge step in order to increase the profile of the campaign as previously discussed. In terms of messaging, MTF exemplified how important messaging is to gaining interest and eventually action. Messaging targeting trade representatives must differ from messaging to students. It must somehow also relate to the position or stance of the individual on the issue. For example, some of Oxfam's congressional targets had no interest in international trade rules; therefore, Oxfam had to make their message relate to something that the congressional targets were interested in. This is something that any professional in public relations or the nonprofit industry can learn and gain from.

The MTF campaign also demonstrates that a very broad reach helps greatly with the roll-out step. In Oxfam's case this was done by national and field organizers in addition to the Oxfam Action Corp in strategic locations. For campaigns like MTF that seek a great degree of general awareness, it does not behoove the organization to work only centrally-based. With multiple Oxfam employees working in strategic locations across the U.S. and hundreds of partners worldwide, Oxfam's voice reaches far beyond its central offices in Boston, Massachusetts and Washington D.C. Moreover, this gives a name and a face to the organization and helps to pull people into the campaign in areas outside of the traditional range of Oxfam.

The last two steps of the process – tracking and then stewarding if necessary – provide methods for evaluating public relations impact over time and then adjusting programs and operations accordingly based upon this evaluation. These two steps are very much intertwined as seen in the Oxfam case. The MTF campaign serves as an example of how crucial on-going evaluation and adjustment is.

For large, global campaigns of this nature, tracking and stewarding must be done from both a macro and micro-level. For example, after a large-scale evaluation of MTF as a whole, Oxfam was able to change its campaign model to focus more on global-national links and campaigning from the national level in developing countries. Macro-level evaluation helps to make sure that every strategy and tactic is in line with the large-scale umbrella of objectives and goals. Micro-level evaluation helps to cater such strategies and tactics appropriately and most effectively to targets. Oxfam did this through feedback collected by its field organizers from constituents and general participants in MTF.

It is clear that had Oxfam not changed directions on a number of issues after evaluation then the results of MTF could have been much less successful. For professionals working in similar fields the course of action comes very much on a “take it as it comes basis.” Organizations can plan for success and/or failure (i.e., the passage or non-passage of a bill); however, there are so many gray areas issues in between that they will only learn about once these issues actually arise. Therefore, the organization must be prepared at anytime to go in any direction and be quick on its feet to react.

This is one fundamental difference noted by the researcher when examining MTF from a public relations theory of relationship management. Public relations operation is very strategic and in planning sets forth all guidelines and measurable objectives very strictly. In nonprofit and advocacy campaigning of this nature there are a lot of uncertainties that do not allow for strict guideline adherence. This is where if anything, the MTF campaign appeared to differ slightly from Ledingham’s SMARTS model. Yet upon closer inspection, the last steps of the process, tracking and stewarding, help to pull MTF back into this theoretical process.

So in summary, it can be concluded that Oxfam's MTF did follow Ledingham's six-step model of the relationship management theory. Although at times the steps were not adhered to as strictly as traditional public relations campaigns, Oxfam did follow each of the steps to a necessary degree for itself. Upon examination of this theoretical model with the actions of Oxfam in the MTF campaign, the relationship between Oxfam and its targets is more clearly revealed. From this relationship management model, the relationship between Oxfam and its targets in the MTF campaign can be characterized as very strategic yet very responsive and convivial as well.

### **Hon And Grunig's Model**

On the other hand, Hon and Grunig's model provided a way to measure the dimensions within the processes described by Ledingham's six-step process model. This model gave "heart, soul, and depth" to the steps followed by Oxfam in the MTF campaign and more intimately exposed the relationship between Oxfam and its targets. Analysis shows Oxfam's MTF campaign very closely followed Hon and Grunig's dimensions and was therefore more successful because of it. Because Oxfam is a nonprofit organization with a mission to help the welfare of others, the organization very much identified with the six dimensions.

The first dimension, control mutuality, dealt with the degree to which Oxfam was able to influence its targets. This was most certainly exhibited through the key informants' interviews and document analysis. Aside from the overarching, major goal of changing unfair trade rules and regulations, Oxfam was able to influence all of its targets in a variety of ways from awareness to action. The MTF campaign's ability to exert control mutuality can remind professionals of the importance of awareness and education in similar campaigning situations.

For instance, before any action can be taken targets must be not only aware but properly educated by the messages the organization has set forth. In many cases Oxfam did not get the

desired actions out of some targets (i.e. – WTO or U.S. legislators) like it did with campaign participants (engagement). Nonetheless, Oxfam was able to create a mass general awareness which can set the foundation for further initiatives and could in itself cause a public response. To ensure that targets are properly informed is always a positive and helps organizations to not get lost in exclusively action-oriented responses. Although it is ideal, it is not always possible. The Oxfam case can help remind professionals that they must put the most attention into awareness and education outlets and in turn, and if done effectively, the action will eventually come.

The next dimension, trust, concerns the targets' level of confidence in and willingness to open themselves to Oxfam. The trust dimension deals with issues of integrity, dependability, and competence. Analysis showed that Oxfam and its MTF campaign embodied the dimension of trust with its variety of targets. Like the act and roll-out steps from Ledingham, trust can also be established from third-party validators like celebrities and partnerships. Oxfam also learned that a great deal of trust came from its own donors and supporters. Hence professionals should make sure that their organization's donors and supporters are of primary focus and are always kept engaged in some way. Donors and supporters' confidence and trust in the organization can be further translated to their friends, families, colleagues, neighbors, and any other social, political, or religious networks they may be a part of.

The MTF campaign also exemplified other ways of building trust among targets that professionals can emulate. For example, Oxfam found its exchanges between farmers in the heartland and West Africa with U.S. Congressmen to be very beneficial. These exchanges served to bring together Oxfam's targets so that they could learn from one another and clear up any misunderstandings one group of targets may have had about another. In this way the targets

can find common ground, and this not only fosters trust among the targets but with the targets and the organization itself because it had set up the exchange.

The third dimension, satisfaction, represents whether the targets feel favorably towards Oxfam in regard to the MTF campaign. This dimension was definitely present in a positive sense towards Oxfam. Just as Oxfam used their *Big Noise* petition to gauge the level of satisfaction with campaign participants, other nonprofit professionals should also look at the numbers of people engaged in their causes and to what level they engage in multiple activities.

From MTF, professionals can also observe ways to increase satisfaction among targets. Oxfam found that its targets in developing countries were very satisfied and happy with Oxfam simply because they believed that Oxfam truly cared about their welfare and sought to do something about it. Professionals must make targets understand that the organization is truly concerned and seeks to make the targets' lives better in some way. If the organization is attempting to ease the lives of the targets in some way, the targets undoubtedly will respond positively to the organization and its work.

Additionally, key informants from Oxfam felt that one of the reasons people were satisfied with participating in MTF was because they felt that they were a part of something. Those engaged in the campaign really felt as if they were a part of the Oxfam family and a part of the movement for fair trade. Thus, organizations should try to make their targets and participants feel like "part of the family" or part of whatever the desired action is. People are much more likely to get involved in something that they can identify with and that they feel they have some sort of stake in.

Similar to satisfaction, the dimension of commitment refers to the extent to which the targets believe and feel that the relationship to Oxfam and MTF is worth spending energy to

maintain and promote. This dimension was strongly echoed through the persistence of Oxfam and its many targets to make trade fair. Oxfam's abundant work on fair trade issues over the years and history as a humanitarian organization were able to show its level of commitment to fair trade. Organizations should play up their history or years of service if possible in order to show commitment to whatever cause or practice it is that they may support.

Likewise, Oxfam's level of commitment was also exhibited through its un-dying will to never give up. By continuing to fight Oxfam not only helped to make trade more fair but also convinced its many targets that it is a serious organization that is deeply committed to the cause at any cost. Professionals should keep this in mind when they run into bumps along the road. If they continue to address problems head on the organization's persistence will allow it to appear almost invincible in the eyes of their targets. To gain the trust and satisfaction of targets, professionals must undeniably show they are committed on all levels.

The fifth dimension, communal relationship, refers to the extent to which parties in a relationship give benefits to each other because they are concerned for the other's welfare. The communal relationship dimension leads very similar guidance to the satisfaction dimension – namely engagement of targets, awareness and education, and the feeling of being a part of the organization and its mission. Oxfam's MTF campaign most certainly practiced and exhibited a communal relationship with its targets. Professionals should try to highlight the good that targets and participants will create by contributing to the desired action. If targets feel they are making the world a better place in some way, they will feel as if the organization really does have the welfare of others in mind and that they, the targets, can actually contribute to the organization's work.

Lastly, an exchange relationship exists when targets give benefits to Oxfam because Oxfam gave benefits in the past or expects to do so in the future. This dimension was very relevant to Oxfam and its MTF campaign as one of Oxfam's strong points is its reputation, past actions, and initiatives. From this dimension, professionals can take away a number of points. Most importantly, Oxfam's case highlights the importance of an organization's reputation. The character and disposition associated with an organization's name can make or break it. Organizations should attempt to keep as clean a reputation as possible by following ethical practices. Furthermore, organizations should always discuss 'bad news' as soon as possible and not wait until the bad news reveals itself. This could greatly hurt business practices in the long run and permanently blemish the organization's reputation.

Another point to take away from the Oxfam case is one way in which to build reputation – particularly by emphasizing the organization's history with the existing issue at hand. For example, since its inception, Oxfam has worked with issues related to poverty. Therefore, when it begins a new poverty-related campaign it appears extremely knowledgeable and experienced on the subject. Other organizations can accomplish the same effect by framing their current initiatives with prior positive actions and knowledge.

As is apparent, the Oxfam MTF campaign followed Hon and Grunig's model of six dimensions. Each of the six dimensions were present within the campaign parameters as well as with Oxfam as an organization. This model and Oxfam's adherence to it has helped to illustrate in a more intimate way the relationship between Oxfam and its many targets in the MTF campaign. Oxfam's relationship with its targets in the MTF campaign can be considered to be sincere, solid, and very proficient from this relationship management model. Moreover, the

presence of Hon and Grunig's model shows all of the six dimensions in a very positive light thus reflecting on the standing and potential of Oxfam as an organization and its many projects.

### **Evaluation From A Public Relations Standpoint**

In addition to the theoretical implications of the Relationship Management Theory for practitioners in the non-profit sector using public relations, the MTF campaign can also provide many practical implications from the evaluation and assessment of the campaign using traditional public relations standards. Looking back in the methodology chapter, Wilcox, Ault & Agee (1986) defined international public relations as the planned and organized effort of a company, institution, or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with the publics of other nations. Immediately, the MTF campaign can be likened to this definition – Oxfam used advocacy and awareness in an attempt to create a positive relationship between policy-makers' decisions in rich countries with the publics' need in developing countries.

During any planning process in a public relations campaign, practitioners set measurable objectives for a specified time period so that they may see if these numbers and/or percentages are achieved post-campaign. Most basic to evaluating a campaign is simply seeing if previously set objectives are met. Although Oxfam was not able to provide the researcher with internal campaign documents (against company policy), nonetheless, many telling interviews and other external reports, notes, and media coverage were able to provide adequate evaluation criteria.

First and foremost and as already discussed in the timeline section, Oxfam's MTF campaign was different from a traditional public relations campaign in that it could not necessarily set specific time boundaries or percentages of change it hoped to achieve. Fighting global poverty cannot be written out and organized ahead of time in simple numbers but rather Oxfam had to adopt an overall umbrella strategy and continuously evaluate and reform its strategy to existing trade talks and outcomes.

Despite this fundamental difference from public relations, Oxfam always kept its main objective in mind and this was the driving force behind the entire MTF campaign. Vicky Rateau described this main objective by saying, “We were trying to highlight unfair international trade rules and propose solutions whether it was trying to eliminate trade-distorting subsidies that trapped and distorted prices for commodities.....or the international negotiations – the Doha round.” Thus, Oxfam was campaigning to get rich countries to change their trading policies in an effort to stop hurting farmers in developing countries and to pull them out of poverty.

In order to make this objective a reality, the public engagement part was a big piece of the puzzle explained Rateau. The idea was to demonstrate that there was widespread concern both by communities of people that were directly impacted and also in the U.S. where there were people who cared about international trade and cared about the welfare of poor communities in developing countries. The public engagement part of the campaign involved raising awareness through the *Big Noise* petition, celebrities, ad campaigns, community organizers and meetings, writing trade and government officials, and using this awareness to influence those negotiating world trade rules and regulations at the various WTO talks.

Additionally, Rateau explained the five overall strategies that Oxfam employed ‘big-picture wise’ in the MTF campaign: (1) the building of alliances and making sure that civil society organizations from developing countries were bolstered in terms of their involvement in decisions regarding trade or decisions that would impact them, (2) making sure developing countries also had a platform in terms where their voices were bolstered in terms of solutions to tackling trade or making trade more fair, (3) addressing the intransigence of the U.S. and other more developed countries in international negotiations, (4) promoting direct engagement of

people who were impacted with decision makers and the public at large, and lastly (5) to facilitate the links between these strategies as a way of building power.

In terms of the five strategies, it is the researcher's opinion, as well as that of the interviewees that all strategies were met with some degree of success. Although each strategy was executed, together they could not make a whole. Regarding Oxfam's three overall strategies of awareness/education, participation/engagement, and trade regulations being changed Oxfam was successful in two of the three. Oxfam achieved its objective to raise awareness and educate its publics. It also achieved its objective of engagement among its publics in the campaign process. It did not achieve, however, its goal to end unfair trading rules and regulations. Perhaps its first two objectives were simply not enough. Perhaps the task was too difficult. In the end it is only a handful of politicians and members of the WTO that make the decision for the rest of the world.

In terms of impact and efficiency of the MTF campaign as a whole and from the standpoint of its main objective, Oxfam made great lengths in the battle for fair trade. As previously discussed, Newsom et al. (1993) explain that changing behavior is one of the most important benchmarks to evaluate public relations campaigns. Typically the campaign starts at the awareness level and the purpose is to create awareness and eventually to get a certain action. This is the case with MTF, as increased awareness sought to influence trade policy-makers to implement fair trade rules.

In an all or nothing sense, Oxfam did fail to meet its objective of getting trade rules and regulations changed in favor of poor farmers in developing countries. However, much was gained along the way and will still continue to be a platform for future trade endeavors and negotiations. Rateau felt split when asked if she felt the objectives were met and if the

campaign was effective. “I think it was effective in many ways.....we didn’t achieve what we wanted to on many other things,” however, says Rateau.

Oxfam managed to set the stage and put fair trade practices in the hearts and minds of every individual on the world stage responsible for fair trade or the lack there of. Not to mention, it gave voices to millions of disadvantaged farmers in developing countries across the world and helped to educate people in the U.S. and EU about the harmful trade practices their countries were promoting. Oxfam put the spotlight on fair trade and the world responded with an enormously large *Big Noise* petition.

As Oxfam’s first international campaign, Rawson felt very positive about MTF. “I think we made a huge difference,” says Rawson. “When you look at the fact that in 1999 and leading up to that developing countries were basically being steamrolled every time they got together for trade talks. The important decisions were being made in small, exclusive rooms, and the developing countries were essentially being left out. When you look from 2001 on the debate and the dynamic around trade changed in developing countries – they formed a political bloc, they drew a line in the sand on agricultural subsidies, and they said we either get more fair terms of trade or we walk out. And they did walk out.”

Therefore, it was basically agreed that no deal is better than a harmful deal whether it was the Doha Round or Free Trade Agreements. “That was an important shift – having no deal instead of continually being railroaded into bad deals,” says Rawson. “That’s huge, and I think Oxfam played a visible, important role in demonstrating the political will that made that possible and provided some the research, the analysis, and sound bites, and the framework about making trade fair that made that possible.”

The MTF campaign helped to prevent a premature Doha draft that could have been disastrous for poor countries. It contributed to the rise of developing country negotiating blocs such as the G20, G33, and G110, and rich countries must now contend with formidable coalitions who are looking out for the interests of poor people. MTF taught world trade negotiators and the public about these unfair trade rules and why they impact the whole world. Most importantly, MTF has forced rich countries to include development concerns as part of the discussion around trade issues, and trade negotiators must now consider the impacts of their decisions on poor people.

The MTF campaign also was able to gain some success in the Farm Bill despite not getting its overall goal of eliminating the dumping of subsidies on the world market. “When you look at the U.S. Farm Bill, we may not have had this central win that we were pushing for on farm subsidies, but the pressure that we mounted I think lead to some of the silver lining around that cloud,” says Rawson. “It lead to some of the smaller steps that were incremental gains in other areas.”

In 2006, after almost five years of haggling and debate, the WTO Doha Development Round was suspended and Oxfam chalked it up as a failure. Although Doha feel short, Oxfam helped make history by changing the terms of the debate and helped to keep the concerns of poor people at the heart of the WTO negotiations. In a July 2006 press release, Oxfam America president, Ray Offenheiser, responded by saying, “While we are deeply disappointed at the failure of the trade talks, we ought to be very proud of the enormous amount of dedicated work and efforts invested by the entire Oxfam family – supporters, staff, activists, students, partners, and allies – in this noble campaign.”

## **What Other International Nonprofits Can Learn From The Oxfam Case**

This section seeks to answer RQ2: What can other international non-profits learn from the Oxfam case? There is much to learn from the study and evaluation of Oxfam's MTF campaign case study, and this has resulted in a number of suggestions and/or advice for professionals. The following three areas of advice are addressed: world trade and poverty issues, working local with developing countries, and advice to similar organizations/nonprofits.

When working on large-scale humanitarian issues and solutions such as world trade regulations, poverty, or the environment, messaging has proven to be a very critical part of the outcome, awareness, and engagement in campaigning. It is very easy to get lost in abstract descriptions and messages. Instead, messaging must be practical and must be made tangible to targets. It must also show the links the target has to the message and must be able to draw attention by being entertaining or creative. This was resonated by Rusu when she remarked, "Frankly, trade policy is not a very exciting topic so we had to be really creative in order to get people to give us a couple of seconds to have them really think about what trade policy is and what it could be and how it can help or how is it integral or not integral in the social justices issues that they care about."

Likewise, Rateau discussed the importance of the messaging research and facts to targets in an easy to understand way. "In the end, in terms of engaging the key publics, I think we should have had more research that could help identify the cost of either not acting or just make it edgier to draw people in," says Rateau. "Much of our research and policy was very sound, but more focused on what should the policy changes be. The policy changes definitely engaged and interested a lot of people, but image-wise was still a very small group." Thus, Rateau recommended producing research with more broad, big-picture facts that could be easily understood.

Some aspects of messaging also brought unintended results for MTF. For example, a key part of MTF was increasing access to northern markets for developing countries, and that was taken the wrong way and was seen as a continuation of what was called the “Washington consensus” then. Also, the initial report on unfair trade received a backlash due to some language that angered people in the introduction summary. Because of these unintended messaging results Oxfam had to work even harder to re-build bridges and convince its targets what the organization really stood for. These unintended results show the power of messaging in global campaigns dealing with sensitive issues like poverty and trade rules.

Another area that professionals can glean insight from is working at the local level with developing countries. This is reiterated throughout all of the data analysis. Partnerships with local organizations in developing countries are a very successful way to gain credibility and access to communities. Although someone in a rural village in Senegal might not recognize the name Oxfam, they surely might be familiar with its local affiliate. Additionally, by forming partnerships with local organizations, this opens the door for educational opportunities and forums, which proved to be a key part in Oxfam’s relationships with developing country partners and governments. When the educational message comes from someone familiar it will likely carry more weight.

Based on Oxfam’s major evaluation of MTF in 2005-2006, this led to significant shifts in its campaign model. Oxfam’s 2007 Accountability Report shows the two shifts include: (1) recognition that global campaigning on international agreements (such as the Doha Development Round) needs increased support for partners’ national campaigns, to ensure that international policy change is translated into real benefits for poor people and not captured by elites, and (2) supporting more homegrown national campaigns on economic justice issues and complementing

these with global campaigning on international policies that prevent changes at the national level. Consequently, these lessons have changed the approach Oxfam is using for its global Stop Climate Poverty campaign, and greater emphasis will be put on global-national links, and more resources devoted to national campaigning.

Lastly, the MTF Oxfam case can provide advice to professionals working in similar organizations and for similar causes. All of the key informants were asked if they had to do it over again would there be anything that they would do differently. Their answers provided a lot of insight and advice for their peers and future endeavors. For instance, Rateau replied in terms of messaging research as previously discussed.

In another example, Rusu responded by saying, “I think I would have gone further with the celebrity side of things. I would have found someone who was willing to give us a lot of money to do a lot of ads. Because I think frankly we did quite a bit of ads but they were very targeted to members of congress we were trying in influence, and if it was up to me now that I have the luxury of looking at it retrospectively, I would put some serious money in broad advertising to raise awareness among Americans.” Rusu’s account shows the importance third-party endorsement especially when paired with broad-scale advertising.

When Rawson was asked he responded with two thoughts: trusting one’s instincts and the importance of champions and marker bills in congress. First off, he felt that by trusting its instincts, Oxfam could have been more successful with MTF. “I don’t know if you can take this one to the bank, but one lesson was that we should trust our intuition,” says Rawson. “You know a lot of campaigning is you gather data and then you respond to the data. And then some of it is of course making decisions based on your gut instincts, and I think that when we looked back we saw that a lot of our gut instincts were correct and we could have moved ahead with

targets or actions or wording or frankly policy divisions. We could have moved ahead on those based on our initial assessments rather than waiting and seeing.”

Another thing Rawson felt was demonstrated to Oxfam during MTF was the importance of having champions in congress and the importance of putting up “your own marker bill.” “If you are gonna win when the going gets tough and the battle is on the floor in the Senate or the House of Representatives, you’re going to need a person who is going to be willing to take your issue as the number one issue for them,” says Rawson.

In terms of a marker bill Rawson felt that one can only accomplish so much by trying to put spin on or amend what is already being tabled or reformed by congress. “It’s important to establish from the beginning that you have a fundamental principle which is of utmost importance and you find a chairman that is going to support that with you and then you stake out the ambitious changes that you want rather than kind of waiting to see what comes forward and then trying to put a spin on that,” says Rawson. “You assert your vision in policy circles, even if it is somewhat politically impractical it is important to put it out there.”

### **Implications For Professionals And Academics**

In summary, what practical implications can professionals and academics take away from the findings this case study? Here, much of what has been previously addressed is synthesized and listed for professionals and academics to interpret and take note of. In order to be successful professionals/organizations should use Relationship Management Theory for the following approaches. These steps/dimensions in RMT are very important to implement or build in relationships with publics:

- To some necessary degree, each step in the SMARTS model is essential to the campaign process.
- Measurable objective setting and set timelines are not always necessary depending on campaign goals and environment.

- Scan the history of the problem at hand as well as what other similar organizations are doing.
- For abstract issues like hunger or disease, organizations should make these issues tangible to publics by mapping their objectives and tactics to tailor to publics' interest.
- The acting step highlighted the importance of the internet in information dissemination campaigns of this nature. All publics should be able to find out everything about the campaign, and further, should have access to reports, press releases, and campaign toolkits for personal use.
- In the rolling-out step of MTF, Oxfam showed the importance of ideas to increase the campaign profile – like celebrity engagement and spokespersons. This creates a wider reach for a minimum price.
- If any of the SMARTS steps are most important to practice it is tracking and stewarding. Organizations must keep constant tabs on the environment and their progress. In some cases, only by implementation can they really see what they should or shouldn't do or how things can be made to work better. These adjustments from tracking are essential in the campaign process.
- Oxfam's affirmative use of Hon and Grunig's six dimensions positively affected the nature of its relationships with its publics and also helped make the campaign more successful.
- For large-scale, global campaigns like MTF tracking and stewarding should be done from both a macro (campaign model) and micro (tactical) level.
- The control mutuality dimension suggests that awareness must come first and is essential if a desired action is to be completed. Awareness in itself is a huge achievement and does not always result in action-oriented behavior.
- Oxfam showed that trust is absolutely essential between an organization and its publics. It is the foundation for anything Oxfam may choose to implement or claim. If trust is not established then Oxfam's work and message is futile.
- The satisfaction dimension in this case shows professionals that they must make publics understand that they are truly of concern to the organization and that the organization is working unselfishly to better the lives of various publics. Further, organizations must make publics feel a part of the process to increase satisfaction.
- Organizations should play up their history or years of service to in order to show commitment to whatever cause or practice it is that they may support.
- The communal relationship dimension suggests that professionals should highlight the good that targets and participants will create by contributing to the desired action (after awareness).

- Reputation is everything as shown through the exchange relationship dimension in this case study. Organizations should do everything ethical within their power to maintain an honest and superior reputation.

Academics can take away the following theoretical implications from this study in regard to RMT and the further study of its impact and relevance:

- If RMT is to be a normative theory, that means if theory guidelines were followed strictly the campaign would be effective. Oxfam did achieve its goals of awareness and participation but not its goal of changing unfair trading practices. To at least some degree it followed all steps and showed all dimensions in a positive way. So was its non-strict adherence to the first steps in the SMARTS model the result of its failure to change unfair trade practices?
- “Good in theory but not in practice” is a common phrase with normative theories. Yet, in this case study, RMT is logical AND realistically practical and implementable. It works but Oxfam still didn’t achieve its main over-arching goal. What is the missing link? Are their unaccounted for variables?
- What would need to change with these models for RMT to be normative and predictable? It appears that by following these two RMT models there is no guarantee to reach a goal but rather, it cannot be disputed that by following these models any campaign and its chances for success would be greatly enhanced.
- Perhaps RMT should be considered a positive theory in light of this. It should be evaluated in part by whether or not the MTF campaign corresponded or reflected reality (which it did). Therefore, yes, RMT would make a good positive theory.
- Perhaps RMT should not be used to evaluate public relations efforts but rather to simply direct them as the results in this study could stipulate.
- RMT seeks to measure the dimensions and steps in the organization-public relationship. A strong measurement should predict success rather than guarantee it.
- Lastly, there may be flaws or gaps in the two RMT models examined. This provides room for future research into the matter.

### **Concluding Remarks And Resolutions**

This case study sought to examine the MTF campaign and the presence or non-presence of Relationship Management Theory within Oxfam and its campaign parameters. Further, by testing the presence of RMT in the campaign, the nature of the relationships between Oxfam and its various publics was revealed. Although both models are thoroughly shown in the campaign

revealing such relationship dimensions and steps, a number of unresolved issues arise based upon the implications to professionals, organizations, and academics motivated by theory. Oxfam and its campaign did in fact employ both models of RMT tested to some level, yet the campaign failed to change unfair trade rules and regulations on both a national U.S. level and globally among WTO members. So what went wrong? Why did it not work? A number of explanations are plausible.

First, perhaps Oxfam's loose adherence to steps one and two (scan and map) of the SMARTS model was in part a reason. Oxfam did not participate in "sophisticated" public relations/marketing scanning and surveying of their targets. Ultimately it was the U.S. legislators and trade representatives as well as WTO members that would decide the fate of the campaign. Maybe Oxfam did not survey these targets thoroughly enough. Further, if Oxfam had a better understanding of these targets they might have been able to more effectively craft messages to them. It seems that maybe the tactics and messages tailored to these particular targets may not have been fully effective – this would be the "mapping" step in the SMARTS model.

It is possible that Oxfam was not able to show these targets why its' fair trade message should be important and of concern to the targets – hence, the lobbying aspect of the campaign. The message needed to focus on why adhering to Oxfam's call for trade was more important than any other strategies on the table on both the Farm Bill and WTO talks. The message should have highlighted Oxfam's unfair trade solution's positives over the alternatives' negatives. Additionally, the messages could have focused more on the devastating and harmful outcome of not listening to Oxfam's proposed trading solutions. This last point was echoed by key informant interviews.

Second, in terms of the Hon and Grunig model, the public including these legislators and WTO members are the ultimate deciders of the fate of this case, regardless of how much awareness or behavior among farmers, campaign participants, and concerned citizens around the world is increased. Just as they may have been approached ineffectively or inappropriately during the scanning and mapping stages, it is possible that the positive gains and evidence of Hon and Grunig's model in the MTF case pertained more so to other publics as well.

For example, the study showed Oxfam's ability to strongly establish trust and an exchange relationship among farmers in both the U.S. and in developing countries as well as among the many campaign participants, donors, and supporters. This may not have been the case with the legislative and WTO targets. Take Hon and Grunig's for dimension, control mutuality, for instance. This dimension dealt with Oxfam's ability to influence its targets, which was shown in a variety of ways from awareness to action in the findings chapter. Yet, control mutuality may not have been fully achieved among these targets as Oxfam was unable to influence their decisions to change the unfair trading laws.

Similarly, it appears that trust was more firmly established among campaign participants and the general public (i.e. – third-party validators like celebrities and partnerships) than the legislative and WTO public. These third-party validators most likely were far more appropriate for mass general awareness rather than members of the WTO. Although the cultural exchanges were very effective in establishing trust among farming populations both at home and abroad they might have done little to establish a strong trust in Oxfam from the key trade decision makers. This is not to say that these strategies were wrong. Rather, they were very effective for their particular publics. It is just that the awareness and outcry from such publics seemed to not be enough.

It appears that Oxfam did have a communal and exchange relationship with these key trade decision makers however. There is no doubt that as Oxfam was trying to propose solutions to these key trade decision makers, it had the concern of farmers' welfare as its main motive. Furthermore, regardless of which targeted public, from donor to trade representative, Oxfam's reputation, past initiatives, and role as a major player in the trade game was never questioned and always one of its' strongest dimensions all around in the Hon and Grunig model.

Third, it is possible that Oxfam did fulfill its part in the minds of these key trade decision makers. After all, the campaign successfully highlighted unfair trade practices among this public and at the very least raised the level of awareness regarding fair trade to those with the ultimate power. The mass awareness they created most certainly put pressure on this public to listen closely and act carefully. So in this sense, although the campaign is slowing down or 'over,' it may really only be starting. The next WTO Ministerial may have a much better outcome for fair trade. World trade laws are not an easy or uncomplicated thing to change, and most certainly, all concessions couldn't be changed at once. There is a very strong chance that the effects of the MTF campaign are still evolving and will continue to evolve over time, regardless of an official "ending."

These explanations lead to the possibility of gaps in Relationship Management Theory. So what needs to be done or added to make the theory predictable? Any organization following these two models of RMT should be more successful because of them but not necessarily meet all objectives. Meeting all objectives cannot be guaranteed. The theory might need to stipulate *to what degree* goals and objectives will be met based upon adherence to the models. It does not appear that something is inherently *wrong* with RMT but rather it needs more guidelines.

Measurable objective setting by Oxfam also might have made this case more unambiguous so that one could accurately evaluate it “pass or fail.”

On the other hand, as previously discussed, the decision that makes or breaks Oxfam’s efforts is held in the hands of a select group of legislators and WTO members. In the end it is their vote and beliefs that decide the current trading climate. Sometimes all the right steps can be taken and still the desired result is not achieved. The establishment Oxfam was working against may not have been ready for a change like the one Oxfam and MTF advocated. Or Oxfam simply may not have been able to handle a global problem of this magnitude. Regardless, its example helps to better understand operational concerns in the theory as stated above.

## CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This qualitative report provided a case study of Oxfam International's Make Trade Fair campaign in order to assess its use of international public relations theory such as the relationship management theory and the extent to which this theory is followed by an international nonprofit organization in practice. This was a unique area to test public relations theory as done through campaigning by a nonprofit organization.

After gathering and compiling relevant literature on the matter the researcher decided that the relationship management theory of public relations would be very applicable to this case. Furthermore, as the theory is still somewhat in its infancy this would provide a good outlet to test various models associated with relationship management theory. Two research questions were then set forth upon examination of the theoretical literature: (1) How well does the Oxfam case reflect current trends in international public relations theory and practice, specifically the relationship management theory, and (2) What can other international nonprofits learn from the Oxfam case?

In order to answer the two research questions the researcher used a qualitative case study approach. Data was then gathered regarding Oxfam and MTF, primarily external sources, with the exception of e-mail sources from Oxfam employees. This data information served as a solid foundation and entryway into the later campaign informant interviews. A MTF campaign timeline and SWOT analysis were then formed and later supplemented by campaign informants' interviews.

As data information was being gathered and synthesized, the researcher began to seek out Oxfam employees that worked in top-level positions for the MTF campaign. These key informants were found using a snowball method. After speaking with numerous Oxfam

employees, the researcher was directed to three key informants that worked in different areas of MTF at top-level management positions. Each of these informants stated that if there was anyone to speak with regarding the U.S. and MTF that these three were the right people. Contacting and interviewing proved to be a challenge as these Oxfam employees were frequently out of the country or extremely busy. However, after much diligence and patience, each key MTF informant was able to speak with the researcher via a recorded telephone conversation that was later transcribed.

After transcription of interviews and the coalescence of documents, the researcher conducted pattern matching to look for the presence of the two models being examined in the relationship management theory – Ledingham’s SMARTS model and Hon and Grunig’s six dimension model. After coding direct responses from key informants as well as more subtle clues in the interviews and documents, the researcher was able to clearly articulate all findings related to the two models.

The theoretical implications and real-world implications to professionals were then discussed in chapter five as well as an evaluation of the MTF campaign from traditional public relations standards. By contrasting relationship management theory models with Oxfam’s behavior in its MTF campaign, the researcher was able to answer the first research question and conclude that Oxfam does closely follow this established public relations theory through the two stipulated models. The researcher was also able to answer the second research question by offering advice or learning points that other nonprofits and/or public relations professionals working in similar environments can take away from the Oxfam MTF campaign case study.

The researcher concludes that the relationship management theory is a practical and usable theory for nonprofits and similarly practicing public relations professionals. The two models of

management practice were able to provide insight into the relationship Oxfam had and still retains with the various targets in the MTF campaign.

Ledingham's SMARTS model offered a process to manage relationships which Oxfam followed to a certain degree throughout the entirety of the MTF campaign. It is here that differences between public relations planning and programming were seen in comparison to Oxfam's processes. Upon examination from this model the researcher concluded that Oxfam's relationship to its targets was and still is extremely strategic in nature. Each target served a specific purpose in reaching Oxfam's ultimate goal of ending unfair trading rules and regulations.

Hon and Grunig's model provided a way to measure Oxfam's relationship with its targets through its six dimensions. This model was followed very closely by Oxfam and the MTF campaign and seemed to be a natural fit with the organization and the nature of its work. This model really highlighted a more private and welcoming side of Oxfam as an organization and showed that some of its greatest strengths include the trust, commitment, and satisfaction it shares with its campaign targets as well as its glowing reputation as a frontrunner in global issues like poverty, trade, aid, and climate change.

Based upon the findings and implications discussed in this case study, the researcher concludes that the two models examined could be appropriate models for the discovery and testing of relationship management theory. They can provide not only guidelines for professionals but also further ways in which to educate up and coming young professionals in colleges and universities. This case study can also serve as a learning opportunity for not only professionals working with similar issues but also as a learning tool at colleges and universities.

This study offers insights into the MTF campaign, its course, and what campaigning of this nature entails and requires.

### **Limitations Of Study**

Despite gaining an abundant amount of information and insight into relationship management theory, there are limitations of the study that should be noted. First, as a global campaign, the MTF campaign is quite an enormous undertaking. Therefore, the participants used in interviewing were not involved as much in policy work and lobbying outside of the WTO Doha Development Round talks. Their roles in the MTF campaign pertained primarily to Oxfam America and what the U.S. was doing that was harmful to farmers in developing countries. Similar policies in the EU for example, were being fought against and exposed to the public. However, for the sake of a timely and condensed report the researcher chose to focus mostly on how U.S. trade policies affected those in developing countries.

Another limitation arose in discussion with Oxfam MTF key informants – all internal campaign documents were considered confidential. The organization has a policy not to release internal documents/correspondence. Therefore, no internal documents could be used for analysis as the researcher had planned. Interestingly enough, however, those interviewed were able to disclose that such information the researcher was seeking was not necessarily all “written out and organized” as I had expected it to be – i.e. things like measurable objects and timelines.

Although the external documents provided by Oxfam and their website were very telling, internal data and documents could have added another element to the case study, particularly more first-person information. Fortunately, this shortcoming was alleviated by the personal insight and disclosures of MTF campaign key informants. The researcher recommends that it would be helpful in future studies if there is an established relationship between the researcher and the organization in order to gain access to internal documents.

Another point regarding study limitations is compensation through concurrent validity. How can readers place trust in the study and believe the accounts of the Oxfam interviewees? What if the Oxfam interviewees are simply trying to bolster their organization and campaign? The insights from the key informants are in large part opinion as much as fact. Therefore, their responses can be proven by examining them in comparison to the information subsidies and media coverage for verification.

Concurrent validity refers to the degree to which the operationalization correlates with other measures of the same construct that are measured at the same time. The information subsidies were used in order to verify the testimonies of the Oxfam key informants. All factual campaign information claimed by the key informants was found to be accurate when compared to the information subsidies. This included the outcomes of particular negotiations, evaluation and campaign composition, as well as specific objectives and tactics used.

### **Suggestions For Future Research**

This case study provides a number of suggestions for future areas of research. First, as one of the limitations recognized the gargantuan scale of the MTF campaign, future researchers could do other case studies of the MTF campaign using the same methodology but with a different country. For instance, the exact same case study could be performed, but instead of examining the trade rules and regulations set forth by the U.S., the researcher could look at those set forth by the European Union. Such a study could then be compared to the current one and see if there are any differences in relationship management in different world regions. Alternatively, the same case study could be performed framing the European Union but with a different theoretical premise.

Future studies could also delve more into the nature of relationships between public relations and nonprofit campaigns to see if the tenets of relationship management theory are

applicable in practice. Researchers could look at the organization from a campaign or how effectively the organization operates. This could be examined both with the relationship management theory or other applicable theories. An additional suggestion for future research could be in the area of strategic partnerships between two NGOs, e.g., Oxfam and a local affiliate in Senegal. Relationship management theory could be used to evaluate the partnership and the partnership-forming process.

This theory also provides many theoretical avenues of further research pertaining to operational aspects and trying to understand why RMT was present in this case study yet didn't predict its success correctly. Further studies could focus on the operationalization of the two models or other another model of relationship management theory in other campaigns. Likewise, additional research can look at other variables or environmental factors that may have affected the theoretical implications and findings in this study. They could also examine to what degree each of the dimensions or steps in both models can accurately predict success. Measurable predictors could also be tested in this subject matter.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This case study of the Oxfam's MTF campaign testing two models of relationship management theory is a distinctive approach to evaluating organizational behavior. The study furthers the body of knowledge in regards to relationship management theory while evaluating combines the practice of public relations in a nonprofit environment. It offers practical advice for professionals and theoretical insights for public relations and similar communication scholars. What's more, the study opens the door for future research regarding relationship management theory and cross-cultural campaign comparisons. This case study offers a unique and exclusive inspection of the inner-workings of Oxfam's MTF campaign and provides a platform to further the body of knowledge in international public relations theory.

APPENDIX A:  
LIST OF PRESS RELEASES AND RESEARCH REPORTS

*Oxfam Press Releases*

- “African Cotton Farmers Call for End to US and EU Export Subsidies,” 15 July 2005
- “African Film Lovers, Artists Demand: Make Trade Fair,” 5 April 2005
- “In Andean countries, Oxfam Partners Speak Out Against FTAs,” 12 October 2006
- “Bono Highlights Trade Reform During Visit to Malawi,” 22 May 2006
- “Breakdown of trade talks a missed opportunity” by Laura Rusu, 29 July 2008
- “Celebrate Fair Trade This October,” 1 October 2007
- “Celebrities Join 18 Million ‘Voices’ Bound for Hong Kong” by Lyndsay Cruz, 12 December 2005
- “Close Vote on DR-CAFTA Shows Strength of Social Movement” by Chris Hufstader and Andrea Perera, 11 August 2005
- “Coldplay Creates Big Noise Over Unfair Trade,” 27 July 2005
- “Coldplay Rocks the US for Make Trade Fair” by Ben Brandzel, 1 August 2003
- “Congress Misses Opportunity for Farm Bill Reform,” 1 July 2008
- “During Second Leg of U.S. Tour, Coldplay Campaigns to Make Trade Fair,” 23 March 2006
- “Farm Bill Deal Light on Reform and Heavy on Bloat” by Laura Rusu, 9 May 2008
- “Food price crisis offers lessons for new trade and agriculture policies” by Laura Rusu, 16 October 2008
- “Habib Koité,” 24 January 2005
- “A Journal of US Farmers’ Journey to West Africa” by Jim French, 21 August 2006
- “Latin Americans Demand Trade Alternatives,” 10 September 2004
- “Make Trade Fair Road Show,” 16 September 2005
- “The Migration of Work and Workers” by Kristi Disney/TIRN, 1 September 2001

“Now more than ever a fair trade deal is needed” by Laura Rusu, 21 July 2008

“Oxfam America Joins FARM AID in Declaration on Agriculture and Trade,” 7 September 2003

“Oxfam America President to Congress: Vote No on US-Peru FTA,” 19 July 2006

“Oxfam Campaigners, African Farmer Reps Call for End to Destructive Cotton Subsidies” by Jamie Baker, 5 September 2003

“Oxfam Joins Civil Society Groups Across the Hemisphere to Oppose the FTAA,” 1 November 2002

“Oxfam at Major World Agriculture Conference: End Cotton Dumping” by Brian Rawson, 1 June 2003

“Oxfam Shares its Message with Millions in New Ad Campaign,” 3 February 2006

“Partners in Central America and US Unite to Fight DR-CAFTA” by Andrea Perera, 30 March 2005

“Rice Farmers Oppose DR-CAFTA in Washington” by Nick Rosen, 2 May 2005

“Senate Fails to Reform Inequitable Agricultural Subsidies,” 3 November 2005

“US Plans to Rejoin International Coffee Organization,” 16 September 2004

“World Fair Trade Day 2004” by Shayna Harris, 26 April 2004

“WTO Development Round Fails, But Oxfam Make Trade Fair Campaign Continues,” 31 July 2006

“WTO talks hang on a thread: Developing countries must not be blamed” by Laura Rusu, 29 July 2008

*Oxfam Research Reports and Company Reports*

“Rigged Rules and Double Standards – trade, globalization, and the fight against poverty,”  
March 2002

2007 Oxfam Accountability Report

*Oxfam Briefing Papers and Notes*

“Africa and the Doha Round – Fighting to keep development alive” by Jennifer Brant,  
November 2005

“Dumping: the Beginning of the End?” June 2004

“Dumping Without Borders: How US agricultural policies are destroying the livelihoods of Mexican corn farmers” by Gonzalo Fanjul and Arabella Fraser, August 2003

“Make Trade Fair for Central America – Agriculture, Investment and Intellectual Property: Three Reasons to Say No to CAFTA,” September 2003

“Running into the Sand – Why failure at the Cancun trade talks threatens the world’s poorest people” by Kevin Watkins, August 2003

“Signing Away The Future – How trade and investment agreements between rich and poor countries undermine development” by Emily Jones, March 2007

“Square pegs in round holes: How the Farm Bill squanders chances for a pro-development trade deal” by Emily Alpert, July 21, 2008

“US Export Credits: Denials and Double Standards,” April 2003

*Oxfam Publications, Magazines, Brochures*

“Oxfam Exchange,” Spring 2002, Volume 1, Number 3

“How Does the USDA Farm Bill Proposal Measure Up?” by Emily Alpert, ICTSD, No. 1, February-March 2007

APPENDIX B  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

**UF** Institutional Review Board  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

PO Box 112250  
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250  
352-392-0433 (Phone)  
352-392-9234 (Fax)  
irb2@ufl.edu

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DATE: January 15, 2008

TO: Ashley Tucker  
504 NW 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32603

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD; Chair *ISF*  
University of Florida  
Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol #2007-U-1180

TITLE: Oxfam International Campaign Interviews

SPONSOR: Start Up funds

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants. Given your protocol, it is essential that you obtain signed documentation of informed consent from each participant. Enclosed is the dated, IRB-approved informed consent to be used when recruiting participants for the research.

It is essential that each of your participants sign a copy of your approved informed consent that bears the IRB approval stamp and expiration date.

If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, *including the need to increase the number of participants authorized*, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

If you have not completed this protocol by **January 15, 2009**, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

## APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

### Informed Consent Document

Hello, my name is Ashley Tucker and I am a graduate student at the University of Florida pursuing my Masters Degree in International Communication. The supervisor of this research is Dr. Michael Leslie, my advisor. As part of my course work I am conducting a thesis, and I am asking you to participate in this study because you have been identified as someone highly significant and relevant to the topic I am examining. The scientific purpose of this study is to examine public relations theory and models in relation to real work approaches through a case study of Oxfam International's social media relations campaign, and further, to provide a case for example and study.

As a participant, you will simply be asked permission for an interview either in person or via phone/e-mail. If you agree to an interview you will be asked to answer various questions about your organization's campaign, the campaign process and your involvement in this particular campaign being studied. Interviews should last no more than one hour each. Participants may expect a few follow-up questions for clarification and explanation after the interview is conducted simply via phone or e-mail. This consent document will be provided to you prior to any interviews conducted either in person or via fax. I will be conducting all interviews.

There are no anticipated risks to this research other than the loss of personal time by the participants. Furthermore, there are no direct benefits other than the satisfaction of helping a study along the way. There is no compensation as well. Participant identity will be kept confidential and protected if desired by the participant. I will ask this at the beginning of each interview. If this is requested anonymity will be promised and no personal identifiers will be attached to the data.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. Additionally, you do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

Face-to-face interviews will be audio-recorded and I, along with my supervisor, will be the only people with access to the interviews. After data analysis all tapes will be destroyed.

Results of this research will contribute to my master's thesis and will be shared by the academic body of the University of Florida.

Please let me know if I can answer any questions for you and below you will find further contact information for both me and the IRB02 office.

Approved by  
University of Florida  
Institutional Review Board 02  
Protocol # 2007-U-1180  
For Use Through 1/15/2009

APPENDIX D  
ORIGINAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

## **Oxfam International Interview Questions**

### *The Case for Fair Trade*

1.) Tell me about the trade environment that you were working with and the conditions that led to the decision to implement the 'Make Trade Fair' campaign.

- Tell me about your role/position in the MTF campaign.

### *Program Planning, Execution and Evaluation*

2.) What did the preparation/planning stage entail?

3.) What did the execution stage entail?

4.) What did the evaluation stage entail?

5.) What was the target population/public/area?

6.) What would you say is the timeframe for the entire campaign?

7.) What was your campaign budget? Standard for a project like this?

8.) Can you tell me about specific campaign objectives including strategies and tactics – particularly in your position?

9.) How did you go about making the decision about key messages, content of information subsidies, or general messages?

### *Reflective of PR Theory and Practice (RQs 1&2)*

#### SMARTS model

10. (scan) Did you complete a preliminary analysis or scan of your target public? What sorts of things does this process entail?

11. (map) How did you plan your campaign (objectives) to tailor to this target market?

12. (act) How many/much materials/websites (etc.) were produced for your target market/the public? How much available information was out there?

13. (rollout) How was its release and implementation aimed to get the attention of your target market/the public?

14. (track) Did you evaluate your efforts to reach your market throughout the campaign?

15. (steward) Did you adjust any goals or tactics based upon evaluation throughout the campaign?

#### Hon and Grunig's Six Dimensions Approach

16. (control mutuality) Tell me about how you believe the 'Make Trade Fair' campaign influenced your target market/the public.

17. (trust) How do you believe that trust is established with your target markets/the public? Can you give any examples.

18. (satisfaction) What do you feel is the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with participating in the 'Make Trade Fair' campaign? What are examples of costs/benefits of participation?

19. (commitment) Tell me about the level of commitment to your area of the 'Make Trade Fair' campaign – from both Oxfam's standpoint and your target markets/the public.

20. (communal relationship) How do you feel that you improve your target market's/the public's welfare? (to those not immediately affected by trade regulations).

21. (exchange relationship) Do you feel that your past actions/future initiatives and promises play a role in the outcome of your part in the 'Make Trade Fair' campaign?

#### ***Reflexive Evaluation Questions (Evaluation of Process & Advice for Organizations)***

22.) How closely were measurable objectives met? Effective? Do you think MTF was successful in your mind?

23.) Did you have any unintended results good or bad?

24.) How would you characterize the media coverage of the campaign?

25.) What was your personal outlook or opinion on the campaign?

26.) What do you think other large-scale non-profit advocacy groups can learn from the MTF case?

27.) Lastly, is there anything else I should know that you think we have not addressed?

APPENDIX E  
TRANSCRIPTIONS

**Laura Rusu Interview Transcript – Monday, October 27, 2008**

AT: What was your role in the MTF campaign?

LR: I did media relations for Oxfam America's contribution to the global MTF campaign. Which means that primarily I was doing media work but there were times when I contributed to the larger campaign including the WTO minister in Hong Kong and so forth.

AT: Tell me about the trade environment that you were working with and the conditions that led to the decision to implement the MTF campaign.

LR: Well Oxfam America has been a part of the Oxfam International organization that has been a humanitarian organization for a number of years. We've evolved from purely providing aid to people in need but also we realized that unless the global system does not change ultimately it is going to be a constant issues of band-aids rather than actually making change happen that would be permanently good for poor countries and poor people around the world. So, early in the decade Oxfam decided that they needed to put a lot of resources behind making large-scale change happen, particularly from a trade perspective given that they firmly believe that trade if done right.....if done fairly, if the system of international trade is fair then in face it could very well help pull many people out of poverty across the world.

AT: Yes.

LR: So we started from there and it was timed off to kick off with a new international set of trade negotiations called the "Doha Round" which was started just months after September 11<sup>th</sup> and this moment of global unity and with the recognition of the impact of poverty on security concerns frankly. It was interesting because there were a lot of NGOs out there – organizations that focus on *free trade*. And they are out there saying that free trade is best for poverty and for really frankly, everybody while there are organizations out there that say that globalization is bad for poor people, that WTO is pretty much evil, that the World Bank is evil, etc. We kind of struck this nice balance of saying that free trade is not good, but trade globalization is here to stay and what we need to do in order to help the poorest people is to make sure that they get something out of international trade – that they get something out of globalization. So, that's where the MTF campaign is rooted and timed. It was very time-specific because there was new opportunity with a new round of international trade negotiations which you should know were kicked off specifically with the goal of bringing developing countries to the table and making the system more fair so that poor countries get benefit from international trade.

AT: Uh huh.

LR: Obviously, the international trading system, WTO, etc were created by rich countries and benefit rich countries. By rich countries I mean the European Union countries, the U.S., Canada, Japan, etc. So poor countries historically have not benefit from this trade. Therefore, the

campaign was set up in the hope that if we could trade international rules for trade we could help poor people pull themselves out of poverty.

AT: For the MTF campaign what was your target population that you were trying to influence? Would it be government bodies you are trying to lobby as well as the general public?

LR: Well, it's hard to look at that – because MTF was very much of a global campaign so in fact there were a multitude of targets and depending on timing there were targets focusing more at a particular time. So, me sitting here in Washington...obviously, my target was the U.S. government and U.S. legislators and most importantly, the U.S. trade representative which is the president's mandated person that sits down with international negotiators from around the world to negotiate international trade agreements. My colleagues sitting on the other side the ocean had the EU as their target.

AT: Yes.

LR: But really – the interesting thing about this particular campaign is that we really went global with it. We had I think, this might be wrong, but something like 18 million signatures of people from around the world that joined the global campaign and said that 'we are in support of MTF.' Three million of those were from India and Ethiopia. Sometimes they weren't even signatures but they were finger prints because the person signing was illiterate. So, it really was very much of a global effort and Oxfam works in more than 120 countries, so although a huge percentage of our effort was targeting rich country governments such as the EU, Canada, the US .....and how do you target rich country governments or any country for that matter because the people raise awareness among constituents and they call up their members of congress, their senators or call on the president to do the right thing. So, depending on time or the specific event sometimes about raising awareness in a particular district to get lots of people to call their member of congress or sometimes it was as simple as taking an ad out in a congressional publication – therefore, speaking directly to members of congress and to their staff. It also was, for example, having Chris Martin from Coldplay record an ad that was heard and ran on Clear Channel radio stations across the U.S. calling on people to call President Bush.

AT: I see.

LR: So, yes, it really kind of depended on the particular effort.

AT: So how did you go about making the decision about key messages? What was the key message you were trying to get across through awareness?

LR: Well, the key message for us was obviously that fair trade – international trade, if fair, can help pull people out of poverty. In fact, policies that we have in this country did not help the people that they were supposed to help – farmers. In this country, actually hurt farmers in other countries.....poor people in other countries. So, we started there and looked who we were trying in influence in congress and looked at their district and who we could get on board in their district knowing what are the districts and their demographics like: are there a lot of farmers? A lot of urban poor? A lot of Oxfam activist in that particular district? And we then tailored the

message to them or in some cases knowing a member of congress was not interested in international trade or was not interested in agricultural issues like that but they were very much interested in security issues. So in that case we would make the argument that trade could very well be a security issue – that poverty could be a security issue. Or when we're talking about subsidies for large-scale agricultural farms in the U.S. – maybe they didn't care about trade or security but they [congressional representatives] cared about the fact that billions of taxed dollars were getting wasted and lining the pockets of *Fat Cat* agro-businesses. So, we used that method. So, It took a long time.....the messaging.....like, we had an organizer in Kansas and what he talked to his constituents about and the messaging he used was different from our organizer in Chicago and different from our organizer in Virginia.

AT: Uh huh.

LR: So, it took a really long time go really go out there with the message and to see what works, what doesn't and to see where the voids are.....to see what the level of interest is and if people are interested at all. That kind of messaging thread we used with reporters, we used in ads, electronic communications with our constituents, E-actions, etc.

AT: Ok. Throughout the campaign, did you guys have some sort of on-going evaluation process to evaluate your efforts to reach your market through the campaign? And for that matter did you have to adjust any of your goals or approaches based upon evaluation throughout the campaign?

LR: Definitely, we did and some of that came from the polling that we did and that greatly helped us out as well as informal polling if you will....of our organizers. We had pretty regular, informal weekly meetings with our organizers and huddle from time to time where we did exactly that. We evaluated what's working, what's not working, what messages are most compelling with our constituents and with members of congress and also where we needed to do a bit more work to develop that. One of the struggles of course was getting Americans to care about someone on another continent.....1,000 miles away that they are never going to meet that was getting hurt because of our policies. So, in order to do that, in accordance with human behavior, if we support anyone its someone closest to us....physically or otherwise. So, we certainly never wanted to put American farmers and poor farmers in other countries on the same balance because despite their knowledge or awareness of how unfair these programs are they will want to help American farmers. That's not the kind of dichotomy that we wanted to create. In fact, poor farmers everywhere.....poor farmers in the U.S. and abroad were being hurt by our policies, and despite the fact that American programs that are supported to help family farmers are in fact helping to destroy them. So it was raising that level of awareness and learning that you know we couldn't just keep the U.S. part of the picture just completely out. You know we couldn't just shut out farmers in other countries but in fact we had connect all of the dots in order to give Americans an accurate picture about what is happening, but also to make it as compelling for them as possible.

AT: Can you tell me about how you believe the MTF campaign influenced the public at large, congress and other trade-influencing bodies that you have had to lobby.

LR: Well, I think we've had a great success in getting out there and talking to people about the fairness of the international trading system, specifically the fairness of American policies and their effects on poor farmers in developing countries.....from subsidies to bilateral free-trade agreements such as the Central America Free Trade Agreement or the agreement with Peru or Columbia. We had a great success rate raising awareness about intellectual property rules that hurt the ability of developing countries to help their poor get life-saving medicines so.....we went very far and wide....especially because we were able to call in some amazing assistance from celebrities such as Chris Martin from Coldplay and Michael Stipe from REM and so forth to be the initial pulling-in of people to raise awareness. Because frankly trade policy is not a very exciting topic so we had to be really creative in order to get people to give us a couple of seconds to have them really think about what trade policy is and what it could be and how it can help or how is it integral or not integral in the social justice issues that they care about.

AT: Yes.

LR: I think that specifically given that honed in and put a lot of resources in the last Farm Bill fight – the Farm Bill is something that comes up only every five years and it's a huge package of funds for programs such as agricultural subsidies, and I think that we actually contributed quite a bit to the toughest Farm Bill fight that congress has seen in quite a long time. Usually, Americans don't really care about farm policy – it's usually just farm state people that write it and benefit from Farm Bill policies. So, I think we can claim quite a bit of success in helping contribute to a national movement of awareness as to what farm policies exist and how they are problematic. We helped get hundreds of articles of the couple of years that we worked specifically on the Farm Bill – editorial stuff like letters to the editor in most of the large newspapers in this country and they came out not once but twice or in many cases much more and in favor of Farm Bill reform. I can't say I can take credit for that at all.....but, certainly we helped contribute to this larger movement.

AT: Ok. How do you believe that trust is established with your target publics? Can you give me some examples?

LR: Well, I think you know when I came to work for Oxfam four years ago we already had the luxury of a strong support of constituents that knew us and trusted us. My particular job....since I focus mostly on media relations.....was really to build trust among the reporters. So if they needed something they could come to us for a quick analysis, a timely analysis of what was going on in the different debates whether it was at the WTO negotiations or in the Farm Bill negotiations in congress. They [reporters] knew that we were not just a player, but that we had something to offer.

AT: How do you feel that Oxfam has improved its target public's welfare? (especially to those not immediately affect by trade regulations and fair trade).

LR: Well, I think that any time the public is well-informed about our policies it's a win. Whether or not the policy changes – in fact, in the Farm Bill it didn't change....we lost that fight. But anytime that you raise awareness and any time that the public is more informed it really increases the chance of change happening the next time around and that's what we were really

hoping for. As far as people not being exactly affected by it.....well, it's kind of hard to tell right now given the immense volatility that is taking place right now and rising food prices and market issues, financial crisis. That is likely to and it has the opportunity to kind of change trade situation in a lot of ways and disprove a lot of theories about free trade that were considered gospel to some.

AT: Uh huh.

LR: So, the Farm Bill of course does affect a lot of people. We worked quite a bit on it, and sure our in into it was the effect of U.S. policies on poor farmers in poor countries but ultimately the whole package and what we supported and what we didn't support is a package that has enormous increases for food stamps that do actually help poor people here in this country and some improvements in farm policy for farmers of color in this country who traditionally have not benefited from what you and I might think of as farm programs in this country. So, there were some direct impacts but I think on the whole the exciting thing is just.....surprising to be around in a couple of these Farm Bill fights.....surprising that it makes people interested and involved.

AT: How would you characterize the media coverage of the campaign?

LR: I think on the whole it was very positive. We focused on a number of different kinds of media anywhere from entertainment media with celebrities that Lyndsay had worked with to the really, wonky, inside-baseball type media here in Washington such as 'Inside Trade' or congressional quarterlies and dailies. So, I would say that we had enormous success. Plus, reporters are supposed to be un-bias so they weren't really going to make fun of us or tell us off in their stories, but I think the fact that we have gotten a number of media hits in the last couple of years really tells you that many reporters came to see us as a player [in the trade game] and as a good source of analysis of information about negotiations and the like. Not only the Farm Bill but also the WTO negotiations as well. We had a number of reporters coming to us for our perspective on things.

AT: Ok. So, if you had to start over or if done over again is there anything that you would have done differently or could have been done better?

LR: I think I would have gone further with the celebrity side of things. I would have found someone who was willing to give us a lot of money to do a lot of ads. Because I think frankly we did quite a bit of ads but they were very targeted to members of congress we were trying to influence and if it was up to me now that I have the luxury of looking at it retrospectively I would put some serious money in broad advertising to raise awareness among Americans.

AT: Oh and lastly, just to confirm and make clear – what would say would be the timeline for the campaign as a whole – from planning stages to evaluation.

LR: Well it started in 2002 and its winding down now. There were definitely different.....it was kind of a multi-headed monster if you will. So there was different pushes in some instances there was a whole focus on coffee-related issues, for example. We targeted Starbucks.....we had

a campaign against them last year and we were pushing fair trade products....so that's one thing and that had its own kind of up and then a down and then another peak. And then the WTO-related stuff....kind of went along with the crescendos of the negotiations of the WTO so there was a spike when negotiations were in Cancun and then in Hong Kong in 2005 and then it still kind of.....they just had a ministerial in June and it didn't really go anywhere and is kind of on hold now until a new administration comes into the white house in this country as well as in India. So, there is a whole other push in the U.S. focusing on trade negotiations focusing on bilateral trade negotiations....the Central America Free Trade Agreement....we focused quite a bit on that and that got voted in by just a number of votes. And then the Columbia Free Trade Agreement which has still not passed and the Peru FTA that has passed.

AT: Yes.

LR: So, you can tell there was a multitude of efforts and some of them were peaking while others were kind of laying low you know which left us very, very busy. So the campaign lifetime if you will has been about five years I would say.

AT: So you would base your timeline as nothing that was set in stone ahead of time, but rather how ever long it took to get done what you had set forth to do?

LR: Yeah, that's right.

### **Interview with Vicky Rateau – November 5, 2008**

AT: What would you say your background was prior to working for Oxfam and MTF? (public policy, management, marketing, economics??)

VR: Social justice organizing and advocacy (public policy).

AT: Have you ever had any public relations experience?

VR: Public speaking, facilitating workshops, doing trainings and trainings for trainers, recruitment for a membership organization. Organizing is public relations.

AT: How long have you been working for Oxfam?

VR: From October 2001 to May 2006 and August 2007 to the present.

AT: Can you tell me about your particular role in the MTF campaign?

VR: Sure. MTF was a global campaign for Oxfam as a family and there were two things I was involved with. One, I was on the managing committee for the international campaign and then two, I managed the U.S. piece of it which was a coordination of what needs to happen behind the scenes for the campaign.

AT: Also, for the rest of the interview maybe speak more about your role in the U.S. part of the campaign as I am going to look at the global campaign but not specific other countries like the U.S. I'm more interested in the U.S. approach.

VR: Ok. Sounds good.

AT: So what did the preparation and planning stages entail for the MTF campaign?

VR: Well, there were several features identified as either being obstacles or opportunities for developing countries under the umbrella of trade. So, those issues were identified by a research and policy team did it first through identifying issues and using consultations with our partners because Oxfam has worked with grass-roots organizations around the world for 30 years for the U.S.....about 60 years internationally. So that is the process in terms of identifying the issues and figuring out what Oxfam may be able to do to either move key decision makers on the issues.....whether they are decision makers from a particular country that holds a lot of power in trade negotiations or the other would have to do much more generally with or much more broadly with power dynamics at the international level. So you see it's hard to separate the U.S. from the international in this phase of the campaign because the issues were identified internationally not necessarily by Oxfam America that operates here in the U.S.

AT: Yes, that makes sense.

VR: So the next stage.....or the continuation of that is really figuring out what Oxfam can do to make a difference on those issues that have been identified – that other organizations weren't already doing and that we were best positioned to do as an international federation. Um, the campaign was brand new or I should say campaigning was new for Oxfam America when the MTF campaign was introduced. And so it was an opportunity to do more advocacy around issues.....systemic issues that we thought were important, and so it was a way to help increase the brand awareness and the recognition of Oxfam's approach to these very complex problems.

AT: Ah huh. That is interesting.

VR: Then after that.....media staff and organizing staff you know looked at...how do we engage who needs to be engaged in this campaign in order to move on these issues, and the strategies were developed from there. But, you know it was something that we'd come back to or look at over some time. So these would be the basic stages I'm trying to outline for you – the goals, the issues, problems that targets face, identification of the targets, looking at what Oxfam can do based on their resources and so forth. And then the tactics that we could use.

AT: So who would you say were your targets or those that needed to be influenced?

VR: In terms of audience.....because it was a.....it was happening simultaneously through our brand awareness efforts, we were trying to engage our own members, our own donors, and like-minded groups that either humanitarian groups or international development groups that are used to addressing issues by working on the ground in various ways....and just wanted to move from that and utilize the power that was there in lobbying our own government. And initially when

the campaign started off, it was very top-level and very broad. You know it was always identified as.....the trade negotiator, the U.S. trade negotiator or the president, and over time it became much more specific and focused on members of congress that could help influence or shape the U.S. trade policies. And that was also easier once there were proposals that we could organize around. So, you know about a year in after the campaign we were aggressively working on the Free Trade Agreements, and since those are ratified by congress we can look at members of congress and figure out who such be swayed or engaged.

AT: Ok. So what would you say to be the timeline for the campaign as a whole? I know it's starting to wind down and is kind of already over.

VR: I think that the peak of it or the busiest time was the five years between 2001 and 2006. We still continue to work on trade, but because of the status of the international trade negotiations or the Doha Round negotiations, its....the strategy has met, there is more lobbying, there is some media.....much more behind the scenes and less of the public engagement piece of it. When the public engagement piece was a huge part of it was when it was a greater disability and just a bigger effort. It's not so much based on time but the opportunities to influence that turned the timeline of the campaign.

AT: I see.

VR: Also, there were other specific issues that came up on trade that we would use to illustrate the unfairness of trade or unfair trade rules. Or also opportunities.....so the promotion around fair trade coffee.....and trying to get people to see their ability to engage in what seem like very complex trade issues and that they had a connection to the producers – the coffee producers at the other end of the supply chain, for one example.

AT: Ok. So would you say that right now Oxfam is in an evaluation stage of the campaign? Looking back on how everything went....

VR: Well, I think the evaluation stage has probably been going on for a couple of years. Right now we are still working on advocating and trying to influence trade policies. Since the peak of MTF in itself is over, I don't actually work on trade anymore so if you would want more detail on that I'd have to send you somebody else. But, the public engagement piece that isn't as high profile as it used to be.

AT: Ok. Can you tell me a little about the MTF campaign budget and if it is a standard budget for something like this. Also, do you go about getting money by fundraising?

VR: Sure. The budget for the U.S. piece was about a million and a half dollars – I don't know if that is standard because we don't have a large history with campaigns of this sort. I know a lot of other organizations that spend a lot more than that and many smaller organizations that spend much less. And, yes, there was specific fundraising for the MTF campaign.

AT: Can you tell me a little about specific campaign objectives and tactics?

VR: We broadly for objectives.....we were trying to highlight unfair international trade rules and propose solutions whether it was trying to eliminate trade-distorting subsidies that trapped and distorted prices for commodities and forced producers to.....or made it hard for producers to get basic essentials. Or another example of an unfair trade rule.....the international negotiations....the Doha round – the process of negotiations as well as forcing of some issues that weren't issues that developing countries wanted on the table. They were looking for a resolution or ways to increase opportunities and access to richer country markets and ways to leverage trade as an opportunity lifting economies out of poverty. But, instead there were many other issues that were on the table before the U.S. and the EU were really ready to focus on those issues....that benefited or would have benefited richer countries more...more developed countries more.

AT: Ok.

VR: Tactics and activities – well based on what you are telling me that you hope your paper will do.....the public engagement was a big part of it or key piece of it. Which is probably more of what people would have seen, and the point in doing that was to demonstrate that there was widespread concern both by communities of people that were directly impacted and also here in the U.S. there were people who cared about international trade and cared about poor communities. So I'm just going to name five kind of strategies or tactics that we employed kind of big picture wise -

AT: Ok.

VR: First, there was the building of alliances and making sure that developing countries...or civil society organizations from developing countries were bolstered in terms of their involvement in decisions regarding trade or decisions that would impact them. And then, second, making sure developing countries also had a platform in terms where their voices were bolstered in terms of solutions to tackling trade or making trade more fair. Another was addressing the intransigence of U.S. and other more developed countries and in international negotiations – their unwillingness to negotiate or the unfair trade rules that they kept pushing and the interest behind those such as trade-distorting subsidies. So the fourth is the direct engagement – direct engagement of people who were impacted with decision makers and to tell them just to mobilize people say for a petition or to demonstrate that there is widespread concern. But we also need to facilitate the links, and it was a way of helping build power....whether it was producer associations in developing countries who wanted more of a role in determining coffee prices or more representation in terms of policies that were being pursued. So those would be the broad strategic and tactical things we were working with in MTF.

AT: Ok, that's perfect. Did you complete a preliminary analysis or scan of your target public?

VR: Yes.

AT: What did this process entail?

VR: For the U.S., we built up or out. Our primary audience were our own donors and our own supporters. We wanted our donors, who gave money to be more politically active, and we wanted groups – or I should say we were trying to engage them in international issues more and to also get involved in advocacy. And the scan there was.....what was holding them back? Or what would inspire or engage them? What sort of ideas and tactics would inspire or engage them? What tools do we need in order to support their effort so they are able to run on their own...or you know student groups are able to figure out what they need to do to lobby or how they can get their campuses engaged.

AT: Uh huh.

VR: We also looked at other development or humanitarian organizations and other like-minded groups, mainly think-groups and other social justice groups and identified what might be the issues that bring them on board that help us achieve what we need to within the MTF campaign; but, would also be of some interest to them and might be beneficial to their own advocacy work. So, I would say that that was the next key step in terms of the broad outreach. Then there were also a lot of things that were done to just increase the profile of the campaign. Like the engagement of celebrities around these dumping photos where if a photo of the celebrity Colin Firth, Antonio Banderas, Alanis Morissette, Bono all being dumped by commodities, and it was more to help raise the profile of campaign and what we were trying to do to give a sense of people power and engagement behind our direct advocacy efforts. That is what Coldplay was doing in terms of promoting MTF – just trying to talk about the issues more, the impact more.....who were the winners and who were the losers around international trade and to just help do more education in a very broad sense.

AT: Great, great. So how much/or how many materials and websites etc were produced for your target markets? How much information do you think was out there and available to the public, including your targets?

VR: There definitely was quite a lot of materials out there. A lot on the web – I mean on the web it was information about the issues, policy papers that people could read, the flagship book written by a lead Oxfam researcher on the various issues and what we were pursuing in regards to each unfair trade rule that was identified. There were a lot of materials to support engagement of activist or people who wanted to be active on international trade – organizing kits, things they could use to set up table, engage other people or to run efficiently on their own with some videos or clips of things to download. There were campaign materials that were there just to help raise awareness like celebrity posters and ads, little gimmicky things that could be handed out to draw somebody's attention to a piece of paper that had much more substance on it.

AT: So mostly internet resources and hard copy things?

VR: Yes, I would say. Especially since most of the hard copy pieces were available to be downloaded online.

AT: Ok. How do you think the release of the MTF campaign and its implementation aimed to get the attention of your target markets?

VR: The internet was a major way in terms of getting the word out there. We were also building up the internet capacity or the E-communications capacity at the same time, so you know it was an area for a lot of testing and trying different things out and being experimental. Then we started hiring organizers, and there are two types of organizers: a.) national organizers that broadly supported the concert tours or concert outreach that was more about educating the people about the issues, you know very broad-scale and were working with key allies...organizations that we knew would be key allies and b.) we also started hiring field organizers. These organizers were placed in strategic locations – places that we wanted to build up our membership base or want to build a base in which we could engage them in direct advocacy around international legislative initiatives. So, they were the ones who reached out to groups, identified top leaders, helped to facilitate that direct advocacy between people who wanted to get involved in the campaign and members of congress and their offices.

AT: Ok. So, throughout the MTF campaign did you evaluate your efforts, and did you have to adjust any of your goals or tactics based upon this evaluation?

VR: Yes, one example – because it was a new campaign.....ok I think one thing....which will led me to talk about MTF internationally rather than domestically.....

AT: No problem. I realize it's all connected. I was speaking more in terms of lobbying U.S. government officials instead of the lobbying of other governments since all of the rich countries do in turn have an effect on the international level.

VR: Ok, perfect. One of the issues that we wanted to highlight around labor rights and workers in the supply chain whose rights were being negatively impacted because of unfair trade rules or because of this 'race to the bottom' as we called it. And, when the campaign started it was very much top-line in terms of what needed to get done, but we realized that in order to move things that there was quite a bit of work that needed to happen at the national level in developing countries, and we couldn't just have one story that everybody can use or one kind of example to use or mobilize around. For example, we talked about unfair trade subsidies and that applied internationally. We could use the specific example of sugar-milk....based on the national government we were trying to influence....but for the most part they could be used universally. With labor rights it was a very different case. So, Oxfam International had just developed campaigns that were much more relevant to the domestic contacts. You know, if they wanted to talk about trade in Chile, what was focused on was the flour industry. If they wanted to talk about trade in poor communities in the U.S. the focus was on migrant workers. If we wanted to talk about unfair...or violation of labor rights, impact of labor rights in trade agreements....you know, pick a country. We had to do something that was relevant to that country...knowing that it was a large growing industry, relevant to the workers and the people we are trying to mobilize in that country.

AT: Ok.

VR: So yes, there was constant evaluation and changing with regard to tactics and activities, but the basic premises of the campaign never changed.

AT: Can you tell me about how you believe the MTF campaign influenced your target markets? The public at large and the governmental bodies you were trying to influence.

VR: Sure. I'll just give a few examples if that would be ok?

AT: That would be perfect.

VR: So one of the first illustrations of unfair trade was around coffee generally. So taking a large commodity that was priced really low, that was priced below the cost of production and so people growing coffee couldn't survive on what they were making. That sort of translated itself or led to a campaign to promote fair trade certification as a choice that consumers could make that would ensure that farmers were paid fairly for their coffee, and also, some of that money could then go back into the local community based on how things are supposed to work if they are under the 'fair trade certification' process. What that led to was more engagement by the producers, by the farmers in international trade roles around the pricing of coffee....or even more direct contact with their consumers and contributed to a huge increase in fair trade consumption. So Oxfam played a major role....particularly in the U.S., where fair trade is just not as universally known or as widely known as it is in Europe. So you know the combining of different approaches or strategies to help raise awareness about fair trade certification and how consumers could directly engage with more producers.

AT: Ok.

VR: Another example, in terms of impact on institutions or things that made a difference – a lot of effort was.....I'll give you two examples. One was the Doha Round negotiations or the WTO. For many, many years the dynamic that had been set up is many developing countries that are being bullied or forced to accept that such that they didn't want in order to get or to be able to secure concessions that would help their economy. So, through a campaigning effort that both involved civil society groups and governments throughout the countries as well as constituents in rich countries that hold most of the power in international negotiations. The developing country voices became much, much stronger. So you know in Seattle they walked out of the negotiations because they couldn't win anything or even be listened to. In Cancun, developing countries were being listened to. And civil society groups just had much more influence in influencing their own governments.

AT: Yes.

VR: I think the other is around the free trade era – the free trade of the Americas ....rather the FTAA free trade agreement. Many groups were involved in that but what was going on was.....you know this was on course to pass and to happen. There was to be an extension of NAFTA...it seemed inevitable it was going to happen, and the elevating of voices of workers being impacted or communities being impacted – this in the north end...the global south really helped stop it in its tracks. You know helped by shining a light on how provisions in the FTAA would impact access to medicines or would make conditions actually worse for poor people. Take Mexican corn workers under NAFTA for example. Before NAFTA, they were producing

corn and used it to make tortillas. Being paid less and less over the years, they were forced to diversify or go into other things because subsidized corn in the U.S. was much cheaper....and you know, played a role in dragging down prices. So you're showing what kind of unfair trade policies in the FTAA existed and what the impact would be on communities.....helped stop things at the FTAA ministerial in Florida....I think in 2003, but double check that date.

AT: Ok, will do. So how do you believe that trust is established with your target markets? Can you give any examples?

VR: Having third-party validators help a great deal....you know people that folks recognize or notice or recognize or knew helped a great deal I'd say. Also, for Oxfam, since I said our primary audience were our own supporters, our donors, our people that are really engaged in international issues.....it was linking it to the communities that they care about. You know they knew Oxfam has worked in many poor communities around the world and that we were coming up with solutions based on both consultations but also engagement of the people who will be directly impacted.

AT: And can you tell me about the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction and the level of commitment shown by your target publics in the MTF campaign?

VR: I mean our list grew from – well we did have an online communications list.

AT: Is this the 'Big Noise' petition that you are speaking of?

VR: Yep, yep. Um, you know to go from zero.....in the U.S. I want to say it was about...or close to 400,000 in the end. Internationally, was 10 million. And you know that was never expected before. Not to mention, most of that list was repeatedly engaged in different actions; they would go from coffee to working on free trade agreements to working on subsidies to working on access to medicines. So, that is kind of one piece of it in terms of satisfaction and commitment. Also, another example – I think the fact that many communities who got involved in these issues in developing countries was a big deal. To me it meant that they trusted what the proposals were in order to tackle this issue.

AT: How do you feel that Oxfam has improved the welfare of those participating in the campaign? (to those not just immediately affected by trade regulations).

VR: I think over time we got people more deeply engaged, so it wasn't just signing a petition. It was figuring out what they could do in their own communities or around their campus to get other people involved. So, you know the investment in our part, Oxfam's part, was to provide those tools that made it easy for them whether it was trainings or materials or contracts or forums in which they could exchange ideas with like-minded people on what might work. So yeah – I think the deeper engagement that just kept people involved in the campaign on a long-term basis or throughout the entire campaign - that would be a good example of it.

AT: Do you feel that Oxfam's past action and future initiatives and promises have played a role in the outcome of the MTF campaign?

VR: Yes. I think a little bit earlier when we talked about key strategies and the impact or the influence on decision makers and institutions....I would go back to that example.

AT: Ok perfect. Overall, do you feel that Oxfam had any unintended results – good or bad?

VR: I'm sure there have been or are....

AT: If you can think of anything pretty significant that sticks out in your head.

VR: A key part of the campaign was increasing access to northern markets for developing countries, and that was taken the wrong way and was seen as a continuation of what was called 'Washington consensus' then. I think that was definitely a challenge to get through, and even though many organizations believed in the rest of the campaign that one issue kind of poisoned it for them. So it would take awhile to build relationships to bring them in or to work closely with them. So that was an unintended consequence; it was something that we had to overcome in the campaign, but I don't really think it was something that could have been improved. Also, the initial report, which is a great report and goes in depth in terms of what are the unfair trade rules and what impact they have on people in developing countries and their ability to better themselves or improve economically.....the report was fantastic.....I think it was the introduction or the introduction summary used some language that angered people. That obviously was an unintended impact, and that also added to the work we needed to do in order to build bridges or to really get people to focus on the proposals and propositions of the campaign.

AT: Do you know if the initial report is still available by download on the website?

VR: Yes, it's called 'Rigged Rules and Double Standards.'

AT: Ok, great. I'll definitely take a look at that. How would you characterize the media coverage of MTF campaign?

VR: It was probably most effective for two things: one – for the engagement and awareness building of Oxfam's campaign in international trade, and two – it cut through the spin and intransigence of rich countries by really honing in on what the interests were.....honing in on the fact that rich countries weren't listening to developing countries at all in these international negotiations. It was a way for us to cut through the spin coming out from governments and helped address the power dynamics.

AT: Overall, what would you say your personal outlook is on the MTF campaign? Do you feel the objectives were met and it was effective?

VR: I think it was effective in many ways. We didn't achieve what we wanted to on many other things. So I'd say kind of split.

AT: Ok, and if you had to do it all over again is there anything you would have done differently?

VR: Um, I think some of the research. I mean in the end, in terms of engaging the key publics, I think we should have had more research that could help identify the cost of either not acting or just make it edgier to draw people in. Much of our research and policy was very sound, but more focused on what should the policy changes be. And the policy changes definitely engaged and interested a lot of people, but image-wise was still a very small group. So we were able to produce the kind of research that would give us more telling facts or bigger pictures things that a lot of people could understand.....that we would be able to broaden.

AT: Ok, well that is all I have for you. I just have a few house-keeping questions. I know from my previous talk with Laura that Oxfam cannot provide me with any internal documents. I'm looking to made a pretty detailed timeline and was wondering how best you think I should go about it?

VR: Well, you're right, we never produce that for external use....because the external stuff is all in issues. I'm trying to think.....

AT: Do you think would be to look at all of the press releases and reports from the Oxfam website in chronological order?

VR: Yeah, yeah that's a good idea.....in terms of issues and what was happening. I was actually going to suggest that. I would actually go to Oxfam.org website and then you can supplement that by looking at the Oxfam America site. Big picture wise you can get a lot from the international site.

AT: Great. Thank you so much I really appreciate you taking the time to tell me about your involvement in MTF and the campaign itself.....

### **Interview with Brian Rawson – December 10, 2008**

AT: Can you tell me about your role in the MTF campaign and what your position was?

BR: Absolutely, yeah I started in 2003 as a MTF campaign organizer, and I initially did some work on fair trade coffee issues. Then I staffed....or I oversaw our work on the Coldplay tour of 2003, and then mobilized for a protest of the free trade area of the Americas which took place in Miami. And then I did a lot of work around agriculture .....and then the global negotiations .....what we call our Big Noise petition to make trade fair which was our global petition on the issues and that had a focus in the global trade talks. And then we did some work around CAFTA – the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Then really concluded with campaign on the Farm Bill – the U.S. Farm Bill. So that covers the number of issues that I personally was involved in with the MTF campaign and that spanned....basically, that went until a year ago roughly speaking – so it was about four years I was working on MTF.

AT: I see.

BR: And then as far as the types of activities my role was – I’ve always been reaching out to community members in the general public here in the United States trying to get people involved and recruiting support for the campaign, and sometimes that is through concert tours, most recently it has been through a more focused effort called the Oxfam Action Corp – which began almost two years ago with a selection of 10 key cities and then training of volunteers in those key cities to organize and mobilize in their city.

AT: Ok great. In looking at your target market – who would you A.) define to be your target public and B.) And did you do a preliminary analysis or scan to figure out the best way to approach them?

BR: Um, you know we generally were looking at the under-35 age group. Um.....the more sophisticated scan was really more about general support for Oxfam – you know who our supporters were – that’s where we were able to get down to more demographics. For the MTF campaign itself, I don’t think we did a really comprehensive demographic survey. We had our...we basically built upon what organizing resources we already had. For example, we had already been organizing among student populations, especially around fair trade coffee, and it was really clear that that issue was a great resonant issue with the student population in college. Secondly, we had you know the band Coldplay supporting the MTF campaign so it was kind of a no-brainer if we wanted to get a huge number of signatures we should try to leverage their U.S. tour as much as possible. So and that also lined up nicely with the 35-and-under crowd.

AT: Yeah definitely.

BR: There was a photo campaign that was part of the MTF campaign where different celebrities sat in and had commodities dumped on top of them. You may have seen those photos.

AT: Yes, I have seen those. The ones with Alanis Morissette and Antonio Banderas.

BR: Yeah. So there was some sophistication from the agency – the PR agency I guess - that put those photos together. They [the agency] were suggesting that it would work well with the under 35 age group but would also work well with people above that age range. So I mean in short the answer is ‘no.’ We didn’t do a sophisticated study or survey, but we had some idea of where our work was already resonating.

AT: So do you think in general there was a lot of information about MTF out there available for people and was it easy to find?

BR: Ah, I think that a person .....well, you know, I was involved with some of the more wide-ranging like national efforts which included the Coldplay tour which hit like 60 different cities. I should say that we also had our targeted effort where we had located field organizers. And I don’t know – you spoke with Vicky and Liam right?

AT: Vicky and Laura Rusu.

BR: Ok, Laura. They may have already mentioned to you that we had field organizers in Minnesota, Kansas City...or Kansas rather, Virginia, Northeast and for a time we had one out in L.A. – Los Angeles. Oh and in Chicago too. Now I would say that in those areas, particularly among key demographics, I would say that our approach in those areas was definitely more sophisticated. We were definitely reaching out to people with agrarian interests, people living in more rural area. We were reaching out to newspaper editorial boards in those areas, and you know the understanding of the demographic in those cases was more sophisticated in Kansas and in Minnesota or in central Illinois our field organizers had a good idea for who the audience was they were reaching and what messages resonated. There was a tension between trying to message the campaign for you know the U.S. rural or farming industry-based audience and then the message to metropolitan places, the two coasts, the big cities. And certainly the messaging and image arena came out of Oxfam International.

AT: Ah huh.

BR: So I would say there was a different approach for different specification with those audiences and a tension that we had to kind of manage all the way through the campaign. Does that make sense?

AT: Yeah, that's perfect. So did you evaluate your efforts to reach your target market along the way and if so, did you adjust any goals or tactics based upon this evaluation?

BR: We were evaluating our efforts as we went with an intention to course-correct along the way. The major shift that took place was with the elections when the Democrats gained the majority in Congress and all the chairmanships shifted – a major, a key part of our strategy...that we located our organizers were that we had our legislative targets. Our legislative targets were often the chairs of the relevant committees, so when the parties shifted and the Democrats assumed the chairmanships of the key committees that was very difficult. It was a challenge for us to adjust to. And did we? Yes. What we were able to do quite manageably was move an organizer from Los Angeles to Minnesota, because the new Democratic chair of the agriculture committee was based in Minnesota.

AT: Ok.

BR: As far as other tactics....you know the project that I helped create almost two years ago, the Oxfam Action Corp, was the recognition that we needed to be more geographically specific and have a sustained effort in target areas. So, as I mentioned before, my role – quite different from the field organizer's role – was to recruit volunteers across the country for a big global petition. But as we shifted from global trade talks into United States legislation – you know having a big global petition was no longer that relevant to U.S. legislation – so my work definitely changed to have an emphasis on training key volunteers and activists in ten strategic cities.

AT: Ok. Can you tell me about how you believe the MTF campaign has influenced your target markets and the public?

BR: Sure, you know I think that the United States public...the population is so big, the country is so powerful and influential that even if you reach a small percentage of people it can make difference. And I think that we reached a small but significant percentage of people with the MTF campaign.

AT: Uh huh.

BR: I think that even the name itself showed that trade was a significant issue and...well, let me put it this way. After Seattle 1999, there was a growing awareness that people were upset about globalization, and a lot of people, a lot of radio shows, talk shows and articles were discussing globalization. One thing our campaign did was...well for those that were paying attention anyways...it made that discussion much more specific and practical which was not just lost in the very vast concept of globalization and whether we should march in the streets against it. We are honing in on trade and particularly the way in which it's unfair. So for those that were paying attention, I think it provided a practical entryway into the topic of globalization.

AT: Ok.

BR: The second thing we did was we provided...well, we changed the discourse you could say or we provided a voice and discourse around globalization where we were talking about not just whether or not you should oppose the whole system, but we were talking specifically about solutions that we can arrive at if we make trade fair. So for people who wanted to get to work, roll up their sleeves and start working on some solutions, I think we provided a way forward by saying that fair trade rules could leverage more revenues for poor countries than aid – many times more. A relatively small improvement in the footing of poor countries in international trade could have enormous improvements in their revenue flow and economic vitality and livelihood. And it was very solution oriented. I think that was an important contribution to those that were paying attention to debates around globalization in the United States.

AT: Ok, that's great.

BR: I'll then mention two other levels. The question is basically did we make a difference right?

AT: Yeah or how you think you were able to influence those that you were trying to get a point across to.

BR: Well just a quick aside – the Big Noise global petition was intended to boost the confidence of the poor country negotiators in negotiations, and it was intended to wake up or alert the rich country negotiators to the political will worldwide for fair negotiations. But one unexpected outcome was by reaching out populations in developing countries by the Big Noise petition we actually had an influence in local and national issues that I think potentially is one of the most significant outcomes of the campaign.

AT: Uh huh.

BR: So to give you one example, I spoke with a tea farmer in Kenya, and from her perspective, the farmers in Kenya had always focused on the government-run buying agency that would basically set the price or commodity for tea for example, and they did the same for sugar and any

of these crops. They'd set a price and the farmers would do their business with that state-run agency. They would buy the product – the agency would buy the product from the farmers and then export it. Now when the farmers were unhappy with the price they would focus on the agency. So one thing our campaign did in that context was public education among farmers to understand that there is a wider political context that's global, that the rules are being set globally and that they're unfair and that there needs to be additional strategies for success.

AT: I see.

BR: So in the case of the tea farmer in Kenya explained that they'd been lobbied to basically choose the rules so that they can have direct access to buyers of their tea and they basically could go around and not have to do business exclusively with the state agency. So they were able to market their product directly to buyers, and you know rich countries' markets for tea drinkers. So that was an important structural change for that industry in that country, and I think similar learning was taking place in a lot of different countries where we were conducting our work whether it was Bangladesh or India or Ethiopia. Among the different agricultural sectors there it was important for farmers to participate in a campaign that was a learning experience. Um, you know when it comes to the final chapter of our work on trade and fundamentally agriculture which came to be really the top issue among all of the trade-related issues, our final chapter was our work on the Farm Bill. I would say that Laura and Vicky probably spoke quite a bit about that.

AT: Yeah, she did tell me a lot about that.

BR: So, I think that Laura summarized, but we had a very important influence on changing the public debate around Farm Bill subsidies. We had the media...the mainstream media; the most influential papers around the country seemed to have an emerging consensus that the farm subsidies needed to be reformed. There was more public outcry than any previous cycle with the Farm Bill. So I would say we not only made a fantastic inroad into the public debate around Farm Bill, I think we won it. I think if you look at how the newspapers came out and so forth, we won the debate in the public. But unfortunately that didn't influence the legislation, so we had an influence on the negotiations in the Congress.

AT: Uh huh.

BR: I think although we didn't win the subsidy battle, all the pressure that we put to reform subsidies at the heart of the matter increased the need for reforms in other areas – so whether it was increasing money for food stamps or whether it was funding for settlement of civil rights discrimination, lawsuits from the past related to farmers of color or whether it was funding for conservation programs and so forth. The smaller gains that were made in the Farm Bill I think results in part from all of the pushing that we had been doing for reform with subsidies at the heart of the Farm Bill. So that's an answer. Yes, we had an influence in all of those different areas.

AT: Ok. So, how do you believe that trust was established with your target markets/the public? Can you give examples?

BR: Well, if you look at the tens of thousands of people who signed up and first heard of Oxfam through the Coldplay concerts, well for that demographic, obviously having the band's support win's trust immediately. If the band was for it then their fans were for it by in large.

AT: Ok.

BR: If you are looking at students, then I think it's our history of trainings with students leaders and various campuses, and the work that they do on campus establishes a reputation for Oxfam and that establishes trust. If you look at rural America, the farming organizations, some of the communities that we were reaching out to with our field organizers in those key states – you know trust was really hard won over a long and sometimes very difficult dialogue. Where I would generalize and say among the farming community.....everybody knows there is a problem among the farm subsidy system; everybody knows that it is difficult for farmers to stay in business; everybody knows that the little guy's disadvantage takes to the big guy. But there is huge disagreements over what is the proper solution, and so for us to enter really contentious territory like that it was only through very smart, sophisticated debating that we were increasing the kind of alliances that we have among that community. One that's interesting is one of our assumptions among those in the American heartland....one of our assumptions is that they would relate much better to U.S. farmers' predicaments and would really relate less to the global situation – they would relate less to West African farmers and what they are going through.

AT: I see.

BR: Yeah, a really interesting point of learning for us was that our exchanges between West African representatives and heartland farmers were some of the most fruitful, most productive projects of the whole Farm Bill at work. So we brought a delegation of farmers to West Africa, and we also brought speakers and farmers from West Africa and have them tour in Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, and so forth. And, you know the connection that farmers were able to make across cultural and language barriers was really strong because they all related very much to working the earth, to being dependant on the weather, to the insecurities and the unpredictable nature of farming. They could really relate to whether the tools were rudimentary hand tools or whether they were sophisticated combines and machinery, they related to the fundamental job of the farmer working the land and managing risk and insecurity. And that was huge; you know we had a video towards the end of it put together and in parts of the heartland it was the segment about the West African farmers that was much more effective than the segment about a Vermont farmer for example.

AT: Uh huh, interesting.

BR: This was because....again coming back to the fact that the debate among the farming community here was so varied and so contentious, that the way a U.S. farmer would work their position would appeal to some and alienate others. But the fundamental survival predicament of a farmer in West Africa related to everybody. Not to say that....I don't want to overstate it, make it sound as though we won over the vast numbers of people simply by showing them the

pieces of a West African farmer.....that would be really overstating it, but the degree to which there was a connection was definitely more than we expected when going into it.

AT: Ok, so do you think that your past actions and future initiatives and reputation played any part in the outcome of the MTF campaign?

BR: Yeah definitely. I think Oxfam has a reputation that is really solid and gave us credibility to be in this. I think people have known us for a long time, understand that we deal with poverty and hunger issues, therefore food and farming is of course an important part of the food question. So we were seen in having a place – I think that we were seen as being altruistic...that we didn't necessarily have a self-interest in this pitched battle over farm subsidies which is all about people vying for a piece of the pie and you know, looking to serve their own interests in the matter. I think we were seen as rising above the fray. We aimed to be credible in our facts and statistics. I think that came across as well, and I think we enjoyed exposure in the media and good relationships with the media because we were seen as a reliable resource.

AT: Ok, and how do you feel that you improved the public's welfare? Especially to those not immediately affected by the cause (farmers)?

BR: Like to those that weren't farmers but got involved one way or another?

AT: Sure.

BR: Well, you know that is the essence of doing the kind of organizing that we do. You know the payoff for someone who gets involved as a volunteer or as an activist is that they feel like they helped make the world better for those in poverty and those in the most vulnerable situation. Hopefully they feel like they helped win some games, they feel like they learned a lot in the process, learned about the issue, and then feel like they are a part of Oxfam and part of the work that we do. It's absolutely true that the volunteers are an essential part of our work, so we hope that they feel some pride...that they can wear an Oxfam t-shirt, button, or sticker or whatever and say 'Hey, this is part of what I do. I work and I support Oxfam. I'm a part of their campaign and I helped make history on reforming the Farm Bill.' So as for people in the U.S. heartland who do have a role in farming, I think that some of the incremental gains made in the Farm Bill will come back and be a benefit to some of those but I don't think that's really what your question was so I won't go further into that.

AT: Alright. Well, I know that as a whole in many of the trade negotiations you didn't necessarily get trade regulations changed that you wanted, but how successful do you feel the campaign was and what is your personal opinion on it?

BR: You know the MTF campaign was our first major international campaign as Oxfam, and I feel really good about it. I think we made a huge difference. When you look at the fact that in 1999 and leading up to that developing countries were basically being steamrolled every time they got together for trade talks. The important decisions were being made in a small, exclusive room and the developing countries were essentially being left out. That's how it was leading up

to 1999, and then when you look from 2001 on the debate and the dynamic around trade changed in developing countries.....they formed a political bloc, they drew a line in the sand on agricultural subsidies and they said we either get more fair terms of trade or we walk out. And they did walk out.

AT: Ah huh.

BR: And whether it was the Free Trade of the Americas or the WTO talks, it was basically agreed that no deal is better than a bad deal. And that was an important shift – having no deal instead of continually being railroaded into bad deals. That's huge, and I think that Oxfam played a visible, important role in demonstrating the political will that made that possible and providing some of the research, the analysis, and sound bites, and the framework about making trade fair that made that possible. And then when you look at the U.S. Farm Bill, you know like I said before, we may not have had this central win that we were pushing for on farm subsidies, but the pressure that we mounted I think lead to some of the silver lining around that cloud. It lead to some of the smaller steps that were incremental gains in other areas.

AT: Ok. If done over again is there anything you would have done differently or could have been done better?

BR: Ahhhh.....hmmmmmm. Yeah there has been a lot of lessons learned. I'm just trying to pull out maybe one of two of the top ones. Well, I don't know if you can take this one to the bank, but one lesson was that we should trust out intuition. You know a lot of campaigning is you gather data and then you respond to the data. And then some of it is of course making decisions based on your gut instincts, and I think that when we looked back we saw that a lot of our gut instincts were correct and we could have moved ahead with targets or actions or wording or frankly policy divisions. We could have moved ahead on those based on our initial assessments rather than waiting and seeing. One thing that was demonstrated to us was the importance of having champions in congress and the importance of putting up your own marker bill. In other words, if you are gonna win when the going gets tough and the battle is on the floor in the Senate or the House of Representatives, you're going to need a person who is going to be willing to take your issue as the number one issue for them.

AT: Ah huh.

BR: And could be a champion for that. You know there is only so much you can accomplish if you try to play or you try to spin the reforms that are being put forward by Congress. If you try and put your spin on what is already being tabled, you can only accomplish so much. It's important to establish from the beginning that you have a fundamental principle which is of upmost importance and you find a chairman that is going to support that with you and then you stake out the ambitious changes that you want rather than kind of waiting to see what comes forward and then trying to put a spin on that. Does that make sense?

AT: Yes.

BR: You assert your vision in policy circles, even if it is somewhat politically impractical it is important to put it out there.

AT: Alright. Well, I don't know if this is about time where you need to go?

BR: Yeah, I should hop off, but if you have one last question?

AT: Let's see. I've kind of jumped all over the place to kind of get the most important questions first before you had to go. Well the last question is sort of two-pronged and it is going back to your participants in the campaign, your targets, and the public. What do you feel that the level of satisfaction was from them, and how do you feel about their level of commitment to the MTF campaign?

BR: For those participating in the campaign....I think people loved it. The look and feel of the campaign people just really identified with. I think that even....it was just a slogan people could really get behind. It was cool. It looked good. It sounded strong, and it was a positive proclamation of what we wanted to have happen. It wasn't protesting. Even the very slogan 'Make Trade Fair' was a call for positive action rather than calling to bring something down. So, did they feel satisfied? Well, I don't think they would feel completely satisfied with the outcome because we really didn't achieve what we wanted fundamentally, but hopefully they felt satisfied with their role and their work with Oxfam and were ready to continue the fight...ready to continue the campaign in general whether on trade or climate or all of the different things that we continue to campaign on.

AT: Alright great well thanks so much.....

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Meredith Ashley Tucker is a Florida native. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia with a degree in public relations and a minor in art history. Her master's degree from the University of Florida will be in mass communication with a specialization in international communication. Ashley has had many valuable experiences studying and interning in Atlanta, Georgia, Panama City, Panama, and Cape Town, South Africa.