



Resource—4 Side—1  
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# 1—How do you decide which charities to support?

To make people sit up and take notice, charities use a whole range of techniques to get their message across. Stop reading for a moment and think about an image or a slogan that has made you think about a charitable cause or issue.

## How do charities make themselves more attractive?

Charities have to think very carefully about the images they use. They avoid using too many sad or shocking pictures, for a variety of reasons:

- They must be careful not to give the wrong impression about a situation.
- They don't want to take away the dignity of people who are suffering.
- They don't want to distress people who see the pictures and so put them off.
- They don't want to make out that a situation is so terrible that it's beyond help.

It's a difficult job choosing how to get a message across and how to raise money – for one thing, we don't all respond to the same messages! For example, research shows that many people don't like being approached in the street for money, though thousands of others happily give in this way. (Do you?)

Because there are so many charities that want our support, the techniques they use to get our attention need to make a big impact – maybe even to shock us into responding.

Some people don't mind being shocked by the truth if it makes them do something they may otherwise be too lazy or busy to do!

Some charities can't rely on dramatic or 'cute' images to get people to support them. For example charities that help homeless people or drug addicts need to tell people about all the different problems that affect those people without exploiting or belittling them. But they still find ways of communicating with the public eg The Big Issue magazine covers the issues facing homeless people and gives those people the opportunity to earn their own money.



These pictures illustrate four different ways charities try to win our support:

- Showing people who need help (which may be upsetting or shocking)
- Showing how happy you can make people when you help their cause
- Showing how much fun you can have while helping their cause
- Creating a symbol that is instantly recognisable and says something you can identify with



Pudsey, the bear with the spotted bandage over one eye, has become one of the most famous images in the country. According to market research, he is now recognised by 85% of the population. When we see him, we know immediately that something is coming from BBC Children in Need – and most of us are then ready to listen sympathetically.



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## 2—Case study: Make Poverty History



In 2005, a number of charities, trade unions, campaigning groups, religious groups and celebrities got together to launch a campaign to end poverty around the world. They called it 'Make Poverty History'. Over 400 UK organisations were involved, besides people in 60 other countries. They timed the campaign to target the leaders of eight of the world's most powerful countries ('the G8') when they met in Scotland. Every year, the G8 'summit' brings together the presidents or prime ministers of

the US, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the UK.

Make Poverty History aimed to put pressure on those eight leaders to make them do more to help the world's poorest countries. The plan was to tell them they hadn't kept the promises they had made in the past and to make them change their policies in three areas:

### Trade

MPH wanted the G8 leaders to stop using the rules of international trade to protect their own countries and instead to give poor countries a chance to trade on better terms.

### Debt

MPH wanted the G8 leaders to cancel the longstanding debts of the poorest countries. Some of these have had to pay so much in interest to rich countries that they have been unable to provide basic public services like clean water and free primary school education.

### Aid

In the past, the governments of rich countries promised to increase the amount of money they gave to poorer countries. MPH wanted the G8 leaders finally to keep that promise – and let the poorer countries have more control over how the money is spent.

MPH knew that in order to put pressure on the G8 leaders it had to get as many ordinary people on its side as possible. Public opinion is important to these leaders and MPH wanted them to see that the people who voted them into power wanted changes to give the poorest countries a chance.

MPH used lots of different tactics in order to reach as many people as possible. Here are just a few of them:

### People Power

MPH asked people to register on its website and then send emails to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor telling them that they supported MPH. In the end, 440,000 emails were sent.

### Wristbands

MPH was one of the first charities to produce wristbands. People who bought the white bands wore them to show that they supported MPH.

### Celebrities

Lots of famous people supported MPH. Some of them appeared in a video that reminded the G8 leaders how many people around the world were dying every day as a result of poverty.

### Live 8

Twenty years after the original Live Aid, MPH held another series of huge concerts on the first day

of the G8 summit. This time it was called 'Live 8' and the aim was to make sure that as the G8 leaders sat down to begin their discussions, the whole world was sending the message: 'Make poverty history!'

### So, what did it all achieve?

The campaign made this G8 summit the most talked-about meeting ever. Two billion people watched the Live 8 concerts around the world, while in Edinburgh itself 225,000 people joined hands to form the world's largest white band around the city centre. The G8 leaders agreed to increase aid by £28 billion by 2010 and to cancel entirely the debts of 18 of the world's poorest countries. They did not agree to change the trade rules, but they did promise that this would be discussed again later in the year.

Some campaigners, like Bob Geldof and Bono, said that the things the G8 leaders had agreed to do would save 10 million lives. Others were disappointed, they said it was a good start on two of the three issues but a lot more needed to be done to make poverty history.

### What do you think?

This case study was written in August 2005.



### Some useful websites

[www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey) – BBC Children in Need

[www.comicrelief.com](http://www.comicrelief.com) – Comic Relief

[www.makepovertyhistory.org](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org) – Make Poverty History (MPH)