A Photograph is Worth *More* than a Thousand Words  
- The Impact of Photojournalism on Charitable Giving

By Michaela Paech

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ABSTRACT

Photojournalism plays a vital role in charity advertising. Set within a historical framework of constructing others in photographs, the aim of this paper is to analyse the image dilemma in charity emergency appeals. The analysis is facilitated by a detailed investigation of two past and two most recent photographs depicting famine scenes in UK charity emergency appeals for Sudan. The examples demonstrate how the value of a powerful photograph is sometimes abducted for fundraising purposes. While trying to help disaster victims, charities tend to lose sight of humanity and victimise the victims even further. As photographers win prizes by portraying human misery, charities use images of human suffering to increase funding. As we do not know the fate of the miserable characters in the pictures that are sometimes exploited to make money, are we bound to develop a syndrome called compassion fatigue?

A discussion of the current image dilemma would be incomplete without the provision of at least one possible solution. It is contended that any successful reform of our image culture must include the voices of the people in the developing world. The young fair-trade project kijiji*Vision has a real potential to provide for this by helping indigenous photographers to get a share of the image economy.
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The most political decision you make
Is where you direct people’s eyes.
In other words, what you show people,
Day in and day out, is political…
And the most politically indoctrinating
Thing you can do to a human being
Is to show him, every day,
That there can be no change.

– Wim Wenders, The Act of Seeing
Introduction

Rethinking Photojournalism

Our current historical moment is experiencing a "pictorial turn" – a reorientation around visual media (W.J.T. Mitchell 1995). We live in an image-saturated information society where the visual clearly supersedes the textual. Through advertisements, family snapshots, cinema and television the ever-growing urban population is infused with an estimated 10,000 photographic and mechanically produced images per day. Yet, despite the emphasis on new media, photography has never lost its power. Today’s still images from Iraq are as powerful as images from Vietnam were in overturning foreign policy in the US. The concept of visual determinism – the idea that a picture can drive political policy and public opinion – is not new. However, the abundance of available images has led to the recognition that each photographic image may distort and frame vision, and that it may do so for a discrete set of purposes. This paper will illustrate that words and images have the power to do harm as well as do good.

While a photograph is made to stand by itself, photojournalism¹ combines images with words. In doing so, charity emergency appeals can be regarded as one form of photojournalism. In fact, charities and the media are our key sources of information from the developing world. Together they act as primary educators about disasters we can only witness through images. However, international development issues only take prominence when a developing country experiences a crisis. Susan Sontag (2003) accurately remarks that photojournalism contributes to one of the distinguishing features of modern life: "countless opportunities for regarding – at a safe distance – disasters and human tragedies taking place across the world" (ibid., p. 16).

Given the prolonged nature of civil wars, it is admirable that images depicting scenes of human tragedy generate a response among the public, most often in the form of donations. However, in communicating famines, aid agencies face a dilemma: how to tug at donors’ heartstrings with powerful images, without impinging upon the right of survivors to be portrayed with dignity. Partly as a result of self-imposed rules, charity emergency appeals have come a long way since the days when European missionaries collected money with pictures of starving black babies. While the harrowing images of emaciated children have largely been wiped out, the message conveyed in emergency appeals remains unchallenged. Both words and images portray a ‘childlike’ developing world dependent on the pity of a paternalistic developed world.

Objectives

As photographs in charity emergency appeals largely determine our perception of developing countries we need to think more critically about their impact. Yet, while the call for a reformed image culture is growing louder, the criticism is largely devoid of suggestions of how this reform should be facilitated. This paper attempts to analyse the problem and explores options to fill this gap. One such option may be the fair-trade photography project, kijiji*Vision. It is assessed against its potential to facilitate a more balanced world view by promoting indigenous photographers. The analysis started with a set of questions. What role do visual images have in constructing our concept of Africa? How do remote disasters gain public attention? What determines the pervasiveness of child images in charity emergency advertising? And, finally, what moves us to respond to visual images of children?

This paper is divided into four sections. Section one outlines the construction of ‘Others’ in colonial photographs which constitutes the framework for the subsequent analysis of images in emergency appeals. Section two starts with a brief discussion of the rules of ethical charity advertising before demonstrating how advertising strategies operate on the subconscious of certain donor groups. Section three critically evaluates past and present
cases of photographic misrepresentations of recurrent famines in Sudan\textsuperscript{2}. It will be shown how famine images are perceived, and whether, and under what circumstances, they can lead to compassion fatigue among donors. Section four investigates the potential of the fair-trade photography project kijiji*Vision to cultivate a more balanced view of events in developing countries. The conclusion summarises the findings and makes a case for the reform of our current image culture. This reform would entice the incorporation of the ‘African perspective’ through images produced by indigenous photojournalists. However, it is contended that the images themselves are not the actual problem, but the way they are used and interpreted. What we really need is political will to end man-made disasters like the current famine in Sudan.

\textsuperscript{2} Since the outbreak of Sudan’s first civil war in 1983 two million people have been killed and the Sudanese population has been struggling against recurrent famines as a result of the ongoing conflict. The roots of the conflict can be traced to the failure of ‘decolonisation’ or even colonisation. However, the conflict is often described as pitting the Muslim north against the Christian south. This dichotomous view greatly simplifies the complexity of a variety of factors involved (Tony Vaux 2001). Since the struggle for land and power in Darfur intensified in late 2003 and early 2004, thousands have been killed and hundreds of thousands have been turned into refugees. The scope of this paper does not allow any further elaboration on the conflict in Sudan. For further reference see i.e. The International Crisis Group (ICG) [http://www.crisisweb.org/home/index.cfm].
1. Constructing ‘Others’ in Photographs

The “idea of Europe” is predicated on historical processes that have created the ‘Other’ who does not belong to society, neither within nor outside Europe. The complex role of internal and external boundaries shaped modern-day ideas about Europe, and European ideas about other cultures and peoples. The creation of difference is inherent in the very concept of modernity. Signs of difference informed the construction and development of others in a variety of ways, such as through photographs (Jan N. Pieterse 2002). Concepts of universality and difference are somehow both manifestations of the same history of "Western humanism" and could especially be found in the hegemonic humanistic notion of sameness and today's globalist and "liberal" notions of otherness, or its multicultural version of respecting the ‘Other’.

The postcolonial critic Edward Said (1978) demonstrates that the colonising West established its identity precisely through the creation of the fact of difference. Each society, whether Orient or Occident, creates its own identity through the continuous recreation and reinterpretation of ‘others’ and their differences to ‘us’. The creation of identity involves a process of constant reinterpretation of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in- and outside society which is informed by changing historical, social, intellectual, and political processes. These processes are centred on concrete socio-political issues such as the direction of foreign policy. However, they sometimes involve the designation of enemies resulting in legitimised discrimination against refugees, for example in contemporary European asylum policies. In sum, “the construction of others is bound up with the fluctuation of power and powerlessness” within and between societies. Human identities like “Britishness” or “Europeanness” are constructed and “occasionally even invented outright” (ibid. 332).

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3 Jan N. Pieterse (2003) suggests that the term ‘difference’ is more appropriate than ‘otherness’.
4 In his article ‘Europe and its Others’ Jan N. Pieterse provides an interesting account of the many faces of Otherness and how the view on Others in and outside Europe have changed over time.
Said warns that the designation of people and cultures to separate categories enforces misinterpretations that lead to the construction of such concepts as the “West” and “Eurocentrism”. The construction of “Western civilisation” is linked to a “detached superiority of a handful of values and ideas” (Edward Said 1978, p. 349). Yet, these values are hollow outside the problematic history of conquest and immigration that gave Western societies like the United States, and to some extend Great Britain, their present pluralistic character. Notions of Western superiority have informed the propagandist contention that the civilised nations need to impose a system of trusteeships onto developing countries, “where the most basic idea of civilised life had broken down” (Paul Johnson, in Edward Said 1978, p. 349). Such polemics of imposed political order reverberates in today’s US-American and European foreign policies. The US American invasion of Iraq is one example. Arguably, they echo in the agendas of international charity organisations, too.

The mid-nineteenth century expansion of colonialism coincided with the emergence of photography. Colonial photographs depicted images and scenes from colonial settings. They significantly facilitated the process of constructing the ‘Other’ outside Europe through touring photographic exhibitions and a Victorian passion for collecting photographic prints of others. The abundance of images from the African continent invited subsequent interpretation and gave birth to ethnographic studies. Applying the concept of the colonial ‘gaze’, Brent Harris (in Wolfram Hartman et al. 1999) and Peter Burke (2001) analyse what Western consumers constructed with colonial images. For Brent Harris, they facilitated colonial discourse as a complement to the ‘truth’ otherwise supported by museum displays or head trophies. John Tagg (1988, p. 64) earlier observed that the camera supports complex power relations in a

5 The term ‘Eurocentrism’ has its roots in the term ‘Eurocentrism’, the idea of placing Europe at the centre of one’s world view and an assumption of the supremacy of Europe and Europeans in world cultures. A relatively new term, it has been used to denote the relationship between the West and the ‘Rest’. The most common usage of the word in recent years, however, rests the centring of the West (The Oxford English Dictionary; 5th edition 2002).


7 While other colonial areas (i.e. Australia and India etc.) generated similar results, for the purpose of this paper the geographical focus is on Africa.

8 The concept of the ‘gaze’ was introduced by the French psychologist Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). It can be interpreted in the meaning of ‘point of view’.
“local state apparatus which deploys it and guarantees the authority of the images it constructs to stand as evidence of truth”. Peter Burke notes that it allowed colonisers to gaze upon the colonial ‘Other’ and, thus, gain knowledge of her or him (2001, p. 59). However, lacking relevant technology and power, the ‘Other’ was in no position to return the gaze. It is therefore arguable that different colonial powers used photographic evidence to justify their subversion of others by portraying them as weak and vulnerable. Photography thus played an important role in the construction of colonial identities.

Peter Burke (2001, p. 125) observes that the continuous gaze “generates attitudes of which the viewer might not be aware”. Such attitudes might be expressed as prejudices, fears or desires when encountering religious, cultural and racial differences in other cultures. Colonial photographs enabled Westerners to encounter ‘African’ cultures and facilitated the emphasis on differences between ‘them’ and ‘us’. The overpowering portrayal of “Africans” as a homogenous group resulted in the formation of mental stereotypes of the ‘Other’. Since then, the European imagination has reproduced ‘Africa’ – itself a mythical unity – “as a site of cultural, moral, and spatial difference, populated by ‘barbarians’, ‘heathens’, ‘primitives’, ‘noble savages’

9The term stereotype originally denotes a plate from which an image could be printed. It illustrates a link between visual and mental images (Peter Burke 2001).

10In 1672, the English poet and playwright John Dryden coined the idea of the ‘noble savage’ (Peter Burke 2001, p. 126).

11Metonymy is defined as the use of a single characteristic to identify a more complex entity. Typically, the use of metonymy does not imply the transfer of qualities (in contrast to metaphor) but transfers associations which may not be integral to the meaning. Metonymy thus yields prototype effects by defying cultural expectations about what an African is supposed to be like. When unjustified stereotypes are applied to groups the negative impact is a key feature in prejudice such as racism. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metonymy]
by selecting “some aspects of the perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem” (David D. Perlmutter 1998, p. 7). Photojournalistic reporting of disaster situations frequently uses metonymy to reduce politics to interests and competition. Ascribing metonymy to an emergency photograph of emaciated children, for example, is a potentially powerful visual framing mechanism. The scene depicted sums up Africa’s problems.

Photographic frames are powerful tools able to impose meaning as well as psychological stimuli for audiences to process. In the 19th century, anthropology, colonialism, and photography converged to strengthen new knowledge and power relations, resulting in a “global visual field of often quite standardized representational practices” (Liisa Malkki, 1996, p. 386). Originating from disaster scenes like Ethiopian and Sudanese famines in the 1960s and 1970s, such standardized images frequently depicted masses of victimised, hungry people staring blankly at a sympathetic, remote spectator. In the 1970s and 1980s, reporters typically produced photographs of anonymous masses of black bodies, lining up passively in anticipation of the rain of grain sacks from UN planes.

Arguably, today such metaphors have been replaced by images of anonymous, often lone children with stern looks and flies on their faces symbolising the fate of the entire population of a country. David Campbell (2003) critiques that emergency appeal images “portray a particular kind of helplessness that reinforces colonial relations of power. With their focus firmly on women and children, these pictures function as icons of a feminised and infantilised place. A place that is passive, pathetic, and demanding of help from those with the capacity to intervene “(ibid., p. 70). Images of mother and child12 or lone children have dominated both still photography and video footage of famines from Sudan and Ethiopia. The current Sudanese famine confirms that the imaging of a disaster, especially when utilised in charity emergency appeals, remains controversial.

12 Resembling biblical images of Madonna and Jesus, mother and child images gained iconic status.
Distinguishing between the ‘Other’ in- and outside Europe, Jan N. Pieterse (2003) points out that Eurocentrism wrongly imparts that hunger and starvation, genocide and ethical cleansing are foreign to European high culture. Over the past thirty years a generation has grown up unused to seeing images of European refugees (other than as historical documents). In the 1990s, however, images of the victims of “ethnic cleansing” in Eastern Europe have temporarily supplanted those of starving and displaced refugees in Africa.\(^\text{13}\)

The concept of ‘otherness’ outlined in this section constitutes the framework for the subsequent discussion of our perception of disasters in Sudan. I contend that the ‘Other’ constructed through colonial photography still mirrors in stereotypical images utilised by UK charities in Press emergency appeals. In disregard of their own representational guidelines, charities have perpetuated and universalised notions of the ‘uncivilised’ and poor ‘Other’. Before a closer examination of selected images, it is important to examine why we care about the sufferings of people in faraway zones of conflict. The following chapter outlines the rules and ethical challenges of charity advertising. It provides evidence that advertising strategies operate on the subconscious of the donating nation.

\(^{13}\) In a temporary exhibition space adjacent to the Scoop on More London Riverside, the renowned British photographer Tom Stoddart exhibits a retrospective of relentless photographic story-telling from worldwide disaster situations. The powerful black and white images are hoped to spark action among the public to stop these disasters happening again and again. With his *iWitness* exhibition (starting 19 July, 2004) he reminds visitors that not everyone on Europe lives in a world of plenty and safety. His powerful black and white images, depicting scenes of ethnic cleansing in East-European Bosnia and Herzegovina, sparked polarised reactions among visitors (see Appendix 3). Some of the captions beneath the images labelling the Serbian atrocities as ethncial cleansing were forcefully removed on several occasions (Tom Stoddart, interview with the author, London, August 2004). Denying the atrocities as happened in Europe is an expression of great ignorance and denial of the reality captured in a photograph by a responsible photojournalist.
2. The Donating Nation and Charitable Advertising in the UK

A discussion of images in charity emergency advertising would be incomplete without a brief analysis of some of the motives behind charitable giving. Why do we give to charities working in disaster and famine situations as geographically and thematically remote as those in Sudan? What makes us care for a starving person we do not know when there are homeless people in front of our doors? The media and charities are the only source of information from disaster zones. For more than twenty years photojournalists have covered conflict and hunger in African countries like Ethiopia and Sudan. Their images have instilled a sense of altruism among donors, to service others affected by disasters such as famines. However, the tendency to generalise disasters in the developing world is rampant in the media. On a recent cover headline “Africa: A scar on the conscience of the world” The Independent (Saturday, 21 August, 2004, p. 1) once again reminded its readership that “the continent is still riven by strife, war and famine” (emphasis added).

By definition, charity is “[w]hat we give to alleviate the need, suffering, and sorrows of others, whether we know them or not” (Bremner 1994, p. xi). As early as 44 B.C. Cicero (106 – 43 B.C.) in his writing “On Moral Obligations” confirmed that giving is first and foremost a moral obligation (in Bremner 1994). Born out of a religious obligation to followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, charity is an act of generosity and humanitarian responsibility. The concern for the person in need is a general human experience. Traditional concepts of ‘duty’ and ‘social responsibility’ had their heights during World War II. They have meanwhile lost ground. For Gary Cooper14, guilt, snobbery and self-interest are reasons for charitable giving today (in Judith Larner 2003). Feelings of guilt are usually born out of a Western notion to live in a society of plenty while others are exposed to protracted civil wars and famines. “In the 80s people became very selfish”, says Cooper, “this carried over into the 90s when people began to lose their jobs and felt less secure.” Today people donate

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14 Gary Cooper is a psychologist with Lancaster University Management School.
because they believe they may need it in the future. “It is a very primitive psychology but some people give because they feel it may ward them off something terrible happening to them late in life” (Gary Cooper, in Judith Larner 2003). This is a valid argument in times of increased terrorist threat, although this threat is magnified by the media. Arguably, for many people donating is a form of alleviating one’s conscience by giving to the “good work of aid agencies” without questioning their operations. For others giving might be the only way to influence the disasters in other parts of the countries. Whatever the individual reasons are, giving undoubtedly generates a feel-good factor.

Through advertising charities create awareness for their causes and win financial support for their operations from the public. The term ‘public’, however, must be treated with caution for there are different publics within the citizenry, such as different donor groups according to sex or age. It will be shown that the images facilitating emergency appeals are chosen to generate a response among a particular public of the citizenry. In contrast to other commercial advertising, donors rarely see the fruits of their support other than through charity reporting. To give an example, a charity’s activity to alleviate the plight of refugees in Sudan is largely invisible to the donor. For donors, charity reporting and advertising function like a window to the events we can only witness through images. Thus, they fulfil an important educational role. In short, charity advertising follows two key rules. First, any advertising should reflect the context of a charity’s publicity and fundraising activities. Second, it must fulfil “a wide promotional and educational role” (Michael Norton, in Ken Burnett 1986, p. 3, emphasis added).

Recent studies on charitable giving in the UK reveal some interesting donor patterns. Seventy percent of the British people give to charity. In 2002-3, international aid was the most popular charitable cause, attracting 654 million pounds in total income (CAF 2004). In 2002, women gave more than men, and ‘Children and young people’ was one of the two largest causes that drew the widest support from the general public (see Appendix 1: Tables
A clear donor profile has emerged: between 1995 and 2002, women gave more than men, and their average donations were significantly higher (CAF and NCVO 2003). A comparison of these findings with the images in past and present charity emergency appeals may lead to the assumption that emergency appeals featuring lone children are designed to appeal to well-stored mental images of Africa as a place where adults are incapable of caring for their children. While children are one of the groups suffering the most in disasters, I contend that the emphasis on heart-touching images in aid appeals operates in the subconscious of the largest donor group: women, and arguably mothers with young children. The bereavement of a child is every mother’s nightmare.

Charities have recently been criticised for infringing upon the rules of advertising with such images (see David. D. Perlmutter 1998, VSO 2002, Ruth Gidley, 2004, Terefa Fufa 2004). This is for a number of reasons. Although emergency appeals are designed to eventually benefit people affected by disasters they are first and foremost a vital source of a charity’s income. As advertising incurs costs, many charities resort to stock photographs, available from online photo libraries of global news agencies like REUTERS and Associated Press (AP), to illustrate their appeals. Registered non-profit organisations can freely select from an abundance of highly sensitive images of past and present conflicts and famines worldwide taken by professional news photographers. A number of charities involved in the humanitarian appeal to alleviate the current Darfur crisis gratefully resort to such cost-saving practices (SCF, Mercy Corps, and Concern).

This section demonstrated that there is a strong link between the nature of charity emergency appeals and donor patterns. The overwhelming abundance of starving children in charity appeals reinforces colonial notions of trusteeship over the ‘Other’. Photographs of children and emotive captions generate a sense of vulnerability and symbolise the inability of an entire population to help itself. Some of the images are outdated, and no single image reflects a charity’s impact to alleviate the crisis. Even worse, the indiscriminate utilisation of
stock libraries has reportedly led to the abuse of images. The subsequent chapter investigates implications of the pervasiveness of images of anonymous and frail children featured in past and present charity emergency appeals for Sudan.
3. Great Pictures? Misrepresenting Sudan’s Famine

3.1 Belief and Seeing

Ein Bild sagt mehr als 1000 Worte.15 – Kurt Tucholsky

A picture is always viewed through pre-constructed prejudices. Viewers are to believe that what they see is the truth. John Berger (1988) says that, while every image represents a way of seeing, the perception or appreciation of an image largely depends upon individual ways of seeing. We interpret an event using our memory of a similar event (Rick Rohde, in Wolfram Hartman et al 2003). It follows that, as a picture is imbued with the viewer’s desire to translate its meaning, the understanding of its context largely depends on preconceived mental images in the form of stereotypes. As images are designed to communicate or to ‘tell us something’ they can be interpreted as a cultural construction and, thus, as reflecting the photographer’s choice. Viewers search the image for indications for their history and context, and the meanings of this choice. Conversely, images tell us nothing for “they are inherently mute” (Peter Burke 2001, p. 34). I argue that images speak a language that we can only understand through our own interpretation of the context as we know it, as well as through the written information provided. Thus, photojournalism is not about good or bad pictures but about whether they tell an accurate story. Yet, while a story may be accurate, it may still be interpreted wrongly.

The widespread belief that photographs do not require an explanation in the form of words but that they speak for themselves is therefore wrong. Of course, words can be misleading too. Like photographs, they are open to interpretation. We are not only cognitively but also emotionally influenced by photographs. Moreover, when looking at images, we memorise them in a way that is shaped by our cultural perception and education of what we see. Starting with the distribution of colonial photography, European consumers have been

15 [A photograph says more than a thousand words.] The original proverb was penned by the German historian and satirist Kurt Tucholsky (1890-1935) in a homonymous article published in 1926. The article itself features a variety of images which cannot stand without text.
exposed to largely negative images from different corners of Africa. The sheer abundance of pejorative images has shaped our perception of the developing world. For example, we correlate photographs of black children in emergency appeals with social stereotypes of Africa and Africans mentally stored. The associations are those of hunger and starvation – in short: of prolonged human tragedy. Arguably, as many people in the northern hemisphere see it, such tragedy has become normality on the ‘black continent’, or Conrad’s ‘heart of darkness’.

The sustained stereotypicisation of Africans is politically motivated and serves a variety of agendas, including that of charities working in emergency situations. We are expected, and our Western mind purposefully manipulated into believing what we see (Colin Jacobson 2002). Since the outbreak of conflict in sub-Saharan Sudan in 1982 its grim history has been providing photojournalists with ethical and political challenges. In his book “Underexposed” (2002) Jacobson published an impressive collection of an extraordinary set of images showing how photographs can be made to lie. One of the most shocking images was taken by Wendy Wallace in the Red Sea Hills during the Sudanese famine of 1984. It depicts a British television crew photographing an emaciated child who had been brought out to sit in the dirt precisely for that image.

Figure 1: Red Sea Hills 1984. In 1984, famine was afflicting many Sudanese, including the nomads of the northeast, whose grazing lands had dried up. Nomadic Hadendowa tribes-people came out of their traditional areas to see work and food in the towns. They set up a temporary camp by the side of the main paved road from Khartoum to Port Sudan. The camp was mainly inhabited by women, children and the elderly; the men were away looking for casual work. When a British television crew and accompanying UNICEF staff member appeared at the camp, the people brought out one of their most afflicted children for the cameras to demonstrate the hardships they faced.
(Wendy Wallace)
The child in the photograph stimulates Western perceptions of well-known stereotypes of the developing world. Colin Jacobson (2002) knows that this photograph was used by UNICEF for advertising purposes, a circumstance that carries serious implications. Heavy media coverage of man-made and natural events in developing countries and the lack of positive stories and images frequently reinforce well-known Western stereotypes of the majority world. The perception of Africans as helpless victims is notoriously emphasised in images of anonymous abandoned children. A suffering and vulnerable child on its own offers “strong familiar pictures” to the Western eye while, at the same time, abasing a frail human being into a media victim (Colin Jacobson 2002, p. 92).

While many photographs owe their fame and value to their famous human subjects, ordinary people are often caught up in some important moment or some striking composition (David D. Perlmutter 1998). Nameless hungry children become generic icons that can be shot to order. These generic icons from the field are increasingly determined by an understanding of previous events. This is why charities tend to resort to download categorized images from stock photo libraries. What appears to be inside the icon is valuable as well, though almost never of profit to those children caught in a moment of extreme suffering. The making of the product may even inflict pain on the subjects as a result of irresponsible journalistic conduct (see Section 3.2). The problem is that, instead of documenting a historical event or revealing human misery, such iconic images are produced for sale in the market place. “The icon, however, despite being surrounded by discourse that appreciates its aesthetic, emotive, and political qualities, is at its core a thing of cash value” (ibid., p. 14).

16 Prominent photographic icons like Che Guevara and Princess Diana are a commodity in the sense that thousands of copies are reproduced for the marketplace. In contrast to anonymous generic icons, the market value of famous icons resides in their ability to increase consumption of other products. On the other hand, unknown people can gain iconic status for they are able to generate awareness. Running away from a napalm attack on her village, Kim Phuc’s image became a famous icon of the horrors of the Vietnam War.
Culturally-induced perceptions of African children might be well-intended but they do not serve a real purpose other than to act as fundraising propaganda. From a journalistic perspective they do not carry any news or educational value either. The above photograph offers a familiar scene of an event on the African continent as we have seen it before. We are part of a system that produces and manages such icons. Interestingly, as photojournalism permeates modern life and we share the same conventional standards, such images continue to catch our eye. (David D. Perlmutter 1998). The fact that the photograph is staged is unknown to potential consumers. Accompanying captions do not normally provide such information. Goodwill of donors has fallen victim to the self-serving marketing strategy of a charity.

This section has demonstrated that what we see in photographs is not always the truth. While a thousand words can lie, a photograph can be made to lie if it is staged and abused in the wrong context. Thus, it is true that belief and seeing are both often wrong. Intended to communicate a message an image can be reduced to fundraising propaganda. To avert such abuse, images should be complemented by a context to strengthen its impact and to give meaning (Colin Jacobson, in Ken Light 2000). The following section provides an example of how a charity used an image of a starving Sudanese child out of context. Such practices place children at risk of stigmatisation or even reprisal. In effect, children are reduced to media victims while Western donors fall victim to misinformation and propaganda.

\*Errol Morris’ documentary “The Fog of War” (USA 2003) about the former US Secretary of Defence during the Vietnam War is subtitled “Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara”. “Belief and seeing - they are both often wrong” is one of McNamara’s lessons to impress on us the frailty and uncertainty of our leaders.*
3.2 Why Ethics Matter

Communications is a profession that demands the highest standards of ethical awareness (Paul Lester 1991). It is important to show the happenings in the world without the intention to shock.\(^\text{18}\) Photojournalists are required by ethical standards to show reality as much as possible, but in any case prevent harm to the subjects photographed. This may be achieved by veiling the identity of those people and places being photographed. A high quality, ethical image is often the result of a relationship between the photographer and the photographed. The timely process of decision-making how to communicate a situation demands considerable thought. Time is rarely granted to newspaper photojournalists who are working to deadlines. Tom Stoddart knows that “[t]here are always photographers who will not play fair, who will be interested only in the moment of death, all this kind of extreme stuff. They don't go there with an open mind. They don't go there to learn about what they are photographing. They go there to make a reputation, to come back with award-winning photographs” (Interview with the author, London, August, 2004).

Howard Davies (2000), a freelance photojournalist who has been documenting the lives of refugees and asylum seekers for more than thirteen years, gives a grisly example of how a lack of accountability in photojournalism can lead to serious repercussions for the people photographed. While on an assignment in an Afghan refugee camp in Pakistan he was reminded by a UNHCR press officer of the inappropriateness of portraying young Afghan girls. Having ignored such warnings, a photojournalist had previously caused the death of a young girl. He snatched her image when she was bathing in a river. Her photograph later appeared on the cover of a large news magazine, with the name helpfully supplied in the caption. When the local Mujahiddeen became aware of the image they reportedly executed her for the disgrace she had caused Islam. Not a million words can undo the damage caused by such irresponsible reporting.

\(^{18}\) A true and powerful image, however, can shock and evoke public outrage.
While failure to address accountability in photojournalism not always leads to such extreme consequences, charities, like photojournalists, are expected to follow standards of ethical communications. Until the 1980s disaster images of helpless, passive victims, known as ‘Biafra children’, and heroic saviours were common in charity appeals. In the mid-1980s major charities like Oxfam and Christian Aid developed new guidelines on visual communications. Oxfam’s report *Images of Africa* showed that negative images of Africa as a doomed continent reinforce colonial stereotypes, but that positive images led viewers to assume that help had in fact arrived” (John Taylor 1998, p. 153). In 1991, the Save the Children Fund (SCF) published a set of image guidelines which promised innovative practices to assess accountability. Intended for both the photographers working for the SCF and the staff using the images, they addressed issues such as selective cropping or inaccurate captioning. Techniques that have been employed for too long to distort the meaning of images. The following case illustrates an example of how the need to generate funding can temporarily supplant a charity’s promise to safeguard its own ethical standards.

Visiting Sudan in 1993 on his own mission, a little known photographer took a photograph that made the world weep and reached iconic status. The photograph depicts a vulture and a small girl sitting in the savannah. It is not possible to determine the child’s gender from the picture alone. While the photographic composition of the picture is unspectacular, the juxtaposition of the girl and the vulture is striking. The image first

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19 This label was coined in the context of images of starving refugee children from the Biafra-Nigerian Civil War in the late 1960s. The Civil War was a direct result of decolonisation in the 20th century. Newly independent former colonies like Nigeria, where the main tribes are Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani and Ibos, usually retained their colonial boundaries, often resulting in nations with no common sense of nationality. Postcolonial Nigeria has been marked by violence, political instability and military rule. On 30 May, 1967, the Ibos proclaimed their territory as the independent nation of Biafra. A bloody civil war ensued, marked by heavy casualties and famine, had claimed an estimated one million deaths when Biafra surrendered on 15 January, 1970. The world remembers Biafra as a bony mother with a dying child, captured in the news. [http://www.camwood.org/biafra.htm].

20 A white hand feeding a black child used to be a typical scene. One such image features in the UN report “As they came in Africa” (New York 1971, p. 63).


22 The photograph was reproduced in major newspapers worldwide (i.e. *The Guardian*). The varying captions described the photograph as a metaphor for Africa’s despair. For a detailed discussion of the image see David. D.
appeared in the *New York Times* international section Friday, 26 March, 1993, in a story about relief in southern Sudan (David. D. Perlmutter 1998, p. 24). However, the story itself makes no mention of the little girl. She serves the sole purpose of visualisation. Carter took a photo of one starving child among thousands. Western newspaper readers saw a little girl struggling for survival. Illustrating the horror of hunger in southern Sudan, her image soon became a generic icon of starvation. The London *Sunday Mail* described it as “a truly iconographic image [that] captured the full horror of the famine in Sudan – a starving child crawling towards a UN feeding station” (Paul Martin 1994, p. 40).

While Carter reportedly did not intervene to save the girl, her image created political testimony and induced humanitarian action. In fact, the image was too powerful for the SCF to resist the temptation to exploit its commercial potential to generate income. Under the heading “Help stop a different kind of child abuse” the advertisement symbolically emphasised that “…this abuse is merciless. It prays on innocent, fragile lives and brutalises them with utter poverty…with constant hunger…with relentless diseases…with no hope for even a basic education” (Michael Maren 1997, p. 157)\(^{23}\). The SCF used the image in one of their advertising campaigns at a time when the organisation had no operations in Sudan.

\(^{23}\) Former relief worker Michael Maren’s exposé to “The road to hell” (New York: Free Press 1997, pp. 157-8) discusses the advertisement and the symbolic value of the image in more detail.
(David D. Perlmutter 1998). In other words, Kevin Carter’s Pulitzer-Prize-winning image\(^{24}\) proved beneficial for a charity that neither provided famine relief in Sudan, nor intervened to prevent the likely fate of the little girl. Moreover, abusing the image in a different context the SCF willingly altered the ethnicity, nationality, religion and country of origin of a suffering human being. A nameless infant girl wearing nothing but tribal jewellery became a symbol of the inclemency of Sudanese life.

Although few people had ever seen a scene like the above, the image offered a sight of more heartfelt understanding than words could or did. In fact, as a result of our cultural experiences, we are able to recognise the objects without words through the “pictures in the head” (Walter Lippmann, in David D. Perlmutter 1998, p. 24). Prompting the metonymic association of “hunger in Africa” the scene is easily imposable upon the stereotype of Sudan as a land of starvation and despair. This image, therefore, presents consumers with yet another picture to file in the mental category of scenes of ‘African famines’. Photographs, however, do not explain the context. We are not told that human agency is responsible for the girl’s plight. Instead, the viewer is left to imagine various scenarios of suffering\(^{25}\). While the vulture embodies danger, the picture does not portray human agency as the actual source of evil. This photograph is not about mass starvation, nor is it about religious factionalism, or even civil war. In effect, the missing context distances the public from responsibility. Perlmutter (1998) concludes that the image is “a prime example of how an icon of suffering may have no more effect outside the world of discourse elites than a tourist photo of an exotic foreign land” (ibid., p. 28). Missing context, this generic icon is abused for ideological manipulations.

\(^{24}\) In 1994, the South African free-lance photographer won the Pulitzer Prize in the category Feature Photography “For a picture …of a starving Sudanese girl who collapsed on her way to a feeding center while a vulture waited nearby” [www.pulitzer.org]. However, Carter was repeatedly attacked for not having helped the child. Only months after he received the award he committed suicide.

\(^{25}\) Has she been lost in the chaos of forced uprooting? Has her family died? Has she been deserted near death in order for her mother to hold on to more viable children? (Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman 1997)
The suffering of others is being used as a commodity largely produced in one part of the world but sold in another. Images that frame suffering are routinely manipulated for news production and fundraising but hardly spur political action. The consumption of suffering in an era of globalisation reiterates the late nineteenth-century view that our own civilisation is more developed (Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman 1997). Through both colonial and postcolonial cultural representation of suffering the relationship is being replicated and subverted. Arguably, while Western democracies defend the equality of men, the lives of anonymous others outside these democracies mean little to us. Charities and the mass media frequently utilise anonymous images as a tool to generate compassion for those who suffer. A metonymic lie, Carter’s image once again cautions us to believe what we see. Like the earlier Wallace photograph, it facilitates a universalised perception of Africans as impoverished and doomed without external assistance. Arguably, Carter’s image could have been taken in 1984 as well.

The SCF’s ethical conduct was heavily critiqued. A SCF worker lamented that “the message of all our advertising at Save was that Africans are too stupid and ignorant to take care of themselves. And if we don’t do it, their parents and their government aren’t responsible enough to do it” (in David D. Perlmutter 1998, p. 25). In a letter to the SCF, executive director Jerry Michaud of the End Hunger Network described the advertising campaign as a form of “hunger porn”26 (David D. Perlmutter 1998, p. 25). However, codes are not static. In a revised edition of the 1991 image guidelines, the SCF addressed this incident, stating that “[t]he people with whom Save the Children works have identities, opinions and dignity. Situations like this, where a child has been put on display, rob the subject of dignity and humanity. When the medium becomes more important than the subject, it can undermine or distort a person or a situation and deliver the wrong message” (SCF 1995, p. 8). However, the photograph has been duplicated in various advertisements to raise funds to provide food for refugees (Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman 1997). It is thus a

26 Similarly, Erica Burman (1994) used the phrase ‘disaster pornography’ to describe the indiscriminate portrayal of vulnerable infants in the context of disaster zones charities.
classic example of how moral sentiment can mobilise support for humanitarian action through donations.

The previous two sections discussed historical cases of the violations of ethical standards in photojournalism and charity advertising. The following chapter shows that these issues are still problematic. While most established charities such as the SCF and Oxfam today promote an image culture that portrays “helping people to help themselves” approaches to development, emergency appeals adopt a language that reinforces notions of trusteeships. The overabundance of lone, anonymous children featuring in current Sudan emergency appeals by many British charities fosters colonial ideas of the “infant of Africa”. The examination of selected images involves a discussion of what the public constructs with these images and the subsequent implications.
3.3 The Case of Concern

In pursuit of a developmental approach, many charities today incorporate images that convey a spirit of self-help and safeguard people's dignity and respect. Admitting that such images are not always possible in emergency situations, the SCF (1995) requires their pictorial editors and staff “to use [their] judgement to portray human crises accurately, in context and without pathos”. While emergency relief is a last resort and emergencies are sometimes inevitable, charities should avoid over-dependency on the ‘starving baby’ image when communicating emergency messages. The SCF warns that this stereotype has come to represent a whole continent, while it reflects only a small part of the story. The overuse of such images has particularly offended Africans. Bland and antiseptic images are no alternative for they are equally untrue (SCF, 1995, p. 5).

In the intensively competitive world of media, reporters may search for images of shock and awe to capture their audience’s attention. In contrast, aid agencies “dumb down” images to make them blander. Partly as a result of image guidelines, most of the children in today’s emergency appeals look less haggard. Yet, their images generate funding and fuel public perceptions of the developing world as a region of doom and gloom for they are easily linked to those burned into our memories as generic icons of starvation (see chapter 3.1 and 3.2). Furthermore, it is argued that the images are aimed to operate on the sub-conscious of potentially female donors with young children.

Following the description of the situation in Western Sudan’s Darfur region as “one of the worst in the world”, the United Nation’s most senior humanitarian official in Sudan called for greater attention to the plight of civilians in the area (UN News Centre, 22 March, 2004).

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27 Eerie images like that of the Madrid Train bombing (11 March, 2004) by photographer Pablo Torres Guerrero have sparked a new debate on ethics in photojournalism. The Spanish El País and the Washington Post were the only papers worldwide to print the original photograph. All other newspapers concealed bloody body parts by means of cropping. In a series of case studies, The Poynter Institute, a school for journalists, discusses ethical issues of such delicate images and invites viewers to edit the photographs and to fit the public taste. [http://www.poynter.org/] see Ethics and Case Studies.
The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), a UK charity umbrella organisation which launches and coordinates the UK’s National Appeals in response to major overseas disasters, recently initiated an aid appeal on behalf of 12 British charities (BBC News online, Charities launch Sudan aid effort, Saturday, 17 July, 2004). It was broadcasted from More Riverside London, the sight of Tom Stoddart’s iWitness exhibition. Several DEC Members, including the SCF, Oxfam and Concern, have launched individual appeals in The Guardian and The Independent. On two occasions, Concern collaborated with both newspapers to launch two major emergency appeals, which are examined in the following.

Concern is dedicated to helping people in emergency situations. Its mission aims “to enable absolutely poor people to achieve major improvements in their lifestyles…”. To attain their mission the charity emphasises partnerships with indigenous populations and promises to "respond[s] to people in a caring and personalised manner that emphasises their human and cultural dignity, and undertakes development education and advocacy on those aspects of world poverty which require national or international action" (Concern, March 2002, emphasis added)29. The charity’s operations largely depend on public donations, partly raised through Press appeals. However, Concern’s recent joint press appeals to alleviate the crisis in Sudan are found to reinforce colonial stereotypes. The images of children chosen to portray the situation in Sudan reinforce “the child Africa” perception. Moreover, their very nature suggests a violation of in-house ethical standards.

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28 Save the Children (SCF), Oxfam, Merlin, Concern, World Vision, Tearfund, Help the Aged, Care, Christian Aid, British Red Cross, Action Aid and CAFOD.
29 In contrast to Save the Children, Concern has not established particular image guidelines.
Figure 3: Concern will be helping thousands of people, providing Shelter Kits and Survival Packs for families. Together with other agencies we will be helping to meet the needs of children and adults in desperate situations.30

A lone, nameless Sudanese child plays in the sand. Nuer or Dinka? Boy or girl? Orphan? – We can only guess. Though less haggard looking and a little further from death than the children in the Wallace and Carter images and its earlier counterparts in the 1980s and 1990s, the flies in his/her face suggest decay. It is unthinkable to find a comparable image of a Western child today. Like the Carter photograph discussed in section 3.2, neither the accompanying caption nor the photo essay in which the image is embedded make any mention of the child. The image is a five-months-old courtesy of REUTERS and, therefore deprived of any sensible reasoning and the power to tell news. Thus, this photograph arguably has no educational value. It fails to imply a link to the caption as well as to

30 The image is one of two child images illustrating the one-page ‘Guardian Reader Emergency Appeal for Darfur Sudan’ (Monday, 14 June, 2004, p.26). An Associated Press (AP) stock photograph, the accompanying caption varies from the original by photographer Antony Njuguna/REUTERS: “A Sudanese child plays with sand on the border after fleeing across the border into Tine, in eastern Chad, right on the border with Sudan; 26 January, 2004. Tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees have poured across the border into Chad since December, fleeing a series of attacks by horse-riding ‘Janjaweed’ militiamen and bombardment by government planes”. This original colour photograph – arguably for economic reasons – has been reproduced in black and white. It is part of a set of images titled ‘Sudanese refugees flee militiamen’ and can be viewed on [www.alertnet.org]. The second photograph in the ad shows an abandoned toddler standing in front of a row of tents. The accompanying text ‘informs’ that “[i]n the last four months, the number of people displaced from their homes has quadrupled”.

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Concern’s impact to alleviate the crisis. As a generic icon of starvation it could have been taken anywhere (in African) and used in any emergency context.

The management of this image conveys the impression that this is the only aspect worth knowing – that this child is a refugee in sub-Saharan Africa, unable to survive without Concern’s help and, in turn, that of the donor. The viewer can only speculate whether this child ever benefits from the work of Concern. Although we do not know the circumstances of the shooting, as emergency appeals do not provide space for such coverage, the image resembles the Wallace photograph taken twenty years earlier. Again, it depicts an unaccompanied anonymous toddler sitting in the sand. While facilitating the charity’s plea for public generosity, chances are rather dim that this child will ever share the “lucky” fate of rediscovery experienced by the anonymous young Afghan refugee girl whose uncompromising eyes once captivated the world from a National Geographic cover. Sharbat Gula was thirteen years old when, in 1985, her photograph was taken by Steve McCurry. Her image generated considerable financial revenues for a number of people, including the photographer. Seventeen years later he decided to share his profits and help his famous subject to provide an education for her children.  

Concern admits that “the media plays an essential role in emergencies and Concern needs to maximise any benefits that they can from media access” (March 2002). The charity further states that “this pressure may run contrary to the need to develop at least a rudimentary understanding of the situation, and the needs of the intended beneficiaries, before establishing a response…” (ibid.). With this image, it is argued, Concern fails to "respond[s] to people in a caring and personalised manner that emphasises their human and cultural dignity". Whilst acknowledging the negative implications of their media dependency, which includes the utilisation of free stock images, there is no signal that efforts will be made to improve such practices. While collaborating with the media to maximise the return in

31 For detailed information see [www.news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/03/0311_020312_sharbat.html].

donations, the charity infringes upon not only its own codes of conduct but also its duty to portray human beings in dignity.

Approximately, two months after *The Guardian* appeal, Concern collaborated with *The Independent* to raise donations in support of its work alleviating the plight of Sudanese refugees. The photograph below first appeared in a three-page photo essay, titled “Abandoned, starving, desperate” (Friday, 6 August 2004, p. 2) before illustrating the Independent Darfur Appeal (Monday, 9 August, 2004, p. 2). Contrary to what the news headline suggests, the caption reveals the gender of the child and shows that it is being cared for. However, it does not tell us whether Concern works in Morni camp or even has any impact on the medical treatment of the boy. The similarities to the photograph discussed above are, however, striking. In two independent fundraising campaigns, Concern implemented (or collaborated to implement) photographs of anonymous children whose faces are covered with flies. Neither images nor accompanying texts indicate any relationship between the charity and the children. Concern meanwhile stated that the Darfur Appeal has raised 181,967 pounds (*The Independent*, Thursday, 26 August, 2004, p. 25).
In contrast to the Carter and Wallace image, the photographs discussed in this section have no educational value. They are hardly worth a thousand words. They arguably fuel a belief that the developing world exists in a permanent state of doom and disaster. Creating a psychological relationship that may be well intentioned; the images have left a legacy that tarnishes the West’s relationships with the developing world. As charities try to help disaster victims they sometimes lose sight of humanity and victimise the victims even further. While photographers win prizes by portraying human misery, charities rely on human suffering as its vital source for generating funds. As we do not know the fate of the people in the pictures that are utilised by charities to make money, we blur moral boundaries. Finally, is our generosity bound to become a victim of a syndrome called donor apathy or compassion fatigue\(^\text{33}\) (Terefa Fufa 2004)?

\(^{32}\) Source: The Washington Times.com, [www.washtimes.com/world/20040824-121314-9641r.htm]. The Washington Times informs that “[a] Sudanese boy waits to see a doctor in Morni camp Wednesday, August 4, 2004, as thousands of displaced people gather for humanitarian aid in the camp 80km from Aljinena, capital of western Darfur region (AP Photo/Abd Raouf)”.

\(^{33}\) In this context, the term ‘compassion fatigue’ is understood in the meaning of ‘burnout’.
3.4. Interpreting Images of Starvation

Surveying public perceptions of developing countries, 'The Live Aid Legacy' (VSO 2002) states why it matters how the British see development. The findings of the first post-September 11th consumer poll of this kind suggest that, despite a growing awareness of the links with other countries and cultures, people are commonly exposed to images that are sixteen years out of date and only reflect the situation of a minority of people in developing countries. The power of the 'Live Aid' images was found to fuel the belief that people in the developing world are helpless victims. Images used in charity reporting and advertising construct a psychological relationship that is often well intended but revolves around an implicit sense of superiority and inferiority. A summary of the responses reveal that the way we picture the world today is problematic.

- **Starving children with flies around their eyes, too weak to brush them off** – 80% of the British people are confident that the developing world exists in a permanent state of doom and disaster.

- **They have the desire to change, but no ability to support that** – 81% say it is dangerous to stereotype people from other cultures, but 'Live Aid' images have caught British imagination in a vice-like grip.

- **A relationship that revolves around an implicit sense of superiority and inferiority** – 74% of us believe these countries 'depend on the money and knowledge of the West to progress' (VSO 2002, p. 3).

The pervasiveness of stereotypical images, as discussed above, has shaped public attitudes of the developing world in the UK that give reasons for concern. Experts warn that misunderstanding on this level breeds arrogance, fear and inequality in our relationships with other cultures (VSO 2002). “This research proves that British people are not only ready for information more complex than the usual images of doom and disaster - but also that they will resent both development agencies and the media if we don't promote a more balanced world view”, says Mark Goldring, Chief Executive of VSO (VSO Press Release 2002). The case of Concern is an example that charity emergency appeals do not yet provide for a

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34 The Live Aid Legacy is the most comprehensive research on how Britain sees the developing world. A National Opinion Poll (NOP) of 1.1018 UK adults aged 15+ was conducted between 22-27 November, 2001. The sample was designed to be representative of the UK adult population.
balanced view. Their nature confirms that, decades after the Live Aid images of starving children became known under the infamous ‘Biafra child’ label, and two years after the publication of the VSO report, there has been little improvement in the implementation of images from disaster zones in Africa. Is the viewer’s perception of reality eroded by the daily flow of agonising images from the world’s disaster zones?

However, it is argued that not only the picture per se is problematic but also the sheer abundance of appeals printed in isolation within the Press. As if to suggest a choice, aid appeals urging the reader to help save lives frequently feature next to commercial advertisements.35 Moreover, some newspapers run several appeals concurrently to generate aid for different emergencies.36 It is not surprising that people cut themselves off from such heart-touching Press appeals. In 2002, of 23 possible ways of giving, appeal advertising only ranked 20th, generating a small fraction of total donations (CAF and NCVO 2003, see Appendix 1: Table 3). It is feared that the long-term effect of such advertising practices may cause increasing cynicism among people about emergencies in the developing world. In 1998, Clare Short, then Secretary of International Development, attacked leading UK charities for overusing shocking images of starving children in advertisements. She argued that the unbearable images would lead to compassion fatigue and make the people “flinch and turn away” (Gabi Hinsliff, Daily Mail, London, May 29, 1998, p. 19). The politically correct view is, however, that such pictures are offensive to the people in the developing world for they portray them as helpless and dependent on western charities.

Evidently, photojournalism can be humanitarian without patronising. A powerful photograph freezes a moment in time. A million words could not capture the joy, sadness or tragedy of life in the same way as a powerfully quality photograph. Through building a

35 The DEC Sudan Emergency Appeal demanding the viewer to ‘Give Now’ is placed next to a Subaru advertisement which promises the freedom of unlimited mobility (The Guardian, Saturday, 24 July, 2004, p. 7).
relationship of trust to the subject, responsible photojournalists are able to preserve people’s
dignity and to show that, even in desperate situations, there is normality and there are
moments of harmony and kindness. One of Stoddart’s images\textsuperscript{37} depicts two starving children.
A girl holding an empty bowl in her hand cuddles a skeletal child, emaciated from hunger and
dehydration. Seemingly unaware of the photographer, both children smile at each other while
the girl snuggles the child’s hand touching her face in affection. Capturing a moment familiar
to adults and toddlers all over the world, this image communicates the spirit of people in
tragic circumstances, while facilitating our understanding and sympathy of other famine
victims’ experiences.

\textbf{Figure 5: A rare moment of joy between siblings at the Ajiep feeding centre in}
southern Sudan. 1998.
(\textit{Courtesy Tom Stoddart})

Such a “sad but necessary” image releases energy that sparks communication, and
even donations to charities.\textsuperscript{38} Tom Stoddart’s \textit{iWitness} exhibition (see section 2) attracted

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{38} Brendan Gormley, Chief Executive of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) knows that “[i]t is reporting
like Tom’s that has, over 40 years, triggered remarkable generosity from the British public to enable DEC
Members combat hunger and disease” (More Riverside London, August 2004). Shortly after the 2004 Sudan
Emergency appeal was launched from Stoddart’s \textit{iWitness} exhibition, the DEC announced a return of five
million pounds in donations.
\end{footnotesize}
more than 2,000 visitors a day. Their voices\(^{39}\) (see Appendix 2: \emph{iWitness} Visitor Comments) give testimony to the abiding power of still images like the above. They also show that our society is divided not only over the value and purpose of the portrayal of people affected by disasters, but also over the realities in some parts of the developing world. Emphasising ‘them’ and ‘us’, the language of interpretation reflects colonial notions of trusteeship over the ‘Other’. In my view, this is largely a result of the nature of media reporting and charity advertising. The \emph{Public attitudes towards development 2003 report} found that, for 62 percent of respondents, donating to charities remains the most popular means of making a contribution to poverty reduction in developing countries\(^{40}\). In contrast, only 36 percent felt that putting pressure on politicians would help reduce poverty (Fiona Dawe/DFID 2003, p. 51, see Appendix 2). I would argue that too few people recognise the impact Western politics has on the events in the developing world.

Tom Stoddart gives a recent example of how one incredible image is enough to change the course of history. “People talk about a picture being worth a thousand words. I wonder what combination of a thousand words would ever have got Donald Rumsfeld, the US defence secretary, to apologise like he did when those shots of tortured Iraqis at Abu Ghraib came out” (Tom Stoddart, in \emph{New Statesman}, Monday, 26 July, 2004). Although well-intended and tremendously influential, the power of photographs is limited. While they can stimulate our thoughts and optimally drive us to action, they can also trigger our responses to solve fundamental problems such as man-made disasters and ongoing civil wars. Thus, while images of starving children might still be powerful enough to touch our hearts, too few people ask why famines are still occurring. Since the 1980s’ African food crisis, famines are academically understood as man-made disasters, for example in Sudan where hunger is used as a tool in warfare (David Campbell 2003).

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\(^{39}\) The comments were selected from a guest book displayed at the exhibition (5 and 8 August, 2004). Courtesy of Tom Stoddart. While the selection focused on comments in English, comments were written in several languages.

\(^{40}\) This survey is based in data from the 2003 National Statistics Omnibus Survey for the Department for International Development (DFID). The complete survey can be viewed on the DFID website [www.dfid.org.uk], see “how DFID works in the UK” and “public opinion surveys”.
While competing for diminishing emergency funding resources, aid agencies are increasingly experimenting with new media. The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) stated that its recent Sudan web appeal generated a record high of 1 million pounds in UK donations (BBC News online, 26 July, 2004). While heavily focusing on emaciated children, the video lacks any indication of local people helping each other. Yet, the reality paints a different picture. Few donors know that ninety percent of the people are saved by their neighbours and families, and that the external aid workers account for nearly 0.01 percent (Tony Vaux, in Ruth Gidley 2004). Moreover, Alex de Waal\(^{42}\) points out that in recent famines in Africa, international food aid accounted for “less than ten percent of the overall diet of famine-striken people” (in Tony Vaux 2001, p. 74).

While increasing the return in donations, innovative technology is not the answer to the dilemma of ongoing conflict. Neither photograph nor video can be a substitute for political will to eliminate the root causes of man-made disasters. The biggest help would be peace. This section demonstrated that one-dimensional global image-mongering spurs little more than empathic reactions, while reinforcing a number of conventional views about developing countries. Charities demonstrate a surprising inability, and arguably unwillingness, to overcome their image dilemma in emergency appeals. While politicians, journalists and academics have been demanding a more balanced world view, the voices of both the subjects in photographs, as well as indigenous photographers have been ignored. Yet without dialogue, there can be no change in the image culture. As Colin Hastings of kijiji\(^*\)Vision sees it, one reason behind the image dilemma is the dominance of Northern\(^{43}\) photographers looking through a Northern lens on disasters such as the Sudanese famines.

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\(^{41}\) The DEC Sudan Emergency Appeal video can be viewed online via [http://www.dec.org.uk/index.cfm/asset_id,437/index.html].

\(^{42}\) The Department for International Development (DFID) has committed a total of pounds 62.5 million in humanitarian aid to Darfur to support the relief efforts of the UN and British charities (BBC News online, UK’s Darfur aid efforts praised, Tuesday, 10 August, 2004). While aid is insufficient, the distance involved in transporting food to Sudan generates astronomical costs. Alex de Waal (2004) believes that, by involving local contractors, relief could be delivered more cheaply.

\(^{43}\) In this context, the terms ‘northern’ and ‘southern’ denote people in the developed and developing world respectively. Northern is used in the same meaning as Western.
Indigenous photographers have a different perspective which is marginalised because of the Northern monopoly of the image economy.44

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44 The phrase ‘image economy’ summarises pictures available for sale.
4. Envisioning a Fair Global Image Economy

Perhaps, the answer to the current image dilemma is a fairer global image economy. Powerful photographs are increasingly seen as a tradable commodity with an immense economic value. The current global image market is roughly estimated at 6.5 billion US dollars\(^45\) (D.J. Clark 2003, p. 1). However, the term ‘global’ is somewhat inappropriate for the images of people and events in developing countries, which are paradoxically produced by northern photographers. The current image economy, controlled by northern photographers and agents, facilitates one-dimensional processes of production, sale and purchase\(^46\). What prevents photographers in the majority world from accessing the global image market?

Drik\(^47\) director Shahidul Alam knows that there is certainly no lack of talented indigenous photographers; rather the resources and efforts to promote such talent are insufficient (in D.J. Clark 2003). Yet, economic and technical barriers determine only one side of the problem. John Levi, Foto8 editor, remarks that the greater dilemma resides in the “compositional” nature of photographs and the political language they speak in different cultural settings. While a local photographer definitely has an edge “to put more feelings into a picture and has better local knowledge”, a British photographer has a better understanding of the language of the readership and is able to construct a clearer message (John Levi, in D.J. Clark 2003, p. 3). Shahidul Alam contests such arguments. He believes that the visual language of the “western eye” is something that can be learned like a spoken language. He further believes that it is much harder to acquire local knowledge than it is to gain knowledge of an intended publication market (in D.J. Clark 2003).

\(^{45}\) D.J. Clark notes that the fractured nature of the market makes reliable estimations difficult (ibid. 2003).

\(^{46}\) For a detailed description of the image economy in the 1990s see D.J. Clark (2003).

\(^{47}\) Drik – which means ‘vision’ in Sanskrit – is a progressive photo agency that was established in the Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka in 1989. Set out by media professionals that other agencies did not cater for, it takes the lead in new media. Drik members share a vision of the majority world, “not as fodder for disaster reporting, but as a vibrant source of human energy and a challenge to an exploitative global economic system”. The agency supports a network of creative individuals around the world who challenge western media hegemony. Drik provides training for the region’s photographic talents through its educational wing “Pathshala” (http://www.drik.net/).
Indeed, it requires an in-depth knowledge of local and political affairs to truthfully report events such as famine and conflict. Indigenous photographers have clear advantages over their northern counterparts who often fly in and out of disasters zones without being able to develop a long-term understanding of the situation. Photojournalists are part of a media system that directs their eyes and, as a result, shapes their images.\textsuperscript{48} However, one of the greatest barriers to photographers in the majority world has been the lack of political influence. “Images are generally regarded secondary to text and are given little space in newsprint” (D.J. Clark 2003, p. 3). The situation is even more serious in post-war countries like Afghanistan, were photojournalists have only just started to enjoy freedom of press, be it fragile.

The young not-for-profit enterprise kijiji\textsuperscript{49} Vision responds to these problems. It was born out of a vision of its founder, Colin Hastings, to create a responsible photography organisation that “gives back” as well as “takes”. The project aims to assist talented photographers in the South to overcome the barriers that currently prevent them from gaining fair access to international image markets. Its guiding principle is fair trade photography.\textsuperscript{50} The idea emerged from a photographic assignment Colin Hastings did for The Tanzanian Cultural Tourism Programme in September 2001. Hastings argues that, while producing images from their own countries, southern photographers are as marginalised and disadvantaged as many small-scale coffee and tea farmers. Acting as a broker between the

\textsuperscript{48} It is often the case that photojournalists deliver images to illustrate stories already written by editors. However, the editors never go and see an event for themselves. They often select images according to what they believe best fit both their stories and the consumer taste. Photojournalists like Tom Stoddart who work independently are an exception.

\textsuperscript{49} The discussion of the project is based on an interview with Colin Hastings (London, July, 2004) and on a selection of materials provided by Mr Hastings. Further information is available from [http://www.kijijivision.org/]. Kijiji means ‘vision’ in Kiswahili.

\textsuperscript{50} The word ‘fair’ has a lot of different meanings. Applied to alternative trade organisations the term ‘fair’ implies that trading partnerships are based on reciprocal benefits and mutual respect and that prices paid to producers reflect the work they do. Source: The Fair Trade Federation, Reports on Fair-Trade Trends [http://www.fairtradefederation.com]. Fair-trade organisations pursue the goal to make trade part of the solution to poverty, not part of the problem. Although impact is measured in money, the real value of fair trade is the human impact. Source: Fair-Trade Labelling Organization (FLO) [http://www.fairtrade.net]. The concept of Fair Trade emphasises the need for ethical standards to be established and adhered to in global trade practices. Fair trade Coffee is a prime example of successful activist campaigning. The International Fair Trade Association [http://www.ifat.org/theftomark/ftomarkftlabelling.html].
photographers and the market, fair trade promises southern photographers a fairer market share of the premium income. With the help of kijiji*Vision, they acquire expertise to improve the quality of their products and learn how to promote their photographs on the international market.

Knowing that it is still very difficult to find talented and commercially-minded photographers in the South, Colin Hastings’ ambitious goal is the establishment of an extensive database of indigenous photographers to be utilised by businesses and agencies, thus closing a market gap. The idea behind kijiji*Vision is that, through exhibitions, projects and other media, indigenous photographers will provide positive, educational images of life in developing countries. This paper has demonstrated that northern-produced images of Africa, as an example of the developing world, fuel Western perceptions that are problematic. Media reporting and the imagery cultivated in charity emergency appeals have reinforced notions of this part of Africa as ‘uncivilised’. Out of this perception follows the view of Africans as passive subjects and of Africa as a ‘bad place for businesses’. Thus, while kijiji*Vision is a market-driven project, it has a real potential to facilitate communication and understanding between North and South. It is arguably one solution to alter our culturally preconceived ideas of people affected by disasters in countries like Sudan.

In addition to fair trade organisations, charities may constitute another promising market\(^{51}\) for fair trade photographs. While in emergency situations charities tend to utilise professional stock images, a high proportion of the photographs used in other charity advertisements is produced by field staff. Yet, lacking photographic technique (i.e. lighting), staff-produced images are often of poor, unappealing quality.\(^ {52}\) UK market research could

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\(^{51}\) Another market to be targeted by kijiji*Vision is the tourism industry.

\(^{52}\) Section two demonstrated that the key target group for charity advertisements are women in their late twenties and thirties. Arguably, these women are also the key target group by glossy magazines. An analysis of their consumerist behaviour leads to the conclusion that style and quality matter.
use the fair-trade campaigns of Oxfam and Christian Aid\textsuperscript{53}, which were developed to help people to find their own solutions to the problems. The fact that an increasing number of people in the UK believe that buying fair trade products could help reduce poverty is a promising signal.\textsuperscript{54}

However, kijiji*Vision is still in its infancy and extensive market research must yet prove whether charities are ready to abandon traditional practices of resorting to free news images to establish partnerships with indigenous photographers. It is not yet known whether, and how, indigenous photographers will contribute to reforming the current image culture. One might argue that indigenous photographers will cater to a ‘northern taste’ without necessarily changing it. As kijiji*Vision is a northern-born business, and its committed volunteers are also northern, Colin Hastings’ team has the challenging task to safeguard its inclusiveness (Shahidul Alam, correspondence with Colin Hastings, February 2004). The future will show whether their vision of a balanced world view can be realised.

However, the benefits clearly outweigh the risks. Firstly, by promoting indigenous photographers, kijiji*Vision has a real potential to contribute to a fairer, global image economy. Secondly, by providing northern audiences with an insider’s view of events, which they can otherwise only witness through images, it proves educational. Thirdly, by promoting an ‘African perspective’ it gives local people a voice through which to communicate their realities to northern audiences. In turn, these audiences can relate to personalised stories rather than react to autonomous subjects in photographs. It is hoped that charities might establish partnerships with local photographers. This would enable them to better communicate their causes to northern donors while, at the same time, increase their accountability to local partners. In the market-dominated Western society, fair trade is a

\textsuperscript{53} Since 1992, Christian Aid has been calling on supermarkets to stock fairly traded products which guarantee fair conditions for overseas producers and collaborated with other organisations to promote the fair trade cause with significant success. For further information see Christian Aid’s website [http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/campaign/fairtrad/fairtrad.htm].

\textsuperscript{54} The “Public attitude towards development 2003 report” notes an increase among respondents from 42 percent in 2001 to 49 percent in 2003. It ranks only second to ‘Donating to charities or other appeals on behalf of developing countries’ (62 percent of respondents) as a possible solution to poverty (Fiona Fawe/DFID (2003).
choice to be more than a passive consumer. Supporting fair trade photographs may therefore contribute to a reformed image culture.
Conclusion

This paper contends that the value of a powerful photograph cannot be measured in words. Their real power resides in their capability to educate and empower people. Strong images, particularly from disaster situations, have an immense political and economic value. They may spark communication, but may also become propaganda if abducted by charities and politically self-interested organisations. Abuse of photographs can cause physical and psychological damage for the subjects. In sum, this paper has given evidence that the real value of photographs cannot be measured in terms of money for a charity or fame for a photographer. However, it can be seen in terms of facilitating understanding between cultures.

Media and charity representations predominate in determining how we see the developing world. Their work is largely fuelled by an image culture that reflects our culturally-induced understanding of large parts of the developing world. The over-abundance of photographs of children in charity emergency appeals, for example, has perpetuated a view of infanticised Africans as passive receivers of aid. Though heart-touching images in emergency appeals might be well-intended, they reflect an implicit sense of superiority and inferiority. Moreover, our world view is largely distorted as the realities of the people in the developing world are framed by northern photographers. The images exclude the view of how indigenous people see their own life and how they want others to see them. New pictorial standards must ensure that images portray people in a dignified manner by showing that, even under harsh circumstances, they are able to help themselves. Such images should depict local people helping each other, rather than emphasising international dependence and invoking pity. People must be portrayed as human beings with capacities rather than passive victims.

Charities urgently need to realise their educational role, and reform their representational practices. A rebalanced picture of the developing world would mainstream
African perspectives on development. Overcoming stereotypes would enable people in the UK, and other Western countries, to build stronger associations with individuals rather than anonymous subjects. A better informed population would be able to actively engage in global issues such as trading laws and debt relief. Moreover, the process of learning about other cultures would bring personal enrichment. Thus, rather than simply resorting to new media while perpetuating the same images organisations like the DEC should take the lead in providing moral leadership and guidance to the multitude of different players involved in humanitarian activities. The collaboration with indigenous photographers who have a better understanding of the environment of charity operations would contribute to a more balanced view of the events in the developing world. Such partnerships would give indigenous people a voice, and a choice about how they are portrayed.

In sum, what we need is a reformed image culture that challenges culturally-induced attitudes about the developing world. This reform must be initiated by both the media and charities. They can show us, every day, that there can be change. However, changing stereotypical attitudes about the majority world entails a process of re-education – first by charities and media editors, and consequently by consumers. Charities can redirect our eyes by showing true and positive images, which enables us to see the world in a different way. The goal is to minimise the ‘self’ and increase the awareness of other cultures. This reform could give rise to a new consumer generation, enlightened by a more balanced view of events in the developing world. The time-consuming but worthwhile transformation process of the consumer generation defines an exciting subject for further research.

The reformation of our image culture, however, faces two main challenges. News editors might refuse to abandon traditional portrayals of events in developing countries. Charities, on the other hand, might face a real challenge in selling positive images to consumers with preconceived ideas about the nature of images in emergency appeals. Worldwide projects like Drik and, arguably, kijji*Vision have a real potential to provide a
more balanced picture of the world. They can make sure that “the grotesque lack of reality –
that the majority of the world is one block of disadvantaged, poverty-striken people – is not
the legacy of our generation” (Mark Goldring, in VSO Press release 2002).
Abbreviations

CAF – Charities Aid Foundation
DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee
DFID – The Department for International Development
NCVO – National Council for Voluntary Organisations
SCF – The Save the Children Fund
UK – United Kingdom
UN – United Nations
US – United States of America

Image Index

Figure 2: Kevin Carter (1993), Source: [http://picturenet.co.za/photographers/kch/].
Figure 3: Reuters/Antony Njuguna, REF.: CHD09D. PP04010102. [www.alertnet.org] cited January 26, 2004.
Figure 4: AP Photo/Abd Raouf (2004) The Washington Times.com, [www.washtimes.com/world/20040824-121314-9641r.htm]
Figure 5: The Independent Darfur Appeal, The Independent, Monday, 9 August, 2004, p. 2.
Appendix 1: Charitable Giving in 2002

Table 1: Who gives?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Average donation (£/month)</th>
<th>Proportion giving to charity (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>13.57</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>28.22</td>
<td>79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>16.46</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>15.68</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>15.39</td>
<td>73.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>11.49</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2: Ways of giving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% donors</th>
<th>% given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street collection</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door to door collection</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying raffle/lottery tickets - not NL</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying in a charity shop</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop counter collection</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church collection</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection at work</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying goods for a charity</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub collection</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal letter</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying in a jumble sale</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending a charity event</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscription/membership fee</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying through a charity catalogue</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV or radio appeal</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll deduction</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone appeal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal advertisement</td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affinity card</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocks and shares</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Support for different causes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>% donators</th>
<th>% given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical research</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children or young people</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other medical/health care</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious organisations</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas relief</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind people</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled people</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rescue services</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly people</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless people</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The environment</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf people</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, music, art etc.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Public Opinions on Poverty Reduction

Three most important ways the UK Government should be contributing to poverty reduction in developing countries - Summary

Order in which respondents perceived the possible contributions to be the most important:

1. 29% Providing financial support and other types of aid
2. 28% Reducing conflict and war
3. 17% Working to cancel the debts owed by developing countries
4. 13% Working towards a fairer world trading system
5. 5% Working to improve the effectiveness of international organisations
6. 2% Encouraging increased private sector investment
Appendix 3: *iWitness* Visitor Comments

“Life is so unfair but this is true about war. Thank you for the images of truth.”

“Life is not unfair. Only people can be.”

“A picture speaks a thousand words, these pictures speak for themselves.”

“We must and can always do what we can – we are all in this together.”

“Fulfilment only comes through giving.”

“Photographs are excellent but the situation taken speaks how much pain have they gone through.”

“We have lost them as we will lose the world.”

“Good, bad, indifferent. This is humanity and this is our nature.”

“No matter how bad you feel your life is, this exhibition shows how lucky we are.”

“How can we do this to humanity?!?”

“I Sandra Agho hate what I see. That this kind of display is in this part of the world. I want to do something about this. But sometimes I don’t even know where to start from one day. Just one day. God knows Good and bad is the only key to act this mess. We pray.”

“Very emotional and needs more charity to end the struggle.”

“Thank you to those who have shared their personal photos to share the stories with us.”

“I am a bit shocked by the ethic of this exhibition. What is exactly the purpose? Oh, we see compelling pictures that are supposed to move us, that are supposed to show ‘dignity’. Where is dignity in the way Africa is once again pictured? When compared to other catastrophes, in Sarajevo etc…, I don’t think people are portrayed in a very decent way and it just reinforces people’s common vision: “par Africa”. It is a shame.”

“Thank you Tom. The Human Race are like the survivors in a lifeboat with only one loaf of bread. There are only 3 ways if distributing it. If you sell it – the rich get all the bread. If you fight for it – the strong get all the bread. But if we share it – there will be bread for everyone.” — Tony Benn

“Words cannot describe my emotions. There are no words to describe my horror.”

“Feel sad and even more than that no words to express that sadness.”

“Something has to be done! How can the human society tolerate such atrocities and terrible sufferings? We must cleanse this world of ours from such evil. These photographs have left an indelible mark on my heart. We must do something! Together, we can stop it …”

“Tom, you are one of the few photographers I have seen who can tell the story but still keep people’s dignity.”

“Sometimes photography is more important than art. Here it conveys truth. Stark and brutal. Brilliant.”
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Visual media


Interviews


Dr. Colin Hastings, a psychologist and freelance management consultant, is the founder and director of the fair-trade photography project kijiji*Vision (http://www.kijijivision.org/), a new not-for-profit enterprise that aims to help Southern photographers overcome the barriers that currently prevent them from gaining fair access to international markets. Having lived long-term in southern Africa, Dr. Hastings has a real understanding of local cultures. His 2003 exhibition "OUT OF THE BOX" creatively depicted the realities of Tribal Communities of modern Tanzania.

Tom Stoddart, a gifted British photojournalist and co-founder of the Independent Photographers Group (IPG), started his unusual career with a local newspaper in the north of England. Thirty-three years of work in over fifty countries have won him numerous awards and accolades. In retrospective, however, he describes the real prize of his photojournalistic work as the privilege to witness "history unfolding in front of his camera". He captured such decisive moments as the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall but Nelson Mandela’s 1994 victorious election, before becoming a messenger of man’s inhumanity in 1998 Sudan and committed supporter of charity. Further information and a selection of his work can be found under [http://www.tomstoddart.com/biography.html].