



STRATEGIC PLAN **2009-2012**

Summary version

I. PREFACE

Looking back to the founding of Jubilee USA Network just over ten years ago, much has changed.

We can reflect proudly on some tremendous victories that looked improbable to many when we began this incredible journey. Together, with global partners, we successfully put breaking the debilitating chains of international debt on the agenda of world leaders not once, but twice – in 1999 and again in 2005. Not only did we help turn an obscure economic issue into an understandable concern, we managed to make debt a focal point for public education, mobilization and policy advocacy on global poverty issues.

Together with global allies, we won \$88 billion of debt cancellation to date, which has freed up funds for millions of children to go to school and patients to access healthcare. Much has changed for the better in countries that have seen life-saving debt cancellation. That is cause for celebration.

But as much as things change, they stay the same. Today, the world is confronted by challenges – sometimes called “new,” but really a repeat of similar cycles from not so distant history. Volatility in the price of oil and the rising cost of food in today’s global economy bear many similarities to the trends in the 1970’s when the global debt crisis began. The rising global cost of food – driven in part by speculation – threatens government budgets and peoples’ survival. Meanwhile, the global economic crisis is front and center in the minds of U.S. residents and the world with rising foreclosure rates and the public bailout of Wall Street, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The economic crisis in the United States is an opportunity to educate Northern campaigners on the links between the domestic economic crisis and the economic policies of the IMF and World Bank that have impoverished many nations in the South.

Jubilee USA Network’s new strategic plan will guide our work to fight global poverty through debt cancellation and a more responsible system of global finance for the next four years. It is based on the experience of our decade-long journey as the U.S. arm of a global movement fighting for global economic justice, and it seeks to address the reality of new global challenges. Our discussions and consultations to develop this plan – which involved member organizations, grassroots supporters across the United States, allies, and global partners – affirmed the significant impact we have already had as an organization over the past 10 years. But we also acknowledge the enormous work necessary to bring ourselves closer to fulfilling our prophetic social justice mission.

With this new strategic plan, we reaffirm our commitment to our original broader vision – the prophetic Jubilee vision of justice and right relationships among people and nations. The Jubilee text from Leviticus envisions a cyclical process of cancelling debts, freeing people from slavery and letting the land lie fallow – this vision incorporates economic justice and stewardship of the land.

For the past ten years Jubilee has focused on debt cancellation. Jubilee South and many of the post-HIPC countries plan to stay with this focus while also reflecting the broader, prophetic Jubilee biblical vision - a vision of a world in which there is enough for all.

Indeed our plan reflects a strong focus on our core competency – building the political will for debt cancellation. We will work to build on our legislative successes over the past two years to ensure that the US funds its existing commitments to debt cancellation, that we win expanded debt cancellation with accountability to help meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and that we win an official debt audit to look at odious and illegitimate debts.

But we also feel strongly that, building from our core competency, we must also focus on the root causes of indebtedness. Our work in the next four years must even more explicitly look beyond the debt cancellation agenda towards addressing some of the critical emerging global economic challenges that relate to international debt and impede the fight against global poverty.

Some of these issues include the need for strong new global rules for more principled and responsible global lending – to avoid the recurrence of the debt crisis, and to avoid the creation of new odious and illegitimate debts.

To avoid the next debt crisis, we must redouble our advocacy for assistance to be provided to impoverished countries in the form of grants, rather than loans. Recognizing the growing impact of climate change on development, we must work to ensure that adaptation to climate change is financed through grants rather than loans based on the reality that the North owes the South a profound climate debt, not the reverse.

We must also more sharply and strategically focus on stopping the heavy impacts that new forms of conditionality from the IMF and World Bank are having. In country after country that has benefited from debt relief, we have heard from governments and civil society that that debt relief came at a tremendous cost, with IMF/WB conditionality undermining many of the possible benefits. This cannot continue.

We also recognize the critical links between debt and trade and seek to develop a strong analytical understanding and greater consensus within the Network regarding the contributions of trade agreements to indebtedness. Finally, we commit to exploring sustainable ways to support efforts by countries in the global South to access and benefit from their own resources, ultimately becoming independent of aid and debt cancellation for development finance.

In moving forward with this agenda, we affirm our unique position as the US arm of a truly global movement. We are proud to be a part of a vibrant, increasingly more coordinated and effective global movement – with partners in more than 80 nations across the globe – challenging crushing debt and working for principled, responsible, and alternative forms of financing for development. We affirm our commitment to build even stronger partnerships with our global allies, taking leadership in our work from our Southern partners most affected by the crisis of debt and an unjust global economic order.

Finally, we affirm that our biggest victories of the past ten years – winning recognition of the debt issue by the G-8, cancelling billions of debt, and passing the historic Jubilee Act in the US Congress – have come thanks to grassroots mobilization and people power. For the broader changes we seek, it will not be possible to win by the force of our arguments and convictions alone. For the next victories, we will need an even broader and more diverse coalition. We remain committed to building a broad, diverse movement for Jubilee justice and right relationships among the world's nations and peoples.

II. SUMMARY OF JUBILEE USA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012

A. Overall Goal: From 2009-2012, Jubilee USA Network will work towards the eradication of global poverty and sustainable development by building a strong movement and political will for cancellation of unjust debts for countries of the Global South without harmful economic conditions. Jubilee USA will also work to achieve new global economic policies and trade rules that eradicate poverty, promote sustainable human development and prevent recurring, destructive cycles of indebtedness.

Sub-Goal #1: Definitive Cancellation of Unsustainable and Illegitimate Debt

By 2015, we will have created the political will for the implementation of an international agreement for expanded debt cancellation for impoverished nations without harmful conditions, which will help enable these nations to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), and for the cancellation or repudiation of debt on the grounds of odiousness/illegitimacy in at least 3 cases.

Outcome #1: Win support of the US administration for a new deal on debt, resulting in additional, definitive debt cancellation on the agenda of the G-8 summit by 2010. Continue to push for the implementation of a new international agreement through the 2011 summit and on to 2012 when the US will host the G8.

The G-8 has a decisive impact on World Bank, regional development banks and IMF policies regarding debt cancellation. To achieve this goal, we will need to convince the new US administration which takes office in 2009 to take on the policy agenda laid out in the Jubilee Act.

To do this, we will use a number of tactics, including by mobilizing direct pressure the new Administration/Treasury Secretary to support the Jubilee agenda; working to get the unfinished agenda on debt on the agenda at the G-8 Summit; and by working with Congressional allies to re-introduce and build broad bi-partisan support for the Jubilee Act, leading to passage by the end of 2010. In the course of this work, Jubilee will support calls for a new Department for Global Development to which Treasury's role on debt and international financial institutions would be transferred.

Outcome 2: Win support from the US government for recognition of illegitimate debt and win a comprehensive audit by an official US government agency of past lending to 2 countries by 2010.

To achieve this, we will work to get a bi-partisan Congressional request for a Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit in 2009. We will advocate to ensure that State department and Treasury officials are supportive of efforts within the UN system and the Paris Club to recognize odious and illegitimate debt. To ensure the US audit supports citizen and official audits within countries in question, we will partner directly with civil society/government agencies in these countries. Finally, we will engage immigrant communities in the US from affected countries in this work, focusing on communities from debt audit nations.

Outcome 3: U.S. is meeting its commitment to fully fund its share of existing debt cancellation commitments under the MDRI by end 2011. This work is critical as the US is currently in arrears to the World Bank and on its debt cancellation commitments -- and Congress and international actors will not support additional debt cancellation unless we fulfill our current commitments. To do this, we will work with partners to determine needed level of appropriations each year for US share of debt cancellation commitments; mobilize pressure on key appropriators to assure full funding; and engage grassroots supporters at key moments in appropriations process.

Outcome 4: By end 2011, there is greater information on mechanisms for and uses of funds released by debt cancellation, and Jubilee USA has supported civil society in at least 3 countries (post-HIPC) to ensure accountability for the use of funds. To do this, we will develop new grassroots education information on the impact of debt cancellation, provide solidarity to civil society such as Jubilee Zambia on their efforts to ensure accountable and transparent use of funds released by debt cancellation. With significantly increased resources we would like to carry out new research in this area.

Sub-goal #2: Towards More Responsible Global Finance

By 2015, we will have achieved progress towards a just and responsible international finance and trading framework which allows developing countries significantly greater flexibility to choose just economic policies, independence from foreign assistance, and avoid future debt crises.

NOTE: This sub-goal incorporates the “non debt relief” aspect of Jubilee USA’s agenda which becomes more important in this strategic plan compared to previous years. This agenda responds to reality that many post-HIPC countries face and the strong trends now pointing towards a renewed developing country debt crisis due to skyrocketing food and fuel crises.

This agenda looks at issues which are critical to achieving a just and equitable development and sustainable forms of development finance including efforts to:

- Given the financial crisis, there is increased urgency and opportunity to win a global framework for responsible finance, including provisions to constrain the practices of vulture funds which are undermining the effectiveness of debt cancellation;
- End harmful conditions imposed by international financial institutions on poor countries as a requirement for aid and debt cancellation;
- Avoid new indebtedness by significantly increasing support for grants for social services and focusing on grants rather than loans to respond to the climate and food crises;
- Analyze the impacts of trade agreements on indebtedness;

Outcome 1: Framework for Responsible Lending and Borrowing. By 2012, there will be significant progress towards the adoption of strong rules that make global finance more responsible and just. To achieve this, we will build relationships with international partners and coalitions already working on this issue especially Eurodad, Afrodad, and the Jubilee South Asia Movement on Debt and Development and help to develop broader international consensus on a rules-based framework for responsible finance. We will also develop research and materials which build case against current IMF/World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework and make the case for strong new rules; and we will advocate with US government to support Jubilee’s responsible financing agenda in international forums including the G-20 where this issue will be discussed in November 2009. With increased resources, this area presents exciting opportunities to make the links between responsible lending locally and globally, and thus build new collaborations with diverse US constituencies affected by irresponsible lending and predatory lending. We’ll advocate for and input to processes initiated within UNCTAD and the UN Human Rights Council to develop support for rules for more responsible lending.

A specific element of the work for responsible lending is our advocacy to stop the practices of vulture funds. Working closely with partners, especially Africa Action and TransAfrica Forum, we will focus strongly on this beginning in early 2009 as the “hook” to educate people on our broader work on

responsible financing, taking advantage of the opening for stronger financial regulation due to recent events. By 2012, Congress passes the Stop Vultures Act.

Outcome 2: Increase Grants to Pay Back our Climate Debt to the South. A critical way to avoid further indebtedness is to advocate for grants, not loans. Our priority is creating the political will for grants, rather than loans as the international community responds to the climate crisis and the food crisis. It is critical that these grants are provided without harmful economic conditions. Our strongest priority will be to keep the World Bank from making loans for climate adaptation while building the political will for grants for climate adaptation as a first step towards repayment of our ecological debt to the South. We will also work to increase the share of grants in IDA, the low income concessional arm of the World Bank, and towards the abolition of loans from IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, which are inappropriate for responding to the food crisis. To achieve the work on climate, we will partner with allies globally and with US partners including Friends of the Earth, Climate Action Network, ActionAid, Oil Change, and Oxfam America to move the World Bank to grants for climate adaptation and increased grant resources for this purpose via the U.S. government and the UNFCCC process. We will also develop new educational materials and play a leadership role in addressing the linkages between debt, climate, and development in the 2009 Ecumenical Advocacy Days conference.

Outcome 3: End Harmful IFI Conditionality. Ending harmful IFI conditionality is a critical objective in order to prevent future indebtedness. Our objective is that by end 2009, Congress will authorize gold sales for the IMF in exchange for some gold sales going for debt relief and tangible, enforceable restrictions on the IMF's ability to impose harmful economic conditions on poor countries. By 2011, we will have created the political will for strong provisions in the IDA authorization to eliminate harmful World Bank conditionality. To achieve these objectives, in 2009, we will continue to campaign to support expedited consideration for countries stuck in the HIPC process because of excessive IFI conditionality – especially Liberia, Haiti, and DRC. In 2009, working with the IMF reform coalition, we will conduct a grassroots campaign targeting Congress to demand gold sales for debt cancellation as well as for an end to the Poverty Relief Growth Facility or specific conditionality. Finally, beginning In 2010, we will launch a major effort to demand fundamental changes in WB policy via the IDA reauthorization. With significantly increased resources, we would organize a three-year North-South campaign looking at three country examples of conditionality, building links with US-based communities struggling with similar conditions.

Outcome 4: Link Debt, Trade and Immigration. By end of 2011, in partnership with trade groups, trade unions and grassroots organizations, we will have developed and established debt-based criteria for assessing trade agreements in order to prevent future indebtedness. We will also have strengthened our analysis on links between debt and migration.

Finally, there is one area of program exploration: Efforts to Help Impoverished Countries Gain greater control over their natural resources and domestic revenues. In order to avoid future indebtedness, we will explore emerging efforts by developing countries and civil society to gain greater control over and profit from their own resources (minerals, etc) without damaging the environment including issues to address capital flight, taxation, and transfer pricing.