

Sharing as our common cause



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Executive summary

Across the world, millions of campaigners and activists refuse to sit idly by and watch the world's crises escalate, while our governments fail to provide hope for a more just and sustainable future. The writing is on the wall: climate chaos, escalating conflict over scarce resources, growing impoverishment and marginalisation in the rich world as well as the poor, the looming prospect of another global financial collapse. In the face of what many describe as a planetary emergency, there has never been such a widespread and sustained mobilisation of citizens around efforts to challenge global leaders and address critical social and environmental issues.¹ A worldwide 'movement of movements' is on the rise, driven by an awareness that the multiple crises we face are fundamentally caused by an outmoded economic system in need of wholesale reform.

But despite this growing awareness of the need for massive combined action to reverse ongoing historical trends, clearly not enough is being done to tackle the systemic causes of the world's interrelated problems. What we still lack is a truly unified progressive movement that comprises the collective actions of civil society organisations, grassroots activists and an engaged citizenry. A fusion of progressive causes is urgently needed under a common banner, one that can create a consensus among a critical mass of the world population about the necessary direction for transformational change. As many individuals and groups within the progressive community both recognise and proclaim, this is our greatest hope for bringing about world renewal and rehabilitation.

This report demonstrates how a call for sharing is central to the formation of this growing worldwide movement of global citizens. As more and more people begin to raise their voices for governments to put human needs and ecological preservation before corporate greed and profit, the call for sharing is consistently at the heart of civil society demands for a better world. In fact, the principle of sharing is often central to efforts for progressive change in almost every field of endeavour. But this mutual concern is generally understood and couched in tacit terms, without acknowledging the versatility, commonality and wide applicability of sharing as a solution to the world's problems.

For illustrative purposes, the many causes, initiatives and movements highlighted in this report's 'mapping' section are broadly grouped according to five main categories: social justice, environmental stewardship, global peace, participative democracy, and multi-issue movements. For each of the causes outlined that fall within these overarching themes, it is not difficult to see how most – if not all – are essentially founded on a demand for a more equitable sharing of wealth, power or resources either within countries or internationally. For this reason, we argue that sharing should be more widely promoted as a common cause that can potentially help connect the world's peace, justice and environmental movements under a united call for change.

How is the call for sharing expressed?

In many ways the need for greater sharing in society is longstanding and self-evident, as there can be no social or economic justice when wealth and income inequalities continue to spiral out of control, increasingly to the benefit of the 1% (or indeed the 0.001%).² There is now an almost continuous and high-profile discussion on the need to tackle growing extremes of inequality, which is a debate that is often framed entirely – if not always explicitly – around the need for a just sharing of wealth and power across society as a whole.

At the same time, advocacy for new development paradigms or economic alternatives is increasingly being framed and discussed in terms of sharing. This is most apparent in the international debate on climate change and sustainable development, in which many policy analysts and civil society organisations (CSOs) are calling for 'fair shares' in a constrained world – in other words, for all people to have an equal right to share the Earth's resources without transgressing the planet's environmental limits.³ Furthermore, some prominent CSOs – including Christian Aid, Oxfam International and Friends of the Earth – clearly espouse the principle of sharing as part of their organisational strategies and objectives, and call for dramatic changes in how power and resources are shared in order to transform our unjust world.⁴

The renewed concept of the 'commons' has also fast become a well-recognised global movement of scholars and activists who frame all the most pressing issues of our time – from unsustainable growth to rising inequality – in terms of our need to cooperatively protect the shared resources of Earth.⁵ On a more local and practical level, there is also a flourishing 'sharing economy' movement that is empowering people to share more in their everyday lives through the use of online platforms and sharing-oriented business models, as well as through gift economies and shared community projects.⁶

In most other instances, however, the fundamental demand for sharing is implicitly discussed or inadvertently promoted in popular calls for change. For example, millions of people across the world are struggling for democracy and freedom in manifold ways, from people-led uprisings against corrupt governments to those who are actively participating in new democracy movements within communities and workplaces. But there can be no true form of democracy – and no securing of basic human rights for all – without a fairer sharing of political power and economic resources, as further outlined in the section of this report on participative democracy.

Similarly, the principle of sharing underlies many of the campaigns and initiatives for peaceful co-existence, whether it's in terms of redirecting military spending towards essential public goods, or ending the scramble for scarce resources through cooperative international agreements. From both a historical and common sense perspective, it is clear that competing to access and control resources causes conflict - and there is no sense in perpetuating an economic paradigm where all nations are pitted against each other to try and own what could easily be shared.⁷

Yet the basic necessity of sharing is often not recognised as an underlying cause for all those who envision a more just and peaceful world without insecurity or deprivation. This is despite the fact that the mass protest movements that have swiftly emerged in recent years, including the Arab Spring demonstrations and Occupy movements, are also invariably connected by their implicit call for greater economic sharing across society, not least in their reaction to enormous and growing socio-economic divisions.⁸

Why advocate for sharing?

Given that a call for sharing is already a fundamental (if often unacknowledged) demand of a diverse group of progressive individuals and organisations, there are a number of reasons why we should embrace this common cause and advocate more explicitly for sharing in our work and activities. In particular, a call for sharing holds the potential to connect disparate campaign groups, activists and social movements under a common theme and vision. Such a call represents the unity in diversity of global civil society and can provide an inclusive rallying platform, which may also help us to recognise that we are all ultimately fighting the same cause. It also offers a way of moving beyond separate silos and single-issue platforms, but without needing to abandon any existing focuses or campaign priorities.

A call for sharing can also engage a much broader swathe of the public in campaign initiatives and movements for transformative change. Many people feel disconnected from political issues owing to their technical complexity, or else they feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges that face us and ill equipped to take action. But everyone understands the human value of sharing, and by upholding this universal principle in a political context we can point the way towards an entirely new approach to economics – one that is integrally based on a fair and sustainable distribution of resources. In this way, the principle of sharing represents a valuable advocacy and educational tool that can help to generate widespread public engagement with critical global issues.

In addition, a popular demand for governments to adopt the principle of sharing has radical implications for current economic and political arrangements, both within countries and internationally. This is clear when we examine the influence of the neoliberal approach to economics that continues to dominate government policymaking in both the Global North and South, and which is in many ways the antithesis of an economic approach based on egalitarian values and the fulfilment of long-established human rights. In an increasingly unequal and unsustainable world in which all governments need to drastically re-order their priorities, a call for sharing embodies the need for justice, democracy and sound environmental stewardship to guide policymaking at every level of society.

Ultimately, only a collective demand for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources is likely to unify citizens across the world in a common cause. Unless individuals and organisations in different countries align their efforts in more concrete ways (a process that is already underway), it may remain impossible to overcome the vested interests and entrenched structures that maintain business-as-usual. While we face the increasing prospect of social, economic and ecological collapse, there is no greater urgency for establishing a broad-based global movement that upholds the principle of sharing as a basic guide for restructuring our societies and tackling the multiple crises of the 21st century. In the end, this may represent our greatest hope for influencing economic reforms that are based on the needs of the world as a whole, and guided by basic human and ecological values.

Recommendations

This report seeks to demonstrate how a global movement for sharing is already in existence – even if it has yet to affirm its collective identity or purpose. If the case for promoting sharing as our common cause seems convincing, then it compels us to acknowledge that we are all part of this emerging movement that holds the same values and broad concerns, albeit in a disparate and as yet uncoordinated form. The following recommendations outline how we can build upon this recognition and play a part in further strengthening and scaling up a united, all-inclusive and worldwide movement for sharing.

1. Integrate the message of sharing into advocacy and campaigning activities

Based upon our recognition of the need to scale up diverse forms of sharing across the world, it is important to explore what sharing means to us personally and in relation to the issues we are working on. This will enable us to integrate the message of sharing into our campaigning efforts and activism, whenever it is appropriate to do so. We can all therefore help to build popular and persuasive frames around the need for greater sharing in our societies from the perspective of justice, sustainability, peace and democracy.⁹ See the full report for some example ideas of how to frame various progressive endeavours in terms of sharing, which also serves as a valuable ‘meme’ that can be adopted and creatively played with in relation to the four key themes outlined in the report.

2. Mobilise on collective platforms for sharing

Building effective people’s movements through collaborative processes is arguably the holy grail of civil society campaigning, and extremely difficult to achieve in practice and on a large scale.¹⁰ But as the crises of inequality, global conflict and environmental breakdown become ever more real and urgent, there is great scope for individuals and groups to mobilise for transformational change *on collective platforms for sharing* that bring together several campaign issues that may otherwise remain distinct and unconnected. The full report outlines some examples of how social movements, campaign groups and activists could coalesce their efforts in the creation of such a common cause for sharing.

3. Sign and promote STWR's global call for sharing

Without doubt, a dramatic shift in public debate is needed if the principle of sharing is to be understood as integral to any agenda for social justice, environmental stewardship, participatory democracy or peaceful co-existence. If you agree with the need to catalyse a global movement of citizens that embrace sharing as a common cause, please sign and promote the campaign statement that can be viewed on page 43 of this report. By joining STWR's 'global call', any individual or organisation can influence the development of this emerging theme and vision, and help spark public awareness and a wider debate on the importance of sharing in economic and political terms.

To sign the statement, visit: www.sharing.org/global-call

A world in crisis and transition

We live in an era that is defined by multiple and converging crises, a fact that is almost continually repeated by scientific experts, civil society organisations and the progressive community. Many describe the major challenges we face as a planetary emergency, as evidenced by rising levels of extreme inequality, worsening climate change and the ecological crisis in all its dimensions, as well as escalating conflicts over the world's dwindling natural resources.¹¹

At the root of our problems is a deeply unjust economic system that is fast careening out of control. The global financial crisis of 2008 exposed the deep-rooted flaws in an economic model that serves only a minority of the world's citizens, neglecting the needs of the majority. The wealth divide is unprecedented and widening in most countries, with 85 of the world's richest people now holding as much wealth as 3.5 billion of the world's poorest.¹² While the growth-driven paradigm of corporate globalisation continues to reap huge profits for the few, we are already transgressing multiple planetary boundaries and rapidly destroying the natural world.

Rather than taking urgent coordinated action to avert this unfolding human and environmental catastrophe, our governments remain fixated on returning to former days of consumer-led growth and competitive free markets. After decades of failed conferences and summits on the world's intractable problems, national self-interest continues to override any possibility of dealing with de-stabilizing trends in a genuinely cooperative and global manner. Progressive ideas are continually rejected while concerted efforts to cut CO² emissions, end poverty or reduce geopolitical tensions all fail to achieve the desired goals.

Many social and environmental crises are now coming to a head, heralding the need for a great transition and a new paradigm for human advancement. Yet in the face of

overarching corporate power that controls the political process and the media, vested interests dominate policy outcomes and continue to promote greed and wasteful consumerism, externalise social and environmental costs, and further perpetuate the status quo. Hence the growing realisation among engaged citizens that we cannot rely on our governments to reverse these ongoing historical trends, and massive civic engagement is needed if we are to stand a chance of affecting the necessary transformation of society and the global economic order.

The growing ‘movement of movements’

Across the world, millions of campaigners and activists refuse to sit idly by and watch the world’s crises escalate, while our governments fail to provide hope for a more just and sustainable future. There has never been such a widespread and sustained mobilisation of citizens around actions to challenge global leaders and influence progressive social change. Much of this activity involves established non-governmental organisations who work on all fronts, engaging in various struggles to defend human rights, push for justice, promote peace, protect the environment, or respond to humanitarian emergencies. The many professionals in this field are involved in myriad efforts to oppose misguided economic and social policies, hold decision-makers to account and challenge the pervasive abuses of corporate power. Many progressive academics also play a vital role in informing civil society through analysis and research on global issues, and often through policy advocacy and public awareness projects.

At the same time, countless citizens and groups are not only protesting a failing system, but also building its replacement from the bottom up. This may involve the many local efforts to live more sustainably, such as through community-based and self-reliant models of production and consumption. Or it may involve the many activities to democratise economies and establish people-led economic alternatives – such as worker-owned cooperatives, community supported agriculture, land trusts, community banks and credit unions, decentralised renewable energy alternatives, peer-to-peer and commons initiatives... the list goes on.

Furthermore, an integral part of global activism today consists of those who are fighting for basic equality and rights in their daily lives. Across all continents, people are rising up to demand better jobs, decent education and health for their communities. They may demand basic services like water and sanitation, or greater participation in the decisions that directly affect them in their slums, villages, towns or cities. Many protest for an end to corruption, or for an end to the glaring inequality that divides our societies. In both the Global North and South, mass uprisings in the street now occur largely spontaneously and without leadership, but united by a deep commitment to universal values of democracy, justice, equity and cooperation.

The great challenge of collective mobilisation

There is no doubt that a worldwide ‘movement of movements’ is on the rise, driven by an awareness that the crises we face are fundamentally caused by an outmoded economic system in need of wholesale reform. A renewed sense of idealism and hope is everywhere being felt for a new society to be built from within the existing one, and for a radical transformation in every sense of the word – in our values, our imaginations, our lifestyles and our social relations, as well as in our political and economic structures.

But despite this growing awareness of the need for massive combined action to affect transformational change, clearly not enough is being done to tackle the systemic causes of the world's interrelated crises. The efforts of civil society organisations remain too dispersed or small-scale to mount a serious challenge to the existing political economic order, and they too often focus on single issues and short-term wins, or else remain constrained by a narrow policy-oriented approach. Overall, any progress won here or there is overshadowed by systemic deterioration and a continued worsening of global trends.¹³

Meanwhile, the actions of grassroots activists are severely limited by current political realities, and social movements find it difficult to move beyond reactive protest and articulate a common vision of change.¹⁴ Although local initiatives and economic alternatives provide great hope and inspirational models for a fairer, more democratic and ecologically viable future society, still the dominant trend lies in the opposite direction. As each critical year passes by, we also witness an increasing centralisation of state and market power, and the shifting of real power away from ordinary people and communities towards largely undemocratic global institutions and multinational corporations.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of all is achieving mass engagement of the general public on these crucial matters. It is well recognised among civil society organisations that popular engagement is what matters most in affecting progressive change, most obviously because it is the public that pushes politicians and business leaders to take action on urgent issues. Public support also opens up a space for debate in society, which in turn gives government the opportunity to make the systemic changes required to tackle the causes of global crises.¹⁵

In general, however, the quality of popular engagement is low and the public as a whole remains uninterested and ill-informed – especially in relation to ‘bigger-than-self’ problems that lie outside an individual's immediate self-interest, such as global poverty and climate change.¹⁶ While millions of people worldwide are rising up to declare their needs and protest against such issues as economic inequality, environmental destruction, illegal wars and the dictatorship of finance, such movements and actions still remain in an overall minority of the population. Those actively involved in the Occupy protests in the fall of 2011, for example, represented only 0.1 percent of the United States – enough to have a huge impact on mainstream debate, but not enough to create any lasting impact on government policies and priorities.¹⁷

What we still lack is a truly unified progressive movement that comprises the collective actions of civil society organisations, grassroots activists and an engaged citizenry. The time has come for everyone who is working on separate issues to join forces in a diverse but united movement, backed up by an informed and educated public opinion. A fusion of progressive causes is urgently needed under a common banner, one that can create a consensus among a critical mass of the world population about the necessary direction for change. As many individuals and groups within the progressive community both recognise and proclaim, this is our greatest hope for bringing about world renewal and rehabilitation.¹⁸ It stands to reason that without a global movement of citizens and civil society organisations that share an all-inclusive vision, it may remain impossible to overcome the powerful corporate interests and structural barriers to progress that we face.

The emerging call for sharing

This report aims to demonstrate how a call for sharing is central to the formation of this growing worldwide movement of global citizens. As more and more people begin to raise their voices for governments to put human needs and ecological preservation before corporate greed and profit, the call for sharing is consistently at the heart of civil society demands for a better world. In fact, the principle of sharing is often central to efforts for progressive social change in almost every field of endeavour, as outlined in the main section of this report. But this mutual concern is generally understood and couched in tacit terms, without acknowledging the versatility, commonality and wide applicability of sharing as a solution to the world's problems.

For illustrative purposes, the many causes, initiatives and movements highlighted in the 'mapping' section that follows are broadly grouped according to five main categories: social justice, environmental stewardship, global peace, participative democracy, and multi-issue movements. For each of the causes outlined that fall within these overarching themes, it is not difficult to see how most – if not all – are essentially founded on a demand for a more equitable sharing of wealth, power or resources either within countries or internationally.

Building on the case that a call for sharing is already a common cause among a diverse group of progressive individuals and organisations, a further section of the report succinctly outlines why it makes sense for us to embrace this global call, as well as advocate more explicitly for sharing in our campaigning work and activism.

In particular, this is because a call for sharing holds the potential to connect disparate campaign groups, activists and social movements under a common call for change. Such a call represents the unity in diversity of global civil society and can provide an inclusive rallying platform for activists, which may empower us to recognise that we are all ultimately fighting the same cause. It also offers a way of moving beyond separate silos and single-issue platforms, but without needing to abandon any existing focuses or campaign priorities.

Furthermore, a call for sharing holds the potential to engage a much broader swathe of the public in campaign initiatives and popular movements that aim towards systemic

transformation. Many people feel disconnected from political issues owing to their technical complexity, or else they feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges that face us and ill equipped to take action. But everyone understands the human value of sharing, and by upholding this universal principle in a political context we can point the way towards an entirely new approach to economics – one that is integrally based on a fair and sustainable distribution of resources.

In short, the principle of sharing represents a valuable advocacy tool that can help to bring together diverse social movements under a common theme and vision, as well as help to generate widespread public engagement with progressive campaign initiatives and popular mobilisations.

Building a common vision

Without doubt, a political programme of action is ultimately needed on an international scale if we are to avert an impending global catastrophe. STWR has argued elsewhere that there is little chance that such fundamental changes to the international economic order will become a reality unless world public opinion is focused on the need to share resources more fairly both *between countries* as well as within them.¹⁹ In a resource limited world, fairer distribution is clearly a prerequisite if we are to reach anything approaching similar standards of living globally, as also outlined in the section of this report on environmental stewardship.

The implications are dramatic, not only in terms of needing to restructure the current arrangements of the world economy and build more democratic global governance institutions. First and foremost, we also need to see ourselves as part of one human family with the same rights and responsibilities, based on an understanding that the needs of the world as a whole must be put before the needs of any one nation. Only through such a shift in global consciousness can we foresee a mass mobilisation of citizens in a common cause for sharing that extends beyond national borders.

However, the aim of the current report is not to propose any specific policies that governments should adopt in line with the principle of sharing, or to put forward a purely internationalist vision of citizen engagement and civil society activity. In contrast, the intention is to demonstrate how a global movement for sharing is already in existence, from the local level to the global – even if it has yet to affirm its collective identity or purpose. No-one can predict how this disparate movement may eventually coalesce into an effective global force for change, even though many would agree that such a process is already well underway – largely facilitated by a technological revolution and the networked power of social media.

Clearly at this stage it is not possible (or necessarily desirable) to propose a comprehensive list of policy demands for this embryonic ‘movement of movements’ in all its manifold diversity. It remains up to individuals and groups in every nation to identify with and unite around this common theme for sharing wealth, power and resources, and by this means to engage with the public and influence policymaking at every opportunity. As stated above, this does not mean abandoning the goals of existing campaigns and initiatives, but rather supporting the emergence of a common cause for political and economic reform that can be explicated in the simplest terms and embraced by the greatest number of people.



Social justice

- Tax justice
- Strengthening social protection
- Reforming the financial system
- Charity and aid
- Trade justice



Environmental stewardship

- Equitable sharing of global resources
- Sustainable communities
- Protecting the environmental commons



Multi-issue movements

- The commons movement
- New economy movements
- The human rights movement
- People's movements



Participatory democracy

- Fighting corruption
- Democratising regional and global institutions
- New democracy initiatives



Global peace

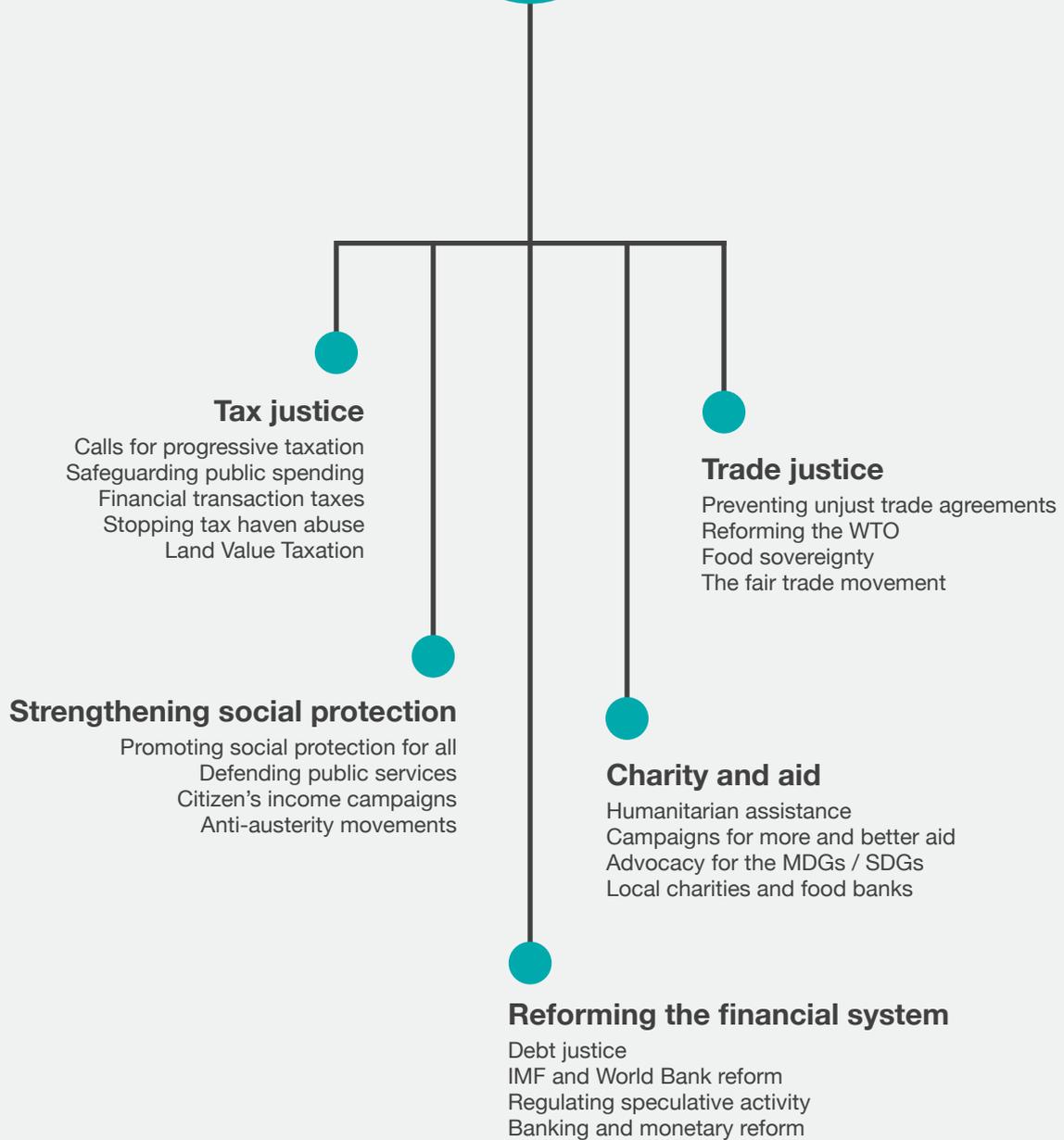
- Ending the scramble for scarce resources
- Stopping the business of war
- Fostering peaceful coexistence

Mapping the global call for sharing

The following sections outline the most prominent issues that relate to the principle of sharing from a perspective of justice, sustainability, peace and democracy. These perennial themes are inevitably the focus of civil society campaigns and activism throughout the world, and form the basis of people-led calls for transformative change in different countries. Many of the key causes highlighted below also directly relate to the urgent global crises that confront humanity, from the tensions inherent in growing levels of extreme inequality, to unsustainable consumption patterns and geopolitical tensions over natural resource depletion.

The purpose of outlining these core themes is not to introduce each of them *per se*, or to attempt a strict classification of every civil society and activist endeavour – as indeed many demands and initiatives necessarily overlap with different categories. Rather, in the simplest of terms, each section seeks to demonstrate how all these issues directly or indirectly embody a call for sharing in various forms - whether on a local, nationwide or global level.

In this way, this report advocates for sharing to be more widely promoted as a common cause that can potentially help connect the world's peace, justice and environmental movements under a united call for change. As the sub-sections below further emphasise, the principle of sharing pertains to the interrelated global issues that all these movements seek to highlight, while resonating with the values and ideals of campaigners and concerned citizens in every corner of the globe.



Social justice

More than any other demand, the call for social and economic justice intrinsically embodies the principle of sharing. A large and diverse group of campaigners and activists fall into this category, and together they form the bulk of sharing-related demands across the world.

The term social justice is often used as a catch-all by conservatives and progressives alike, and there has been a broad agreement among Western thinkers that social justice must incorporate various means of achieving a fair distribution of societal goods to achieve these ends. Yet there are very different ideas about what constitutes a fair distribution, or the kind of redistributive policies that are required to achieve social equality without compromising individual freedoms.

However, most of those who work or struggle for social and economic justice are focused on joint responsibility for addressing systemic poverty and inequality, based on solidarity with those who are most disadvantaged or excluded in society. Such an understanding of justice therefore involves the creation of fair institutions and institutional frameworks, for example by establishing a labour market with jobs that are socially inclusive, and a system that can guarantee universal access to social protection and public services.

The main reason why people are protesting in different nations is due to a lack of economic justice, often as a result of the global financial crisis and the expansion of austerity measures worldwide since 2008.²⁰ This is encapsulated in the idea of the 1% versus the 99%, which emerged as a slogan during the Occupy protests of 2011 and quickly spread around the world to reflect the trend of growing extreme inequality within many advanced capitalist nations. Since we live in a highly globalised economy in which socio-economic rights are the most frequently unfulfilled human rights,²¹ many of the individuals and organisations working on economic justice issues also take an international perspective – especially those who advocate for tax, debt or trade justice, or for major reform of the global financial system.

For many activists within the oft-termed global justice movement, the starting point for recognising our common humanity is the enormous disparities in living standards between the richest and poorest nations of the world, notwithstanding the excessive levels of inequality that endure and worsen within most high-income countries. Even many mainstream politicians and institutions today recognise that these vast global inequalities are neither just nor defensible, and are ultimately unsustainable by generating instability within the world economy.²²

Hence many global justice advocates focus on the need to change the rules that structure the world economy, and to reform the powerful global institutions and processes that maintain the unjust structural arrangements between rich and poor countries. In this way, the demand for a just sharing of the world's wealth, power and resources is a thread that unites the global justice movement in its various expressions and guises, as further explicated in the broad categories below.

Tax justice

The public demand for tax justice is rapidly escalating in countries across the world, with an array of organisations and coalitions now campaigning for corporations, financiers and high-net-worth individuals to pay their fair share of taxes. Whether these initiatives focus on the impact of tax havens and illicit capital flows on developing countries or the need for more progressive taxation in high-income countries, they generally seek to safeguard or improve public funding for social protection and essential public services. This call for distributive justice is squarely centred on the need to share the financial benefits of economic activity more fairly throughout society. For example, the Global Alliance for Tax Justice specifically frames its demands in terms of ‘fair shares’.²³ Similarly, taxing the value of land and natural resources is often promoted on the basis that any wealth derived from the natural world should be shared for the benefit of all people/stakeholders.²⁴ More often, however, the focus on sharing is implicitly expressed in most tax justice campaigns, proposals and initiatives. This is particularly the case with advocacy for a financial transaction tax (a.k.a the Robin Hood Tax) which is now widely supported as a means of redistributing public revenues to tackle poverty and climate change.²⁵

Strengthening social protection

A key example of economic sharing is progressive taxation and the provision of social protection and public services, which – by pooling and sharing a portion of the nation’s financial resources – enables members of society to take collective responsibility for reducing inequality and securing basic human needs for all citizens.²⁶ In both the global North and South, however, national systems of sharing are being steadily dismantled by policies of economic austerity – often as a result of harsh conditions attached to loans from the International Monetary Fund.²⁷ In recent years, this shift away from economic sharing in high-income countries has led to widespread civil unrest and spurred the rise of grassroots anti-austerity movements such as Occupy and UK/US Uncut. At the same time, civil society support for the state provision of social protection is on the rise, with numerous international and national organisations promoting various forms of universal social protection.²⁸ These initiatives join the ranks of longstanding calls for healthcare and education for all, as well as popular campaigns for governments to provide all citizens with an unconditional basic income – which, although controversial, have gained momentum on both sides of the political spectrum.²⁹

Reforming the financial system

In a world with extreme concentrations of wealth and soaring levels of personal and national debt, progressive campaigns for financial reform reflect the growing demand to establish a more equitable distribution of wealth both within and between nations. For example, many campaigns now address the problem of speculative activity in the world’s complex financial markets, which rewards a tiny concentration of banks, hedge funds and investors while destabilising national economies across the world.³⁰ Since the global food price crisis of 2007/8, campaigns to prevent gambling in food commodities have also attracted

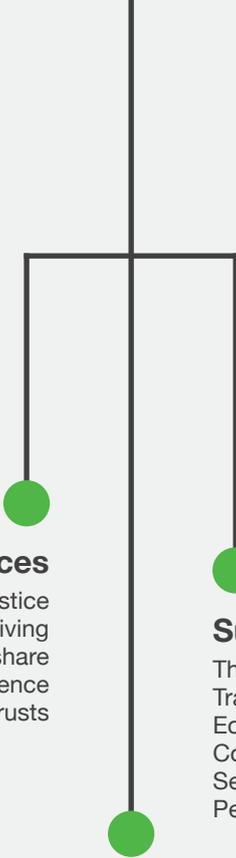
continuing and widespread support, with some notable success.³¹ At the same time, there is a growing recognition within civil society that money is a shared resource that should be created by democratic institutions and managed in the interests of all people - not primarily the private sector.³² Longstanding calls to cancel unjust developing country debt and reform international financial institutions (such as the IMF and World Bank) also reflect the urgent need to redistribute the world's financial and political power in a way that serves humanity as a whole, rather than the interests of the financial sector alone.³³

Charity and aid

One of the most familiar examples of sharing is the work of the numerous charities, aid organisations and humanitarian agencies that ceaselessly provide much needed assistance to people within local communities and overseas. There is little doubt that charitable aid can help alleviate the worst effects of social and material deprivation, especially in an increasingly unequal world where billions of people still lack access to the essentials for life.³⁴ But this elementary form of sharing is widely criticised for addressing the symptoms of extreme inequality and not the underlying structural causes. For such reasons, many forms of charity are often regarded as a substitute for real justice, allowing governments to escape some of their broader responsibilities to citizens and the world as a whole. For example, there are longstanding criticisms of international aid, which is often tied to the political interests of donor countries and can result in 'aid dependency' and a host of associated problems.³⁵ Nonetheless, calls to improve and scale up economic sharing in the form of emergency humanitarian assistance are likely to grow louder in the coming years, especially in light of rising levels of poverty in rich countries as well as the devastating impacts of climate change and violent conflicts in the Global South.

Trade justice

There is a growing recognition that trade and investment agreements (both bilateral and those negotiated through the World Trade Organisation) have enshrined powerful corporate rights into international law in a way that threatens democracy, infringes state sovereignty, and works against social and economic justice.³⁶ The world's broken food systems starkly illustrate this trend, where a handful of large corporations now dominate the production, processing, distribution, marketing and retailing of food – and thereby maintain control over the major proportion of the planet's productive resources.³⁷ Calls for trade justice and food sovereignty (and to a lesser extent, fair trade) therefore seek to reverse the concentration of wealth and corporate power that characterises so-called 'free' trade, and establish fairer trade rules and sustainable systems of food production that benefit small farmers and local industries.³⁸ Altogether, trade justice campaigns encompass a broad range of crucial global issues that embody the principle of sharing in many fundamental ways. This includes, for example, mounting opposition to TRIPS - an intellectual property rights regime that reduces access to essential medicines for the world's poor, and paves the way for the corporate enclosure of the biological commons.³⁹



Equitable sharing of global resources

- 'Fair shares' and climate justice
- One Planet Living
- Cap and share
- Contraction and convergence
- Global resource trusts

Sustainable communities

- The sharing economy
- Transition towns
- Ecovillages
- Community Supported Agriculture
- Seed saving/sharing
- Permaculture

Protecting the environmental commons

- Stopping deforestation
- Nature conservation
- Defending the rights of Mother Earth
- Eradicating ecocide
- Common Heritage of Humankind treaties

Environmental stewardship

The principle of sharing is long recognised as central to resolving the global environmental crisis. All of the ecological problems that humanity faces, from climate change and pollution to deforestation and resource depletion, can be seen as a result of our failure to put sharing at the centre of policymaking.⁴⁰

In simple terms, the crux of the issue involves the necessity for governments to achieve a balance between global consumption levels and the Earth's life-supporting capacity, which is clearly the basic imperative for a sustainable future. At present, however, we are consuming natural resources at a rate 50 percent faster than the planet can support, while demand for resources of all kinds is increasing exponentially - in particular for food, oil, land and water.⁴¹ Hence the issues of resource scarcity and environmental limits have risen up the global agenda in recent years, and are becoming ever more pressing due to both a growing population and rising affluence in emerging economies.

The only way out of this critical impasse is to reduce the overall global rate of depletion of nature to a sustainable level, and to distribute the world's resources in a more reasonably equitable fashion. In other words, we need to dramatically shift towards a new economic model that can ensure that everyone has access to the resources needed for a decent life, but without transgressing the limits of 'one planet living' - because one planet is all that we have.⁴² Various analysts have now encapsulated this commonsensical recognition in the concept of 'fair shares' in a world of limits, which is an issue that lies at the heart of the international debate on climate change and sustainable development.⁴³

Already, the urgency of sharing the world's resources is accepted by countless individuals and groups worldwide as the only way to make social justice compatible with environmental sustainability. But in a world of vast inequalities in living standards between rich and poor, with the richest 20 percent of people in mainly high-income countries consuming the majority of global resources, the implications are profound and far reaching. At the very least, it is clear that the global middle class will need to dramatically reduce their overall consumption levels, if enough 'environmental space' is to be left for the world's poorest people and countries to meet their basic needs.⁴⁴ Yet governments seem increasingly far from agreeing upon the economic arrangements needed to cooperatively share the world rather than keep it divided, which ultimately depends on a reversal of decades of privatisation, corporate control and profiteering over the Earth's resources.

Many engaged citizens in every country therefore realise that we cannot wait for governments or corporations to lead the necessary transformation of society, and are themselves taking action in a multitude of different ways. This includes the academics, writers and policy thinkers who are conceptualising economic alternatives that can address the gross unfairness in the distribution of resources and, at the same time, avert climate chaos and further planetary destruction. Millions of activists around the world are also taking matters into their own hands through popular mobilisations and resistance against ecologically damaging projects, or else through participating in the

growing cultural shift towards communal sharing, sustainable living and environmental stewardship. As further explicated in the categories below, all of these initiatives and movements form part of a growing awareness of the need for a fairer sharing of the world's finite resources.

Equitable sharing of global resources

Nowhere is the principle of sharing more directly relevant or widely discussed than in relation to climate change and the discourse on how to share the world's natural resources more equitably and sustainably. For example, central to United Nations climate change negotiations is the debate on how all nations can share the limited capacity of the planet's atmosphere to absorb carbon emissions, and in a way that safeguards the economic interests of both developed and developing nations.⁴⁵ As mentioned above, the concept of 'fair shares' is increasingly being adopted by civil society organisations to frame this debate, which helps to illustrate the need for all people to meet their basic needs without transgressing the planet's environmental limits. Economic sharing is also central to 'cap and share' models for regulating fossil fuel consumption, as well as the widely endorsed 'contraction and convergence' framework for equalising global per capita emissions.⁴⁶ Furthermore, as metrics such as the 'ecological footprint' graphically demonstrate, humanity continues to use more resources than the planet provides each year – while failing to share those resources within the constraints of the Earth's bounds.⁴⁷

Sustainable communities

Environmentalists have long recognised the need for local economic alternatives that reflect the concept of 'one planet living', which is concerned with how individuals can enjoy a high quality of life without consuming more than their fair share of the earth's resources.⁴⁸ In keeping with this perspective, numerous initiatives have emerged in recent years that seek to establish modes of local and community-based production and consumption that are environmentally sustainable. For example, collaborative consumption enables people to share underused resources rather than purchase more material goods – even though the 'sharing economy' movement as a whole still lacks a clear focus on the complex political issues that underpin climate change and ecological degradation.⁴⁹ Grassroots initiatives for co-creating ecologically resilient towns and cities are also flourishing, and there is widespread support for sustainable forms of small-scale agricultural production in rich countries and across the developing world. Invariably, these transition town initiatives and sustainable farming practices involve sharing resources such as land, skills, seeds or equipment, while also recognising the importance of equity and social justice within communities.⁵⁰

Protecting the environmental commons

The need to safeguard and share the planet's finite resources in a way that benefits all people and future generations is a recurrent theme in environmental campaigns. This demand for ecological justice and sustainability underpins the work of an ever-increasing number of individuals and organisations who defend the

Earth's commons - such as those calling for substantial cuts in carbon emissions, for divestment from fossil fuels, or for the protection of rainforests, oceans and biodiversity. The notion of planetary stewardship is also embodied in the growing movement to safeguard the inherent rights of Mother Earth, and for 'ecocide' to be recognised as the 'fifth crime against peace'.⁵¹ Alongside the countless state and non-governmental conservation organisations that seek to protect large swathes of nature and biodiversity, international agreements have been negotiated to manage the damaging impacts of human activity on cross-border resources based on shared global responsibilities.⁵² Under the ground-breaking Common Heritage of Mankind principle, a number of treaties also exist for safeguarding and sharing certain global commons, such as the Antarctic and the world's oceans. Attempts have even been made to extend the Common Heritage principle to cover the genetic material of plants and animals as well as basic food resources, which is another way of challenging the ongoing 'enclosure' and commodification of life forms and common resources.⁵³



Ending the scramble for scarce resources

- Preventing conflict over resources
- Ending land grabbing
- Sharing transboundary resources
- International frameworks for resource security

Stopping the business of war

- Reducing military spending
- Preventing war profiteering
- Regulating the global arms trade
- Nuclear disarmament

Fostering peaceful coexistence

- Peace activism and anti-war movements
- Ending the occupation of Palestine
- Strengthening UN peacekeeping
- Reforming the UN Security Council

Global peace

The case for sharing the world's resources has no greater relevance than in the peace and security of nation states. We now live in a new global landscape in which competition over vital resources is becoming the governing principle behind the accumulation and deployment of military power, with potentially devastating consequences for the future of humanity unless this trend is reversed.

History is in many ways defined by the colonial and imperial ambitions of governments, or the 'plunder by trade' of stronger countries that have sought the conquest of less developed nations.⁵⁴ For millennia, empires have been built on the expansion of financial, technical and military superiority in order to gain control of the earth's wealth and technology. But in an interdependent world that is fast approaching natural resource limits and planetary boundaries, everyone may lose if governments continue to pursue a 'winner takes all' paradigm of global resource acquisition. Even today, the possibility of future violent conflict grows as nations race to control oil and gas reserves in the Arctic, the East and South China Seas, around the Falkland Islands and elsewhere. With the proliferation of nuclear weapons continuing unabated, any intensification of the struggle to secure the world's untapped natural resources increases the likelihood of a catastrophic war among the major industrial powers.

There can be little doubt that a viable resource security strategy for the 21st century must be based on an alternative framework of international cooperation and resource sharing, rather than national self-interest and recurring conflict. Despite a distinct lack of debate on this issue, millions of citizens and organisations around the world are constantly mobilising to end the institution of war, such as through global campaigns of education, lobbying activities or non-violent direct actions. And as highlighted in the various categories of this section below, the principle of sharing underpins many of these calls and actions in either implicit or direct ways.

For example, it may remain impossible for governments to meet their collective obligations to alleviate global poverty unless they divert a significant portion of the financial resources spent each year on military budgets. This has immense implications for the United States in particular, which could secure a significant peace dividend by redistributing some of the colossal amount it spends on military activities towards preventing the unnecessary loss of life, both at home and abroad.⁵⁵ But equally in low- and middle-income countries, spending significant proportions of national income on armaments and military operations deprives the public of vital money for essential services, such as healthcare and social welfare.

More explicitly, the failure to share transboundary or scarce resources is often at the heart of longstanding violent conflicts within many fragile states, particularly when competition for land and water is intensifying – as reflected in the war in Darfur from 2003 to 2010, or the recurring fighting in the Horn of Africa and across the Middle East. From both a historical and common sense perspective, it is clear that competition over resources causes conflict – and there is no sense in perpetuating an economic paradigm where all nations are pitted against each other to try and own what could easily be

shared. Furthermore, it is often argued that global terrorism has its roots in the stark differences in living standards between the rich world and the poor. In this way and many others, the need to share the world's resources is an underlying demand that unites the activities of all those who envision a more just and peaceful future.

Ending the scramble for scarce resources

In recent years a growing number of organisations and initiatives are focussing their efforts towards ending the scramble for the planet's scarce natural resources. Whether this basic cause is framed in an explicit or implicit context, such campaigns point towards the essential need for governments to share rather than compete for control over land, water, fossil fuels and other key energy assets. For example, Greenpeace has been highlighting the mounting threat of military conflict between a number of Arctic states seeking to gain exclusive rights over oil and gas reserves, which are becoming increasingly accessible in the area around the North Pole as a consequence of global warming.⁵⁶ Numerous campaign groups are also mobilising against neo-colonial land grabs driven by sovereign wealth funds, hedge funds and agribusinesses that frequently displace indigenous communities, upturn sustainable farming systems and decimate livelihoods.⁵⁷ At the same time, many of those who advocate for a peaceful and democratic approach to global resource security recognise the importance of international cooperation and economic sharing in preventing conflict, especially at a time when the global consumer class is fast expanding and climate change is exacerbating resource scarcity.⁵⁸ Clearly, as long as a presiding theme of foreign policy is the aggressive drive to secure - rather than cooperatively share - access to natural resources abroad, an escalation of conflict is almost inevitable in 'the race for what's left'.⁵⁹

Stopping the business of war

For decades, civil society initiatives in countries across the world have rebuked excessive government spending on military activity and the machinery of war.⁶⁰ Although these campaigns are rarely framed explicitly in terms of economic sharing, they directly relate to how nations allocate their domestic budgets to meet the urgent needs of people and communities. In an increasingly unequal world where many governments are struggling to fund key public services or protect the natural world, a global military budget of \$1.75tn per annum is widely regarded as a flagrant misallocation of the world's financial resources.⁶¹ Redistributing even a small portion of this inordinate sum would result in a sizeable 'peace dividend' that could help prevent extreme deprivation or strengthen international peacekeeping efforts.⁶² In light of the ongoing proliferation of nuclear weapons and the stalling of existing disarmament programs, a reallocation of military budgets is also an urgent priority for averting a devastating nuclear war and safeguarding humanity's future.⁶³ Yet there is currently no indication that governments are willing to significantly cut back on military expenditure, even despite the global financial crisis of 2008 and the austerity and deficit reduction measures implemented in many countries.⁶⁴ In response, many activists and campaigners make a powerful case for abolishing nuclear weapons, ending

the corrupt business of the international arms trade, and redistributing military spending in order to finance pressing social and environmental objectives.⁶⁵

Fostering peaceful coexistence

In a fundamental sense, the principle of sharing directly relates to many existing peace campaigns and anti-war initiatives, not least because a chronic lack of economic sharing is at the root of injustice, social disruption and even terrorism in many countries. This is visibly true, for example, in the longstanding and illegal occupation of Palestinian territory, which is unlikely to be resolved until a just agreement is reached for sharing land and water resources in the war-torn region.⁶⁶ Similarly, the drive to control rather than share resources underpins many other localised and regional conflicts, whether spurred by small militias or else by powerful governments attempting to gain exclusive access to natural resources - as was patently the case during the invasion of Iraq in 2003.⁶⁷ From another perspective, international initiatives to mitigate and prevent conflict also often embody the principle of sharing, for example through agreements for managing shared trans-boundary resources such as water,⁶⁸ or through efforts by the international community to take shared responsibility for enhancing the United Nation's peacekeeping mandate.⁶⁹ Although an array of complex cultural, economic and political issues underpin the world's many intra- and interstate conflicts, there are clearly strong reasons for peace activists and campaigners to strengthen a global call for sharing resources more equitably between countries.



Fighting corruption
Ousting corrupt leaders
Ending government corruption
Getting dirty money out of politics

New democracy initiatives
Local democracy projects
Direct democracy and horizontalism
Internet-enabled democracy initiatives
Workplace democracy

Democratising regional and global governance
Democratising international financial institutions
Reforming the United Nations
Fighting the corporate capture of policymaking

Participative democracy

The principle of sharing relates not only to the economic realm, but also to how effectively political power is shared within and among nations. Democracy is still generally thought to mean ‘rule by the people’, as in its original Greek meaning *kratos* of the *demos* – the power of the people. But today, we are a long way from achieving a society in which people participate in the decisions that affect them most closely, leading to a groundswell of popular discontent with the political class and our current systems of government.

In most countries, power is increasingly centralised into the hands of a narrow political elite and sucked from regional, municipal and local levels, which leaves no true participation of the public except for putting a vote in a box. We live in highly capitalised societies where productive resources are controlled by a small class of wealthy people, who are able to shape supposedly democratic outcomes to their advantage. Under the prevalent ‘strong market/weak democracy’ model, the individual right to property holds sway over the collective rights of the community, and popular sovereignty is compromised by vast inequalities in wealth and power.⁷⁰ With a limited amount of democratic choice for the majority, the rules of society inevitably favour market solutions and corporate interests, while undermining the mutuality and solidarity among people in society.

In the vibrant debates about how best to shift decision-making power from corporate shareholders and political elites to the broader public, there is a common starting point: that the road to real democracy depends on greater equality and active citizen engagement.⁷¹ In other words, there can be no true form of economic democracy unless resources are more equally shared across society, and citizens have a more or less equal weight in shaping the direction of political life. So long as inequality is at the extreme levels of today, it is impossible to realise the proper functioning of democratic institutions.⁷² Hence a coherent strategy for achieving a more robust democracy necessitates challenging entrenched economic power and vested interests, and redistributing wealth and economic power downwards.⁷³

The need to share economic and political power also has radical implications at the international level, where the agenda of corporate globalisation takes decisions out of the hands of elected officials and places a limit on national sovereignty. In a world system that is characterised by enormous disparities in power and influence among nation states, institutions like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation are buttressed almost entirely from public democratic pressure. The concentration of power in their hands, along with private actors in the global economy (such as transnational corporations, big banks and capital market players), means that the policy choices of governments are hemmed in by powerful economic forces beyond their control. Even the United Nations is plagued by superpower domination, and remains in dire need of re-empowerment and broader representation.

Across the world, people are fighting back to demand the sharing of power in democratic decision-making, from the local level to the global. This would include the alter-

globalisation campaigners who have posed a challenge to the economic liberalisation agenda by reasserting democratic values from below. Other activists focus on the need for democratic principles to be built into the workplace, or for political power to be devolved from the national level down to cities, towns and local communities. And there are myriad ‘new democracy’ initiatives that involve people reclaiming autonomy over their lives, land and resources. Central to all these demands is the need to effect a long-term transformation of society that levels economic and thus political inequalities, and institutionalises the sharing of power among the citizenry as a whole.

Fighting corruption

The fight against corruption is clearly essential for creating more equal, free and democratic societies in which political power and wealth is fairly shared among the citizenry. This is most visibly the case in mass protests against corrupt leaderships, in which economic and social problems are often ignored as kleptocratic rulers seek to amass ever more wealth and power at the expense of the majority. As witnessed in scores of people-led uprisings in the modern era - not least those across the Middle East during the Arab Spring - a fundamental demand from protesters is for a rules-based democracy and the levelling of extreme power inequalities. However, diverse efforts and initiatives to fight corruption in the delivery of basic services are also fundamental to ensuring that governments work on behalf of the common good, so that public money is effectively shared across society as a whole instead of being diverted into the hands of corrupt politicians, businesses and their agents. This is a global concern of both rich and poor countries, while the evidence shows that it hurts poor people disproportionately.⁷⁴ Another key area of concern for campaigners and activists is getting dirty money out of politics, which – as groups like OpenSecrets.org demonstrate – serves to maximise the power of money and minimise the power of democracy, and ultimately perpetuates a *status quo* based on privilege and inequality.⁷⁵

Democratising regional and global governance

In an age of economic globalisation where the issues we face are international in both cause and potential solution, we are witnessing an explosion of initiatives calling for political power to be shared more democratically within global governance institutions. Many activists within the global justice movement challenge the power of the so-called ‘unholy trinity’ or ‘iron triangle’ – namely the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation – which are widely seen as promoting corporate and rich country interests, and perpetuating the rules that maintain a divided and unequal world. In particular, major criticisms surround their undemocratic governance structures which are dominated by the largest economic powers.⁷⁶ Civil society organisations worldwide also advocate for the renewal and democratisation of the United Nations, which is heavily marginalised as an actor within economic affairs and far from fulfilling its potential as “a multilateral voice for the majority of the world’s countries”.⁷⁷ Furthermore, of the myriad schemes to extend democracy beyond the nation-state, many campaigners focus on the need to prevent the corporate capture of decision-making on regional levels, most notably within the European Union which is

dominated by the excessive lobbying influence of banks and big business.⁷⁸ As all these diverse initiatives recognise, we can never realise true democracy on regional or global levels as long as the economic system is beholden to powerful vested interests that undermine policymaking for the public good.

New democracy initiatives

The many 'new democracy' initiatives that have emerged in recent years directly oppose the concentration of economic and political power in any state or corporate institution, and are therefore concretely founded on the principle of sharing. Of these myriad and diverse initiatives, many are creating new forms of democratic experiences that are based on self-organisation and power-sharing, and that minimise the need for a coercive central authority. Many are also experimenting with new forms of political expression and direct democracy. For example, participatory budgeting processes in Brazil involve large numbers of local people in setting government spending priorities.⁷⁹ In recent years, horizontalist movements are also experimenting with ways to radically decentralise power and extend democracy to direct decision-making – as notably expressed in the general assemblies adopted by the Occupy movement, 15M and others.⁸⁰ Even internet-enabled initiatives, from Avaaz to 38 Degrees, aim to strengthen democracy by giving people a new way to be involved in politics, and work to bring about more progressive and fairer societies through e-petitions and direct actions.⁸¹ Not all of these democracy initiatives are strictly 'new', especially those that seek to institutionalise democracy in the workplace such as the cooperatives movement.⁸² But all in some way promote the basic principle that decisions should be taken by those most directly concerned with them, and thereby seek to reverse extreme power inequalities through the highest possible degree of decentralisation, participation and popular empowerment.



New economy movements
Time banking and alternative currencies
Decentralised renewable energy
Community land trusts
Urban agriculture
Cooperatives and social enterprises

People's movements
Occupy and 15M
Anti-government protests
Indigenous peoples
Shack dwellers
Peasant farmers
Landless labourers
Trade unions

The human rights movement
The right to food and water
Healthcare, education and shelter for all
Race and gender equality
LGBT rights
Religious freedom

The commons movement
Creative commons
P2P alternatives
Commons trust proposals
Promoting the social commons

Multi-issue movements

Many initiatives and group endeavours address a vast matrix of issues at local, regional and global levels, hence it isn't possible to conceive of their activities in terms of any single issue or cause. These disparate and often interconnected movements are often at the forefront of progressive change, and they typically embrace a vision of a more sustainable, equitable and democratic future. Hence they are all directly linked, either implicitly or explicitly, with the diverse calls for sharing wealth, power and resources that are being expressed in manifold ways across the world.

For example, the commons has fast become a well-recognised global movement of scholars and activists who frame all the most pressing issues of our time – from unsustainable growth to rising inequality – in terms of our need to cooperatively protect the shared resources of Earth. New economy movements in different countries are also pioneering the alternative ideas, institutions and initiatives that can pave the way to more equal, self-determining and ecologically resilient societies. As outlined below, a burgeoning human rights movement also recognises that political power and material resources must be shared more equitably within and among nations, if all people's basic rights and freedoms are ever to be universally realised. Perhaps most prominently of all, massive people's movements are spontaneously forming in the midst of economic austerity, rising poverty and mass unemployment, and many of them uphold a grand vision of a more just and sustainable world – one that is underpinned by a global economic system that finally serves people's welfare and the environment, not private profit.

Grouping these extremely different and yet closely connected movements together is necessarily loose and open-ended, as many of them defy strict categorisation or overlap with different platforms. In particular, new economy movements often uphold the whole gamut of progressive issues and point towards a new development paradigm that can help us live within the limits of the natural world, and more fairly and peacefully with each other. Many of the scholars and activists within these fields may also identify with the commons paradigm or the human rights framework, for example, and resist classifying their work according to just one of the general categories below. Furthermore, ordinary people of goodwill who join in citizen-led protest movements may not identify with any one particular label, cause or category at all.

Hence the purpose of outlining these various groupings of progressive movements is not to try and compartmentalise their activities, but rather to demonstrate in a very broad sense how they embody or support the principle of sharing in accordance with multiple issues. All of them oppose the current distribution of economic resources whereby only a minority of the world population escape poverty and insecurity, while future generations and the global majority are condemned to suffer the consequences of an unjust, unsustainable, anti-democratic and conflict-generating economic order.

A demand for equity is an overarching theme that connects these different movements, whether it's in terms of reducing inequality between and within countries, upholding basic human rights, redistributing power within corporate and governance institutions, or

establishing balance and harmony between humans and nature. In calling for a return to equity as the guide for how we make individual and collective decisions in society, the need for sharing is implicitly regarded as central to creating alternative development paths, participatory and inclusive governance structures, and a transformation in politics and economics.

The commons movement

The commons is often generally understood in terms of land and natural resources, but it is in fact an overarching concept that relates to almost every progressive issue through the lens of sharing. As many of its advocates attest, the commons includes all those things that we share, meaning simply everything in society and nature that belong to all of us – from forests and rivers to knowledge, cultural traditions, the gene pool, even public services like healthcare, education and infrastructure.⁸³ More than a concept, however, the commons also represents a burgeoning movement of people worldwide who are working to protect or promote the commons in all its forms. This may involve ongoing struggles against the commercialisation of shared resources, the reclaiming of public spaces, or cooperative acts of environmental conservation.⁸⁴ It may also involve new thinking and research on how to apply alternative structural mechanisms – such as peer-to-peer and collaborative production – to all aspects of everyday life.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the commons has re-emerged in recent years as a new discourse that presents a paradigm shift in the direction of a commons-based society – i.e. the policies and values needed to reduce inequality, heal the environment and enhance social wellbeing.⁸⁶ In this way, ‘commoners’ aim to bring together seemingly disparate issues and unite engaged citizens into a new kind of global movement that upholds the common good through shared ownership, collaboration and responsible stewardship.⁸⁷

New economy movements

Across the world there are many institutions, groups and individuals who can be considered part of a flourishing new economy movement that promotes social, economic and environmental justice. This may involve new economic thinking and policy proposals that address the inter-linked economic, environmental and energy crises of the 21st century and demand comprehensive, joined-up action from governments.⁸⁸ Or else it may involve the pioneering work of those who focus on building or participating in specific components of a new economy on mainly local and national levels, which would include everything from co-working and time banking to local currencies, community banking, community energy, collaborative consumption, and community supported agriculture. New business models such as cooperatives, not-for-profits and social enterprises are also a key part of this overarching movement for transformative change, especially those that are genuinely aligned with the values and ethics of sharing.⁸⁹ In different ways, all of these ideas and initiatives embody the principle of sharing by recognising the concentration of wealth and power in the political economic system, and the need for radical change based on a more equitable redistribution of resources. Many also respond to the problem of unsustainable economic growth, and propose new

macroeconomic policies that can achieve the goal of ecological balance and social equity in a constrained world.⁹⁰

The human rights movement

There are thousands of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) throughout the world that press for a variety of social, political and even environmental issues to be addressed from a ‘rights-based’ perspective. In a fundamental sense, these various groups embrace the cause for sharing by upholding a vision of an international order that promotes peace, justice, equality, sustainability and democracy – all themes that were reaffirmed at The World Conference on Human Rights in 1993.⁹¹ Until recent decades, civil and political rights dominated public discourse and the concerns of human rights organisations, which essentially focused on the need for genuine equality and the sharing of political power across society as a whole - regardless of a person’s race, gender or sexual orientation. However, there is now a major focus on socioeconomic rights among NGOs due to rising poverty, extreme inequality and the widespread failure of public policy to protect the long-agreed basic right to an adequate standard of living for all.⁹² Often, civil society campaigns on the right to food, medicine, healthcare, shelter and other issues are predicated on the need to ensure a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources.⁹³ Recognising that the crisis of unfulfilled human rights are compounded by the negative forces of economic globalisation, many people-centred initiatives also aim to challenge powerful interests and promote human rights obligations beyond borders.⁹⁴

People’s movements

Of all the progressive movements in the world, those led by civil society organisations or ordinary engaged citizens are the most inclusive, dynamic and extensive in scope. In particular, the loosely termed global justice movement consists of the myriad individuals and groups that promote a more equitable distribution of wealth, power and resources across the world, and often mobilise on the basis of transnational solidarity among activists in the Global North and South.⁹⁵ The many indigenous, peasant, shack-dweller and landed labourers’ movements worldwide can also be considered a potent international force for change, and indeed many of them embrace a broad vision of a socially just and ecologically sustainable global society.⁹⁶ Similarly, nationwide and international trade union movements have long been effective proponents of social solidarity and economic justice, and they continue to exert significant influence within civil society as well as in politics.⁹⁷ In recent years, an implicit demand for sharing is also being expressed in the leaderless and frequently spontaneous street mobilisations that are erupting in most countries. From Wall Street to Gezi Park to the Puerta del Sol, all of these popular uprisings are connected by their revulsion against an economic system that has caused such huge inequalities in wealth and income.⁹⁸ As governments continue to try to resurrect the old economic order, millions of people are increasingly calling for a better world that ensures all people live in dignity, with the basics guaranteed.

Why promote sharing as our common cause?

The above section demonstrates how activists, campaigners and progressive thinkers have long been calling for transformative and fundamental forms of economic sharing across the world. All of their urgent demands and proposals relate either directly or indirectly to the need for greater sharing in our societies, which is invariably the basis of people-led calls for justice, sustainability, democracy and global peace. Yet this collective voice remains disparate and uncoordinated, and we still lack an inclusive, multi-issue platform that can enable citizens to unite beyond national borders through a concerted call for world repair and renewal. This opens up a great challenge and opportunity for civil society organisations and engaged citizens to build upon our common cause for sharing, and to play a role in the creation of a united global movement for transformative change.

As this report argues, only a collective demand for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources is likely to unify citizens across the world in a common cause. Unless individuals and organisations in different countries align their efforts in more concrete ways (a process that is already underway), it may remain impossible to overcome the vested interests and entrenched structures that maintain business-as-usual. While we face the ultimate prospect of societal, economic and ecological collapse, there is no greater urgency for establishing a broad-based global movement that upholds the principle of sharing as a basic guide for restructuring our societies and tackling the multiple crises of the 21st century. In the end, this may represent our greatest hope for influencing economic reforms that are based on the needs of the world as whole, and guided by basic human and ecological values.

No matter the existing focus of our efforts and activities, there are many additional reasons why it makes sense for us all to participate in and strengthen this emerging call for sharing – just some of which are summarised below.

A call for sharing represents unity in diversity

Many people today recognise the need for connected and powerful citizens movements that are not built on single-issue platforms alone, but rather encompass the root causes of injustice and unsustainability that underpin an entire economic system.⁹⁹ Grassroots groups and established organisations are continually engaged in building pragmatic coalitions that emphasise our common causes, focusing on the longer-term and systemic solutions to global problems that reflect the reality that all our issues are connected. Herein lies the great potential of advocating for the principle of sharing in any such endeavours and activities. As either a time-honoured ethic or a popular meme, sharing presents a way forward that can help connect the work of progressive campaigners, and even provide an inclusive rallying platform for activists that represents the ‘unity in diversity’ of global civil society.

Moreover, as this report attempts to make clear, advocacy for sharing does not require us to abandon our existing focuses or campaigning priorities in favour of a new, overarching cause. On the contrary, it may help us to build a deeper analysis of the crises we together face, and perceive how we already embrace a common cause and vision – thereby emboldening our actions and empowering us in the formation of a vast worldwide movement for change.

Sharing embodies a positive proposal beyond ‘isms’ and factional politics

In the wake of the Arab Spring and Occupy movements of recent years, many activists profess the need for grassroots political movements that move beyond a position of ‘anti’, and instead mobilise around a far-reaching vision for change that can fundamentally redress the balance of power between people and capital. In this light, economic sharing constitutes an active, solutions-based strategy that is not limited to analysing and critiquing the existing problems in the world. Not only can it be adopted by civil society to hold political leaders to account when government policies do not result in a fairer distribution of wealth, power or resources, but it also provides a moral compass for policymakers that can inform their position on a range of issues and help guide the process of economic reform.

By applying the principle of sharing to the field of political economy, we can also navigate between the divisive ‘isms’ that still drive much of the debate on how governments should guarantee social and economic rights for all people. Most importantly, sharing is neither a dogmatic, ‘one size fits all’ ideology, nor does it encompass a set of prescribed methods or processes implemented from the top down by an unaccountable or absentee authority. In recognising how this universal principle relates to the economic drivers of worsening planetary crises, we all have a powerful advocacy tool in our hands for educating public opinion on the necessary direction for world change.

We all understand the human value of sharing

Sharing begins at home, and everyone understands the human values of caring, mutual respect and generosity that we express in our families and social relationships. Yet despite a wealth of evidence that demonstrates how human beings are naturally predisposed to cooperate and share, mainstream economists and politicians still base

much of their decision-making on the assumption that people are inherently selfish, competitive and acquisitive. As recent sharing theory suggests, however, the apparent historical decline of sharing in modern societies is associated with the development of consumer capitalism and the consequent promotion of a culture of individual self-reliance.¹⁰⁰ This growing body of literature directly challenges the model of *homo economicus* that has underpinned the dominant political and economic structures of recent history, and points to the need for a fundamental reassessment of what it means for humanity to evolve and progress.¹⁰¹

In short, by upholding the principle of sharing in our everyday lives and campaigning activities, we essentially take a stand against the values of an unjust economic order that is based upon an outmoded view of human nature. And in so doing, we point the way towards the creation of an alternative economic system – one that is rooted in universal values and ethics that reflect our highest ideals.

The demand for sharing is already on the rise

What better reason to embrace the cause for sharing than the realisation that this basic demand is already on the rise across the world. This report has outlined the many ways in which the call for sharing is being expressed in different fields of campaigning and activism, often in an implicit context. For example, an indirect call for economic sharing is embodied in the widespread mobilisations for an alternative to austerity measures; for a fairer distribution of wealth and income through redistributive policies and tax justice; for participatory democracy and a shared political demos; for the sharing and conservation of natural resources; and for shared public spaces and the non-enclosure of the commons. At the same time, many millions of people are taking to the streets to demand that governments play an essential role in sharing resources, as prominently expressed, for example, in the ‘Brazilian Spring’ of 2013 that called for the right priorities in government spending.¹⁰²

Furthermore, there is a non-vocal and as yet non-politicised sharing movement that is driven by people who are aware of the ecological, societal and financial impact of their actions, and who desire to reconnect with each other and build their own solutions to the many crises we face.¹⁰³ There are even many signs that progressives are beginning to realise the transformative potential of sharing on national and global levels, and not only within our own communities.¹⁰⁴ Clearly, now is the time to raise awareness of the need for economic sharing as a solution to critical global issues. Can we together realise the power that lies in our hands when that public awareness is translated into a mass grassroots movement that aims to influence government decisions?

A global call for sharing has radical implications

Sharing may be a simple, human process that everyone understands and naturally practices, but integrating this universal principle into world affairs has radical implications for current economic and political arrangements, both within countries and internationally. This is clear when we examine the influence of the highly ideological approach to economics that continues to dominate policy discourse in both the Global North and South, which is in many ways the antithesis of an economic approach based on the need to ensure a fair and sustainable distribution of resources. With increasing vigour over recent decades, almost all governments have pursued policies that favour large-scale corporate activity, debt-fuelled finance, reduced barriers to global trade and

increased capital flows between states. As a result, trade between countries remains premised on national self-interest, aggressive competition and a ‘survival of the fittest’ attitude to business that has shifted economic power towards transnational corporations and largely unaccountable global institutions.

At the same time, previous economic ideals based on egalitarian values, redistribution and human rights have been replaced by a new ‘common sense’ that takes for granted the supposed naturalness of the market and the primacy of profit-making – assumptions that continue to set the parameters of public discourse and media debates.¹⁰⁵ In this way, advocating for governments to share rather than compete for the world’s resources is not a naïve or utopian demand, but an almost revolutionary challenge to a status quo that is predicated on economic selfishness, rampant commercialisation and purely materialistic goals.

To be sure, reversing decades of policy decisions and institutional arrangements that broadly oppose the principle of sharing is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Given the enormity of the task ahead, it is up to us all to identify and unite around our common causes for sharing through the forging of practical alternatives on the ground, the creation of new proposals and initiatives, and the influencing of policymaking at every opportunity. As a broad swathe of civil society acknowledges and demonstrates, it is not enough to leave the necessary transformation of our societies up to our governments. We must also scale up and strengthen all the diverse forms of sharing that are outlined in this report, from the local level to the global. As support for the principle of sharing continues to rapidly grow across the world, it may ultimately hold the key to co-creating a more just, balanced and peaceful future.

Recommendations

This report has attempted to demonstrate why it is important for civil society organisations, progressive campaigners and engaged citizens to recognise that a global movement for sharing is already in existence, albeit in a disparate, uncoordinated and often unexpressed form. If the case for promoting sharing as our common cause seems convincing, then it compels us to acknowledge that we are all part of this emerging worldwide movement that holds the same values and broad concerns. The following points below make further recommendations for how we can build upon this recognition and play a part in the creation of a united, all-inclusive and worldwide movement for sharing.

1. Integrate the message of sharing into advocacy and campaigning activities

Based upon our recognition of the need to scale up diverse forms of sharing across the world, it is important to explore what sharing means to us personally and in relation to the issues we are working on. This will enable us to integrate the message of sharing into our campaigning efforts and activism, whenever it is appropriate to do so. We can all therefore help to build popular and persuasive frames around the need for greater sharing in our societies from the perspective of justice, sustainability, peace and democracy.¹⁰⁶ Here are some example ideas of how to frame various progressive endeavours in terms of sharing, which also serves as a valuable ‘meme’ that can be adopted and creatively played with in relation to the four key themes outlined in this report:

For sharing, not ‘anti’: Instead of rallying ‘against’ austerity, poverty or even capitalism *per se*, those campaigning for social justice can call for a fairer sharing of a nation’s wealth, power and financial resources. This embodies the recognition that as a nation we must share what we have in order to protect one another from preventable poverty and deprivation. Of course, key to this message is the need for governments to build/sustain effective systems for redistributing wealth and income through progressive taxation and the provision of essential public services. As many campaign groups have already recognised, there is also a lot of scope for anti-austerity activists to reframe their initiatives in terms of the need for corporations to pay their fair share of taxes, as

this is a key part of the established and most important system of sharing that we have (yet) created.¹⁰⁷

Sharing the Earth: In relation to environmental and sustainability issues, it is outlined above how the principle of sharing is already well discussed by civil society organisations and campaigners as key to resolving the impasse in climate change talks, and the ‘fair shares’ concept is often promoted as a solution to broader ecological concerns. But there is still a lot of scope for messaging around sharing to be integrated into environmental campaigns of all types, especially since the concept of equity in access to ‘environmental space’ is largely absent from mainstream public debate.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, the idea of sharing the Earth can also be adopted as a frame for more community-based endeavours and initiatives that reflect the concept of ‘one planet living’.

Peace through sharing: Peace issues might not seem directly related to the principle of sharing, but there are in fact a host of ways in which this message can be incorporated into such campaigns. As outlined in the section above on stopping the business of war, it is imperative that governments reallocate or ‘share’ their colossal military budgets towards urgent public goods and social needs – not least if they are to meet their collective obligations to end global poverty. Even existing campaigns to protect the global commons can be framed in terms of the need for governments to share and conserve resources, such as through efforts to prevent an escalation of military activity among competing nation-states in the area around the North Pole.¹⁰⁹ To be sure, it is the very lack of economic sharing between countries that is often at the root of geopolitical tensions. There are many possibilities for peace campaigners to flesh out this argument, build upon this theme and integrate such a message into their activities.

Sharing power: Democracy might also appear to be an issue that isn’t readily applicable to the principle of sharing. As emphasised in the section on this theme above, however, power sharing is indispensable to democratic decision-making at every level – locally, nationally and globally. And there can be no true democracy without more equal societies and a just sharing of wealth and economic resources, which should open up a whole range of options for pro-democracy activists to adopt and frame this message in their various activities.

2. Mobilise on collective platforms for sharing

Building effective people’s movements through collaborative processes is arguably the holy grail of civil society campaigning, and extremely difficult to achieve in practice and on a large scale.¹¹⁰ But as the crises of inequality, global conflict and environmental breakdown become ever more real and urgent, there is great scope for individuals and groups to mobilise for transformational change *on collective platforms for sharing* that bring together several campaign issues that may otherwise remain distinct and unconnected. Here are some further examples of how social movements, campaign groups and activists could coalesce their efforts in the creation of such a common cause for sharing:

Politicising the sharing economy movement: The rapidly-growing sharing economy movement has a potentially important opportunity to join forces with environmentalists, the new economy movement and even anti-poverty campaigners. There are already signs that environmentalists see the potential of peer-to-peer sharing to act as a counter-

cultural movement that challenges consumption-driven economics and the materialistic / individualistic assumptions of neoliberal capitalism.¹¹¹ But can proponents of the sharing economy broaden the focus of their activities beyond the solely personal and community level, and recognise other vital forms of economic sharing that provide a more comprehensive solution to social and ecological problems?¹¹² If so, this already established sharing movement could play a preeminent role in pioneering a multi-issue, collective platform for progressive change on the basis of economic sharing.

New alliances for a sharing society: Despite the well-recognised and historical problems associated with civil society coalitions, there is arguably an urgent need for progressive organisations and campaign groups to unite in their calls for transformative systemic change. In particular, there exists a vast array of groups and initiatives that focus on economic injustice within different countries, all of which could potentially forge new alliances through a common call for a sharing society.¹¹³ This might involve, for example, a collective platform of tax justice campaigners, anti-austerity activists, anti-poverty charities, the champions of a financial transaction tax, as well as trade unions and progressive faith groups. It may be idealistic to imagine a common policy agenda aligned to the theme of economic sharing being agreed among a wide variety of established non-governmental organisations, but it is possible that smaller scale coalitions could be quickly formulated and mobilised on this basic theme in creative ways.

Mobilising for a fairer sharing of the world's natural resources: Further to the point made above about the opportunity for integrating the 'fair shares' concept into campaign messaging, it is even possible to conceive of a collective platform of civil society organisations that together promote this theme when trying to influence policy debates. In formulating different agendas for fair shares in relation to climate change negotiations or sustainable development issues, such campaign initiatives could potentially combine the efforts of a prodigious number of environmental organisations and activists. As many NGOs have already started to engage with this theme, the time is perhaps ripe to consider building an international campaign that is directly framed around the need to share the world's natural resources more equitably and sustainably. In light of the additional imperative to share natural resources as a means of mitigating intra- and inter-state conflicts, there is also scope for such a campaign to engage numerous peace activists and anti-war movements across the world.

Raising our voice for sharing in public demonstrations: As mentioned in the section of this report on multi-issue movements, an implicit demand for sharing is already being expressed in the many mass mobilisations that are spontaneously erupting in most countries. For example, citizen-led demonstrations often call for a fairer sharing of government revenue on behalf of the common good, even if this demand is only tacitly or indirectly expressed. Yet there are many advantages in explicitly embracing a common cause for sharing in any popular uprising, which could help to move mobilisations in the street beyond a position of 'anti' and reactive protest, and could also engage the wider public and encourage broader participation. At the least, such a call for sharing can be creatively engaged with through slogans, banners and consciousness-raising actions, thereby attracting public and media attention and building sympathetic support.

There are many other possibilities for how citizen-led or community-based initiatives can adopt sharing as their common cause in different ways, and link up with other movements or build larger campaigns under such a banner or slogan. By definition, any experimental endeavour of this nature will require groups to move beyond single-issue silos, identify with the vast array of other initiatives that are already in motion, and actively bring together diverse issues on the basis of an all-embracing demand for a just sharing of wealth, power and resources either within countries or internationally.

3. Sign and promote STWR's global call for sharing

Without doubt, a dramatic shift in public debate is needed if the principle of sharing is to be understood as integral to any agenda for social justice, environmental stewardship, participatory democracy or peaceful co-existence. This report has demonstrated how the concept of sharing is already being widely discussed in many different contexts, and how there are numerous groups in existence that have long been working towards goals that relate to an aspect of this overarching demand. If you agree with the need to catalyse a global movement of citizens that embrace sharing as a common cause, please sign and promote the campaign statement below. By joining STWR's 'global call', any individual or organisation can influence the development of this emerging theme and vision, and help spark public awareness and a wider debate on the importance of sharing in economic and political terms.

Join the campaign

As outlined in the sections above, the principle of sharing is already central to diverse calls for social justice, environmental stewardship, participative democracy and global peace. Whether expressed in implicit or explicit terms, all of these urgent demands relate to the need for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources throughout our societies - from the community level up to the international.

To coincide with the publication of this report, Share The World's Resources (STWR) has launched the sign-on statement below to encourage engaged citizens and progressive groups to explicitly acknowledge and embrace sharing as a common cause. This represents an initial attempt by STWR to build upon the emerging demand for sharing in its diverse forms, and to promote the potential role that a call for sharing can play in uniting citizens across the world. Both the sign-on statement and this report are part of an ongoing campaign called 'a global call for sharing' which aims to catalyse public debate on the need to strengthen and scale up all genuine forms of economic sharing, both within and between countries.

The campaign statement is available online in multiple languages and can be endorsed by any individual or organisation. For more information about the campaign, our work or to sign the statement, please visit:

www.sharing.org

A global call for sharing

As global citizens and organisations who uphold the common good of all humanity, we recognise that:

Sharing is our human nature

The practice of sharing is integral to how we live in our families and communities, yet we have built societies that increasingly encourage greed, selfishness and materialistic values. Now is the time to create a more equal and united world – one that reflects and supports what it really means to be human.

Our failure to share is a root cause of the world's crises

Across the world, we see the tragic results of our inability to share. No longer can we endure the growing divide between rich and poor, the over-use and wastage of the planet's scarce resources, and ceaseless conflict driven by aggressive competition and national self-interest.

Sharing is the key to creating a better world

We urgently need to reform our political and economic systems by bringing them more in line with the principle of sharing. Without a fairer distribution of wealth, power and resources both within and between nations, it will remain impossible to establish a just and sustainable future.

A demand for sharing is on the rise across the world

As governments continue with business-as-usual, ordinary citizens are calling for sharing and justice on an unprecedented scale. It is imperative that millions more people take the lead as proponents of change – the wellbeing of the Earth and future generations depends on this shift in global consciousness.

Sharing is a common cause that unites us all

Now more than ever, a call for sharing is central to the demands of all those working towards social justice, environmental stewardship, true democracy and global peace. Together, we can combine our efforts in a global movement of citizens and organisations calling for sharing in all its diversity.

By signing this statement, we affirm the fundamental importance of strengthening and scaling up all genuine forms of sharing in our divided world. We therefore add our voice to an emerging worldwide call for sharing, and commit to engage in this crucial debate at every opportunity.

To sign up as an individual or organisation, visit:

sharing.org

Notes

1. For an introductory perspective on the world's multiple and converging crises, see STWR, A primer on global economic sharing, Part 2: Why nations need to share, June 2014.
2. Nick Buxton (ed.), State of Power 2014: Exposing the Davos Class, Transnational Institute, January 2014.
3. For an overview of this issue, see the section in the main report on environmental sustainability.
4. STWR, Economic sharing as a challenge to neoliberal globalisation, 15th January 2014; STWR, Christian Aid's renewed focus on sharing, 5th December 2012.
5. See the sub-section in the main report on the commons movement.
6. The sharing economy is further mentioned in the main report; see the sub-section on sustainable communities.
7. See the section in the main report on global peace.
8. See the sub-section in the main report on people's movements.
9. For information on the importance of values and frames in the creation of a more sustainable, equitable and democratic world, see the work of Common Cause <valuesandframes.org>; also <findingframes.org>
10. In the UK context, for example, there has been unprecedented collaboration between a wide spectrum of civil society organisations, often with millions of members involved across the nation, but repeated problems of unity have placed a question mark on the future of such coalitions. See: John Hilary, Do NGOs Have a Future?, Arena Magazine, No. 129, April-May 2014; War on Want and the IF campaign, 25th January 2013; STWR, Put People First! campaign day, 9th September 2009.
11. See note 1.
12. Oxfam, Working for the few: Political capture and economic inequality, Briefing Paper 178, 20th January 2014.
13. Michael Narberhaus, Civil Society Organizations: Time for Systemic Strategies, Great Transition Initiative, October 2011; Paul Raskin et al, Great Transition: The Promise and Lure of the Times Ahead, The Great Transition Initiative, 2002.
14. Orion Kriegman, Dawn of the cosmopolitan: The hope of a global citizens movement, The Tellus Institute, 2006.
15. Tom Crompton, Common Cause: The Case for Working with our Cultural Values, WWF-UK, September 2010; Andrew Darnton with Martin Kirk, Finding Frames: New ways to engage the UK public in global poverty, Bond, January 2011.
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17. Professor Mark Lichbach writes that when more than 5 percent of the population engages in sustained, coordinated civil disobedience, few governments can remain in power whether they are a dictatorship or a democracy. See: The Rebel's Dilemma, University of Michigan Press, 1998. Quoted in: Kevin Zeese and Margaret Flowers, History Teaches That We Have the Power to Transform the Nation, Here's How, 12th June 2013, <www.truth-out.org>
18. For example, see: Paul Raskin, Imagine all the People: Advancing a Global Citizens Movement, Great Transition Initiative, December 2010, <www.gtinitiative.org>; James Gustave Speth, The Bridge at the Edge of the World, Yale University Press, 2009, Chapter 10; Susan George, Global citizens movement: a new actor for a new politics, Transnational Institute, 2001; Kumi Naidoo,

- Boiling Point: Can citizen action save the world? Development dialogue No. 54, The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, July 2010; David C. Korten, Nicanor Perlas, and Vandana Shiva, Global Civil Society: The Path Ahead, Living Economies Forum, 2002; Kevin Zeese and Margaret Flowers, Rising Up! The Growing People-Powered Movement Is Showing Power, AlterNet, 9th June 2014.
19. See for example: A primer on global economic sharing, June 2014; Financing the global sharing economy, October 2012; Sharing the World's Resources – an Introduction, October 2010; When will ordinary people rise up?, June 2012; Uniting the people of the world, May 2014; A dialogue on protest, sharing and justice, December 2011.
 20. According to a study by Initiative for Policy Dialogue and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 488 public protests against economic injustice took place in the period 2006-2013, or 58% of total protests counted. Isabel Ortiz et al, World Protests 2006-2013, Initiative for Policy Dialogue and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, New York, January 2014, p. 16.
 21. This refers to those rights that come under Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. See: Thomas W. Pogge, World Poverty and Human Rights, Polity, 2007, p. 97.
 22. It is notable that critiques of inequality have broadened and deepened since the Occupy protests of 2011, with a dramatic increase in news mentions of income inequality in the United States and other countries (Ruth Milkman, Stephanie Luce and Penny Lewis, Changing the subject: A bottom-up account of Occupy Wall Street in New York City, The City University of New York, 2013). By early 2014, even the World Bank and International Monetary Fund had adopted an increasingly forceful narrative on the threat of extreme global income inequality to future economic and social viability. The World Economic Forum's Global Risks 2014 report also highlighted the ongoing gap between the incomes of the richest and poorest citizens as the risk that is most likely to cause serious damage globally in the coming decade.
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 24. STWR, Earth rights and sharing the world, 18th January 2013. See also: Alanna Hartzok, The Earth Belongs to Everyone, The Institute for Economic Democracy Press, 2008; <www.earthsharing.ca>; <www.henrygeorgefoundation.org>; <www.earthsharing.org.au>; <www.theiu.org>
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 27. Although Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were first introduced in the 1980s and have been widely criticized since, the IMF continues to impose austere conditions on loans to developing countries today. See Conditionally yours: An analysis of the policy conditions attached to IMF loans, Eurodad, 2014.
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 32. To get involved in campaigns for reforming the way money is created visit: <<http://internationalmoneyreform.org>>
 33. STWR, Financing the global sharing economy, Part 3, Section 9: Cancel unjust debt, October 2012.
 34. Ibid. See: Part 2: The global emergency.
 35. Ibid. See Box 13: What's wrong with international aid?.
 36. Thomas Mc Donagh, Unfair, Unsustainable, and Under the Radar: How Corporations Use Global Investment Rules to Undermine a Sustainable Future, The Democracy Center, 2013.
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- Destroy the Climate, Pambazuka Press, 2012.
38. For example, see: www.tjm.org.uk; www.foodsovereignty.org; www.viacampesina.org
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 40. Rajesh Makwana, *Proposing a vision of a new earth*, STWR, October 2012.
 41. WWF et al, *Living Planet Report 2010: Biodiversity, Biocapacity and Development*, October 2010.
 42. See the following sub-section on 'sustainable communities'.
 43. For example, see: Alison Doig, *The Rich, The Poor, and the Future of the Earth: Equity in a Constrained World*, Christian Aid, April 2012; Alex Evans, *Resource scarcity, fair shares and development*, A WWF/Oxfam discussion paper, 2011.
 44. Kate Raworth, *A safe and just space for humanity: Can we live within the doughnut?* Oxfam Discussion Paper, February 2012.
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 48. For more information about the concept of 'one planet living', visit: www.oneplanetliving.net
 49. STWR, A collection of STWR resources on the sharing economy, 30th May 2014.
 50. For example, see: www.transitionnetwork.org; www.foodfirst.org; www.seedfreedom.in
 51. See the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth <http://pwccc.wordpress.com/programa>. According to the proposed amendment to the Rome Statute by Polly Higgins (April 2010), "Ecocide is the extensive damage to, destruction of or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been or will be severely diminished." www.eradicatingecocide.com
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 53. Prue Taylor, *The Common Heritage of Mankind: A Bold Doctrine Kept Within Strict Boundaries*, in David Bollier and Silke Helfrich (eds), *The Wealth of the Commons: A World Beyond Market and State*, Leveles Press, 2013.
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 71. For example, see: A Charter for Democracy [Movimiento por la Democracia], June 2014, www.guerrillatranslation.com/2014/06/26/a-charter-for-democracy/
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 82. Workplace democracy can take many forms and includes diverse practices, such as voting systems, debates, and participatory decision-making. Of the different kinds of cooperatives in existence, however, those that allow the most significant democratic control are generally seen to be worker cooperatives and other forms of worker ownership. For an introduction, see Molly Scott-Cato, Market,

- Schmarket: Building the Post-Capitalist Economy, New Clarion Press, 2006, Chapter 3.
83. Precise categorisation of each type of commons is difficult to achieve, as many cross several categories. A group of experts from the International Forum on Globalization have advocated for a new category called the 'modern commons', which includes public services like health, water purification and distribution, and information, each of which was once achieved informally within small local and indigenous communities that have since been absorbed by the state and now lay open to being privatised. See John Cavanagh and Jerry Manders (eds), *Alternatives to Economic Globalisation*, op cit., chapter 5. See also Francine Mestrum, *Promoting the Social Commons: the what, why and how*, May 2014, Global Social Justice, <www.globalsocialjustice.org>
 84. Such activity may also entail the creation of collective trusteeships, in which the rights to the commons may be realised for the benefit of present and future generations. For an introduction to trusteeship, see the Global Commons Trust, <www.globalcommonstrust.org>
 85. See the work of the P2P Foundation <p2pfoundation.net>
 86. For example, see Jay Wallasper et al, *All that we share: a field guide to the commons*, The New Press, 2010; David Bollier and Silke Helfrich (eds), *The Wealth of the Commons: A World Beyond Market and State*, Leveillers Press, 2013, <www.wealthofthecommons.org>; *On the Commons*, <www.onthecommons.org>
 87. cf. David Bollier, *Think Like a Commoner*, New Society Publishers, 2014, <www.thinklikeacommoner.com>
 88. Some prominent examples include the New Economics Foundation (UK) and its American counterpart, the New Economics Institute; the Institute for New Economic Thinking; the Institute for Local Self-Reliance; the New Economy Working Group (an informal alliance of the Institute for Policy Studies), and the Tellus Institute, among many others.
 89. For example, the 'sharing lawyer' Janelle Orsi is a prominent advocate of converting sharing economy companies into cooperatives (The Sharing Economy Just Got Real, Shareable, 16th September 2013). See also: Marjorie Kelly, *Owning Our Future: The Emerging Ownership Revolution*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2012; Donnie Maclurcan et al, *How on Earth: Flourishing in a Not-for-Profit World by 2050*, (upcoming), <www.postgrowth.org>
 90. This would include the degrowth movement, the paradigm of deglobalisation, various proponents of economic localisation, as well as advocates for a steady state economy.
 91. UN General Assembly, Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 12th July 1993, A/CONF.157/23.
 92. This includes major NGOs in the international human rights movement such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Federation for Human Rights, all of which now incorporate the full spectrum of human rights in their agendas and missions. See: Paul. J. Nelson, 'Human rights, the millennium development goals, and the future of development cooperation', *World Development* Vol. 31 no. 12, 2003.
 93. Coalitions and networks are constantly formed that support a human rights framework, which gives CSOs a way of working collectively to influence States to tackle the structural and systemic dimensions that prevent the fulfilment of socioeconomic human rights, which include the rights to work and decent working conditions, social security and care, an adequate standard of living, food, housing, water, sanitation, health, education and participation in cultural life. An example is the work of Social Watch, which is an international network of citizens' organizations in the struggle to eradicate poverty and the causes of poverty, to end all forms of discrimination and racism, to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and the realization of human rights <www.socialwatch.org/about>. Similarly, the People's Health Movement - a global network of grassroots health activists, CSOs and academic institutions - fundamentally recognise that the right to health is compromised by unfair economic structures, and that a top priority in policymaking at all levels must be a more equal and sustainable distribution of the world's resources. See The People's Charter for Health, <www.phmovement.org/en>
 94. In particular, see the work of the ETO Consortium, a network of some 80 human rights related CSOs and academics whose major terms of reference are the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. <www.etoconsortium.org/en>
 95. Important organizational pillars of the movement are well-known civil society organisations such as Friends of the Earth, Christian Aid, and the Jubilee Debt Campaign; some think-tanks like Focus on the Global South and the Third World Network; many loosely tied youth groups; as well as some large internationalist and transnational trade union organisations.
 96. Notable examples would include: The international Indigenous Peoples Movement for

- Self-determination and Liberation (IPMSDL); La Via Campesina; Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI); and the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST).
97. According to the Trade Union Congress, the global trade union movement is estimated to incorporate over 150 million workers in countries across the world. As a general rule, trade unions oppose neoliberal policies and take a progressive stance on the full range of social, environmental and human rights issues.
 98. This was reflected in many of the manifestos co-written for the worldwide protests. For example, see: Ana Sofia Suarez and Shimri Zameret, 'A manifesto for regime change on behalf of all humanity', *The Guardian*, 14th October 2011; People's Assemblies Network, 'Global May Manifesto', 4th May 2012.
 99. See note 18.
 100. For further reading, see: Jeremy Rifkin, *The Empathic Civilization*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009; Michael Tomasello, *Why We Cooperate*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009; Frans De Waal, *The Age of Empathy*, New York: Harmony Books, 2009; Colin Tudge, *Why Genes are not Selfish and People are Nice*, Floris Books, 2013; Michael Tomasello and Felix Warneken, *Share and Share Alike: The happy tendency to share resources equitably*, *Nature*, vol. 454, 28 August 2008.
 101. *Sharing the World's Resources: An Introduction*, STWR, 26th October 2010; Alexia Eastwood, *Revisiting Economic Man*, STWR, 16th April 2010;
 102. Simon Romero, 'Protests Widen as Brazilians Chide Leaders', *The New York Times*, 18th June 2013.
 103. STWR, *A collection of STWR resources on the sharing economy*, 30th May 2014.
 104. STWR, *Viva la #SharingSpring!*, 5th March 2014.
 105. Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Michael Rustin (eds), *After Neoliberalism? The Kilburn Manifesto*, Soundings, 2013.
 106. For information on the importance of values and frames in the creation of a more sustainable, equitable and democratic world, see the work of Common Cause <valuesandframes.org>; also <findingframes.org>
 107. These are just two examples, but there are many further possibilities for integrating a call for sharing into the campaigning activities of those who focus on debt justice, alternative finance and trade issues, as well as those who advocate for charitable aid and humanitarian assistance. See the section of this report on social justice for further ideas.
 108. Alex Evans, *Resource scarcity, fair shares and development*, A WWF/Oxfam discussion paper, 2011, p. 17 (see point 8).
 109. <www.savethearctic.org>
 110. See note 10.
 111. For example, Friends of the Earth have embraced sharing as a Big Idea to Change the World and a "call to action for environmentalists". See: Mike Childs, *The Power of Sharing*, Shareable, 5th November 2013; Julian Agyeman, Duncan McLaren and Adrienne Schaefer-Borrego, *Sharing Cities*, Friends of the Earth briefing paper, September 2013.
 112. Rajesh Makwana, *Global justice, sustainability and the sharing economy*, STWR, 3rd June 2014.
 113. For an introduction to this theme, see 'Building a sharing society' in STWR, *A primer on global economic sharing*, June 2014.

Share The World's Resources

STWR is an independent civil society organisation campaigning for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources within and between nations.

Through our research and activities, we make a case for implementing economic sharing as a pragmatic solution to a broad range of interconnected crises that governments are failing to adequately address – including hunger, poverty, climate change, environmental destruction and conflict over the world's natural resources.

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For more information, please visit www.sharing.org

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As is currently the case for many progressive organisations, our small team of staff and volunteers are facing mounting budgetary pressures. Your donations can help us to maintain our website and continue researching, writing and communicating our work while generating support within the global justice movement for the principle of sharing as a solution to global crises.

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Thank you for your support,

The STWR team

This report demonstrates how activists, campaigners and progressive thinkers have long been calling for transformative and fundamental forms of economic sharing across the world. All of their urgent demands and proposals relate either directly or indirectly to the need for greater sharing in our societies, which is invariably the basis of people-led calls for social justice, environmental stewardship, participative democracy and global peace. Yet this collective voice remains disparate and uncoordinated, and we still lack an inclusive, multi-issue platform that can enable citizens to unite beyond national borders through a concerted call for world repair and renewal. This opens up a great challenge and opportunity for civil society organisations and engaged citizens to build upon our common cause for sharing, and to play a role in the creation of a united global movement for transformative change.

As this report argues, only a collective demand for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources is likely to unify citizens across the world in a common cause. Unless individuals and organisations in different countries align their efforts in more concrete ways (a process that is already underway), it may remain impossible to overcome the vested interests and power structures that maintain business-as-usual. While we face the ultimate prospect of social, economic and ecological collapse, there is no greater urgency for establishing a broad-based global movement that upholds the principle of sharing as a basic guide for restructuring our societies and tackling the multiple crises of the 21st century. In the end, this may represent our greatest hope for influencing economic reforms that are based on the needs of the world as whole, and guided by basic human and ecological values.