

International Development in Wales: A Heritage of Humanity



From the Archives of Wales' Temple of Peace & Health

Produced for Wales Africa Health Links Network Conference, 3rd November 2021

It is often quoted that Wales has a 'long and proud history of internationalism' – but what is that story? As we mark the '15th birthday' of the government's Wales Africa programme, launched in 2006, this session will explore what came before: Do health links have a family tree ripe for research; and can understanding our past, inform future practice? From the world campaign to eradicate Tuberculosis, to the shared learning of UNESCO, via a dairy in Bihar, India... WCIA's Heritage Advisor (and former Wales Africa Community Links Coordinator) Craig Owen shares some of his archival research on the History of Welsh Internationalism, in relation to development initiatives.



Through Wales' Freedom from Hunger Campaign, the Women's Institute present a cheque towards UNICEF projects in Lesotho in 1982. A series of health and water projects initiated for International Year of the Child in 1979, led to the establishment of Dolen Cymru / Wales Lesotho Link from 1985.

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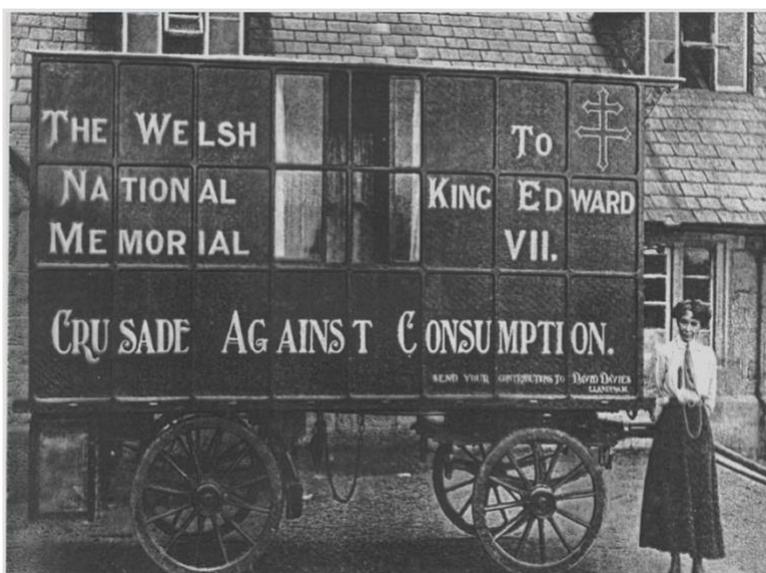


Evolution of Welsh Internationalism (pre-WW1)

1816 – [London Peace Society](#) set up by Welshmen Evan Rees and Joseph Tregelles Price, as the UK's first dedicated 'internationalist' / humanitarian organisation, remaining active until 1930 (when it was merged into the International Christian Peace Fellowship). 5 out of 6 Peace Society Secretaries were from Wales, the most famous of whom was [Henry Richard](#) of Tregaron (1812-1888), known as the 'Apostle of Peace' for his instrumental role first in anti-slavery, and then in successful introduction of international 'Arbitration' – negotiation based upon keeping the peace.

1849 – Facilitated by Henry Richard and American Elihu Burritt following the Napoleonic Wars, the [Paris Peace Congress](#) established the principle of 'Arbitration between Nations'.

1899 & 1907 – The [Hague Peace Conventions](#) were the first multilateral treaties on conduct of warfare, establishing laws of war and war crimes, and the concept of disarmament. The date of the Hague conference opening, 18 May, is marked every year with the broadcast of Wales' Youth Message of Peace & Goodwill.



1910 – [Wales' National Memorial Association](#) (WNMA) for the Eradication of Tuberculosis set up by David Davies of Llandinam initially to 'tackle the scourge of TB' in Wales, which at that point killed 1 in 4. It became a world leader in the field, such that the WNMA's methods and practices were shared internationally through League of Nations commissions in Geneva and other routes. In 1946 the WNMA was tasked as the 'Transitional Authority' in Wales for coordinating establishment of the NHS; formally merged in 1948 into the Wales (Regional) Hospitals Board, headquartered at the Temple of Peace & Health.

'There are few families in Wales without reason for gratitude to the WNMA, which had grown to be the foremost anti-tuberculosis organisation in the British Empire, if not the world – a fitting memorial to a king, which has ensured the WNMA a place of honour in Welsh History.'

[Glynne R Jones](#)

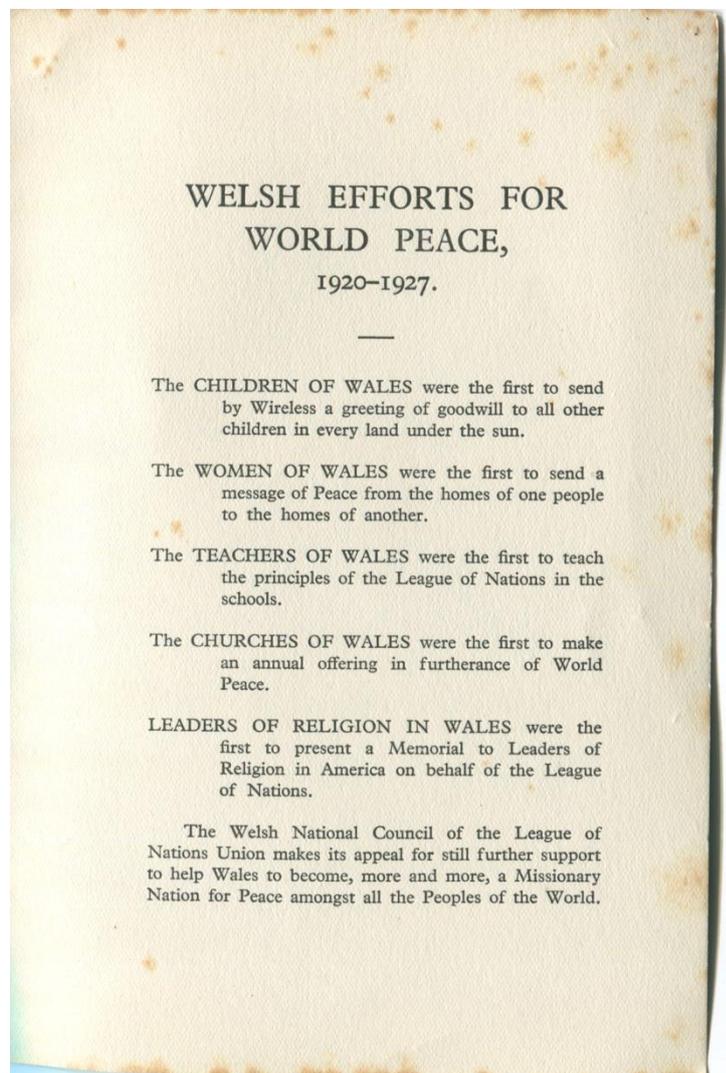
1920-45: League of Nations, Empire and Cooperation

1918 - In the Paris peace process and treaties that followed the tragedy of World War 1, the [League of Nations](#) emerged as the world's 'great hope' - and first attempt at international organisation of peace and cooperation (between 58 nations at its nadir in 1935). The League itself was founded in Geneva, with delegates representing member states – Winifred Coombe Tennant of Swansea being one of Britain and Wales' early recognised figures.

1922 [Welsh League of Nations Union](#) (WLNU) was established by David Davies of Llandinam to coordinate social action on peace building and international cooperation. The League became one of Wales' biggest membership organisations, with over 60,000 members across 1,000 community branches. WLNU Director Gwilym Davies also founded the Youth Message of Peace & Goodwill in 1922, which continues to this day and celebrates its centenary in 2022; David Davies also founded the world's first academic department of International Relations at Aberystwyth University.

1920s WLNU campaigns focused on securing primacy of the League with peace at the heart of intergovernmental relations. Many proposals would later form the basis of the United Nations. Major movements, with activists in every community across Wales, included:

- Children – through the **Youth Message of Peace & Goodwill**, organised annually through WLNU and then UNA until 1954, when on the passing of Gwilym Davies, responsibility for the message passed to the Urdd, with whom it is synonymous today.
- Teachers – through the **Welsh Education Advisory Committee** (WEAC), which produced the world's first global education curricula, replicated by many nations, with leading educationalists from around the world gathering at Annual 'Gregynog Conferences' in Montgomeryshire.
- Women – through the 1923 **Welsh Women's Peace Appeal to America**, signed by 390,296 women, which led to America's 'Conference on the Cause and Cure of War' (1925-1942), and WLNU's Women's Advisory Committee (1930-1992).
- Churches – through the annual Churches' Peace Offering
- Communities – through annual '**Daffodil Days**' organised Wales-wide, people would plant bulbs and buy lapel daffodils to signify their support for peace through the League of Nations.



1930s With the onset of the Great Depression, the League of Nations was increasingly undermined by member states failing to abide by their agreements, enabling the rise of expansionist regimes in Italy, Germany and Spain. WLNU campaigns responded to worsening world security, as crises in Manchuria, Abyssinia, Spain, Sudetenland / Rhineland, Austria and Poland set the stage for WW2.



1932 – UK's **first 'international volunteering' exchange workcamp in Brynmawr, Monmouthshire**, organised through the Quakers by Swiss Peace Activist [Pierre Ceresole](#) (who founded [Service Civil International](#) in 1920). They built a **swimming pool in Brynmawr (left)** – and planted the seed of solidarity volunteering and community links.

1935 Over 1 million people in Wales voted in a 'Peace Ballot' organised by WLNU, in an effort to curb the arms race that was escalating across Europe

and to bring nations back to the League of Nations table – for cooperation over militarisation.

1938 Wales' Temple of Peace and Health was opened on 23rd November 1938 by bereaved war mother Minnie James of Dowlais, Merthyr, alongside 28 'mothers of peace' from Wales, the UK regions and commonwealth.

1939-45 Outbreak of World War Two led to suspension of most WLNU work, as branch members Wales-wide and all but a skeleton staff at HQ were released for war service. The Temple's offices were mothballed, except for daily services for visitors to Wales' WW1 Book of Remembrance.

What did 'Development' look like pre-WW2?

The concept of International Development as understood today, was not a recognised field of practice prior to the late 1940s. Of course, international trade and diplomacy had existed as long as human civilisation, with cooperation between nation states organised generally on a bilateral basis (between individual states). The League of Nations was the first multilateral institution, and its supporting bodies and 'Commissions' - ranging from the International Labour Organisation to Health Organisation, Slavery and Refugees Commissions - were the predecessors of development movements that would emerge after WW2.

1940s-60s: United Nations, Social & Human Rights

Following the horrors of WW2, the world was jolted into creating properly resourced international bodies with underpinning principles and machinery of enforcement. The **United Nations era** of human rights brought an end to 'rule by empire', as former colonies gradually transitioned to independence and set upon their own development journeys – albeit, often pitted between Cold War power struggles.

1941-45 - WLNU International Secretary Gwilym Davies and others instrumental in the WEAC - who in the 1930s had started advocating for an international education organisation (equivalent to the ILO for workers) - were tasked by UK and US post-war planners with drafting proposals and a constitution for such a body. Over a series of conferences in Oxford and London, the 'Welsh model' was developed into a framework for an education, scientific and cultural organisation...

1945 - [UNESCO was established](#) 1-16 November 1945 in London, based on the WEAC proposals championed by Education Minister Rab Butler, and launched with the first UNESCO Conference in Paris over 19 Nov-10 December 1946, *"with writers, thinkers, educationalists and scientists from 24 countries... unlike any other conference I have attended."* (quote from Gwilym Davies)

1945 – The [UN Charter](#), founding document for the United Nations, was published on 26 June 1945 following the San Francisco Conference on International Organisation.

1946 – First **United Nations Assembly** held 10 January – 14 February 1946 in Methodist Central Hall, London, organised by Welsh Economist David Owen and Gladwyn Jebb of the Foreign Office. The programme was opened at the Albert Hall by Wales' Temple of Peace choir (performing 6 songs including 'Nos Galon' and 'Men of Harlech') and a keynote speech from Lady Megan Lloyd George, Wales' first female MP for Anglesey. The first UN gathering of 51 nations established the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, International Court of Justice, UN Economic and Social Council (later UNDP), and elected Norwegian Trygve Lie as the first Secretary General.

1946 – The interwar WLNU morphed into 2 new organisations, [UNA Wales](#) (the United Nations Association) and **CEWC** (the Council for Education in World Citizenship), from 1945 onwards.

- 1942 onwards, the WLNU's Education Advisory Committee drafted a new constitution for a Welsh Association for Education in World Citizenship, agreed July 11 1945.
- Oct 27 1945 – [Last AGM of WLNU](#) and Inaugural / transitional meeting of UNA – held at Temple of Peace - endorsed a new constitution, process for local WLNU branches to 'transfer' into UNA Wales, and for other associations to affiliate.
- 1 Feb 1946 – First Executive meeting of newly formed UNA Wales met in Shrewsbury, producing the first postwar WLNU / UNA Wales [Annual Report for 1943-46](#).
- August 1946 – World Federation of United Nations Associations launched in Luxembourg, organised by a secretariat seconded from the Temple of Peace staff, and adopting a constitution and preamble drafted by Wales - the 'Charter of Luxembourg'.

1946 – [UNICEF](#), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, established to protect children's rights in the aftermath of WW2.

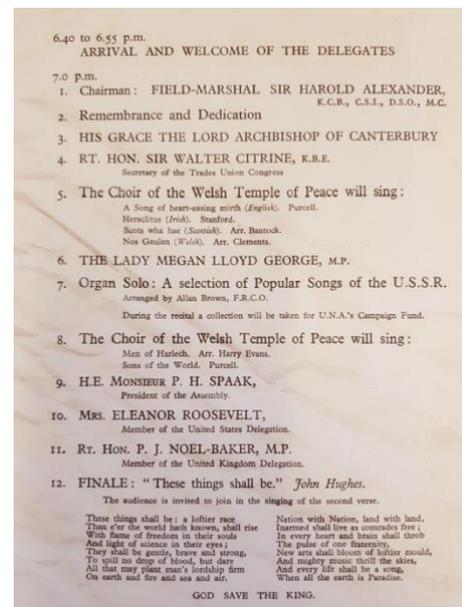
1947 – The [Llangollen International Eisteddfod](#) was launched in June 1947, with a mission to build 'lasting peace and harmony' through musical and cultural exchange. In 1949, Wales welcomed the Lubeck Choir as one of the first **exchange groups** from Germany to visit the UK after WW2.

1953 – UNA groups across Wales mobilised public support for the Korean Refugee Fund, following the outbreak of the [Korean War](#). In 1954, The first **UNICEF** Appeal to Wales was launched.

1956 – Following the [Hungarian Uprising](#), UNA groups Wales-wide mobilised public support for Hungarian Refugee projects, including cultural evenings for many who had fled to Wales, as well as volunteer relief projects in Hungary itself.

1957 – UNA **International Youth Service** was formed in Spring 1957 to take forward projects started by the post-WW2 Hungarian Relief programme, coordinate summer work camps, and develop other projects.

1960 – **World Refugee Year** became the first ever designated theme of a 'UN International Year', with fundraising UK-wide and public activities coordinated Wales-wide by UNA Wales. £1 million was raised across the UK – at that point a vast sum, far greater than any previous public appeal, establishing the now-familiar concept of public aid appeals. Channelled through the UN High Commission for Refugees, this drive enabled all WW2 Refugee Camps to be cleared by the end of the 1960s; some camps having existed for nearly 30 years, on our European doorstep.



International Youth Service (IYS)

Although UNA had been organising international work camps supporting post-WW2 reconstruction in Holland, Austria, Germany and Britain from **1950 onwards**, the creation of IYS aimed to “further the aims of UNA by providing opportunities for practical service in the international field,” with a programme that contributed both to post-war European Reconstruction, and to peace initiatives in the Middle East.

Work Camps

- Develop existing projects in Austria, Germany and Britain (soon expanding to Greece, France, Norway, Holland and Northern Ireland)
- Hungarian Relief projects
- Aid to Arab Refugees
- Development Cooperation and voluntary assistance to Commonwealth bodies in underdeveloped countries
- Study of international projects

Community Projects

- Christmas Present Scheme to refugees across Europe
- Refugee assistance across Wales and UK
- Social functions to bring together ‘foreigners in the UK’ including work campers, UNA members and UN scholars
- Other practical activities

Over 1957-58 - the first year of operations - 863 volunteers from 23 different countries contributed 125,000 hours of volunteer labour across 19 work camps / community development projects.

In November 1958, the first **Africa refugee projects** were supported through partnership with a small but effective group called the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief. OXFAM of course is now one of the biggest International Development NGOs in the world. From 1959, the **World Refugee Year** Appeal financed a series of projects and summer camps in Austria, building homes to resettle refugees who remained homeless 13 years after WW2 had ended.

In 1965, the first International Service workcamp to welcome reciprocal visits of **overseas volunteers to Wales** took place in Cardiff’s Docklands, supporting the ‘Rainbow Club’ – a children’s club run by the Save the Children Fund (SCF) and UNICEF Wales. From 1973, **UNA Exchange** was founded in Wales to take over the role of London-based UNA International Service projects. Projects through the 1970s focused on social workcamps and playschemes for children, in the 1980s expanding across Western Europe.

The fall of the iron curtain enabled through the 1990s development of a new ‘**North South Programme**’, not only offering placements for Welsh volunteers with community projects worldwide – managed by local, in-country partners rather than ‘London offices’ - but also hosting reciprocal exchanges from Uganda, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Mexico, India, Zambia, Togo, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Argentina, Botswana, Nepal and Zimbabwe. This continues to this day, with UNA Exchange having merged into the WCIA from 2020.

Archives:

UNA International Youth Service Bulletins 1958-59,

“*A Short History of UNA Cardiff*” by Robert Davies (1997)

“*A Short history of UNA Exchange*” by Sheila Smith (2005)

1959 – UNA Wales coordinated a Racial Forum for students, bringing overseas speakers from India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Ghana.

1959 – **Freedom from Hunger Campaign** (FFHC) established Nov 1959 by Dr BR Sen, Director General of UN Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

1962 Wales' Freedom from Hunger Campaign Committee launched, alongside an FFHC Women's Committee. A formal launch in 1964 was staged at the Temple of Peace, with the Duke of Edinburgh in attendance as patron.

1962 - a UNA Students Association was established in Cardiff University, to involve students and academics in human development campaigns and thinking. UNA Wales reinstated the pre-WW2 'Geneva Scholarship Scheme' to which many students contributed essays on development thinking; 1962's winning essays, published in the Western Mail, advocated UN support as the only alternative to war and chaos. One of the writers, Mary Reddaway, went on to head the Rockefeller Library in Geneva.

Through the 1960s, UNA Wales coordinated 2 annual congresses entitled 'Wales and the World' in North (Bangor) and South Wales (Cardiff) every autumn, drawing speakers from the United Nations and other international institutions.

1965 – **UN International Cooperation year**, with the founding of [UNDP](#) (UN Development Programme), was marked by a programme of activities Wales-wide.

1968 – **UN Human Rights Year** activities were coordinated Wales-wide by UNA Wales.

1970s-90s: Age of Globalisation and Humanitarianism

1973 – WCIA and UNA Exchange were both founded and launched in October 1973.

- The Welsh Centre for International Affairs (**WCIA**) was founded following a campaign by the Western Mail for 'Wales to have a voice in the world', following a decade in which Westminster and Whitehall had become increasingly centralised. Bill Davies, who became the first Director of WCIA, coordinated a group of Welsh civil society leaders, forming a structure that accommodated not only the campaigning and volunteering activities of UNA, but also global education and work across local authorities and institutions.
- **UNA Exchange** was founded by architect and volunteer Robert Davies, who also founded VCS, Cardiff's Volunteering Service. UNA Exchange took over volunteering and workcamp opportunities previously managed by the London based International Youth Service (who shifted focus to 'gap year' experiences in Asia, South America and Africa). In 1982, UNA Exchange was a founding member of the International [Alliance of Voluntary Service Organisations](#), coordinating community projects worldwide.

Through FFHC and WCIA's work with Higher Education institutions, Professor Glyn O Phillips of NEWI was 'seconded' to Central Africa following the end of the [Nigerian Civil War](#) in 1970, to help found the [University of Benin](#) – as its first Principal from 1970-73. In recognition of his support to development of Higher Education after **Nigerian** independence, Glyn was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Science by the University of Benin in 1990.

1975 – Over the late 1970s-mid-1980s, Wales spearheaded international work to develop and support [Khartoum Polytechnic](#) in **Sudan**, the [National University of Lesotho](#) and the [Oman Technical Industrial College](#); NEWI established an equipment support system for all the universities and polytechnics in **Nigeria and Pakistan**.



LH – Poster; RH - Dairy project in Bihar, India – now the State's Milk Cooperative

Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FFHC)

Launched in Wales in **1964** (following London launch in 1962), the FFHC was internationally headquartered in Wales' Temple of Peace from **1978 to 1997**. Through the 1960s, Welsh FFHC groups had raised £600,000 towards 47 specific projects, and there was momentum to continue the cause.

Over 2 decades, FFHC oversaw 57 further development projects worldwide in India, Africa, South & Central America, Asia, the Pacific and Middle East; as well as 30 development education projects (13 across the UK, and 17 overseas). Of £1,314,968 raised and dispersed by FFHC, over half - £722k – supported 8 projects in India.

Wales' largest programme was a dairy development project in Muzaffarpur, **Bihar**, inaugurated in 1982 in partnership with the Regional Government to provide 200,000 people with access to a safe supply of milk and dairy produce. In 1996, Prime Minister HD Devegowda awarded Bihar the National Dairy Award for best-managed enterprise, becoming a model for development practice across other Indian states. It is hopefully a sign of effectiveness that this former Welsh 'aid project' continues trading today as COMFED, the [Bihar State Milk Cooperative](#) Federation.

A cattle improvement scheme in Dalpatpur, **Uttar Pradesh**, was supported by Welsh veterinarians, whilst academic research through NEWI (North East Wales Institute, now Glyndwr University) led to the establishment of the **West Bengal** Spirulina Project, which continues today under Calcutta's Institute of Wetland Management Design, with the government of West Bengal. Projects in Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia focused on empowering small farmers and village elders.

Africa saw the largest number of community development initiatives by FFHC, mostly at smaller scale – with 45 projects totalling £402,481 delivered through collaboration with local government and established organisations on the ground, agencies who are now household names such as Oxfam and Save the Children. FFHC financed the 'upscaling' of proven projects at the time by Welsh linking charities Money for **Madagascar** (supporting poultry production and eco-farming) and **Zambia** Family Farms (supporting water provision for agricultural communities), over periods of several years.

The largest project from 1976 onwards was in **Malawi**, supporting nutritional initiatives through Bunda College of Education in Lilongwe. From 1979, a series of projects through UNICEF in **Lesotho** to mark [International Year of the Child](#) – developing health services and water supplies – laid the foundations for the launch in 1985 of [Dolen Cymru](#), the Wales Lesotho Link. FFHC also gained significant recognition with its efforts over the **Ethiopian** Famine of 1984, channelling substantial donations from Wales towards Oxfam agricultural development programmes. Gendered approaches to development were piloted in **Kenya**, with women's self-help groups leading projects on stoves, dairy and goat rearing in Turkana, Kisumu and Naivasha between 1981 and 1993; with similar agricultural initiatives supported in **Zimbabwe** from 1981 to 1995. **Tanzania** was a focus for mechanical training projects to establish a mill in Tabora region, with over 5 years resourcing through Folk Development College.

In **South America**, 4 projects worth £36,500 included support for irrigation and food security through intermediate technology in Peru, and farmers cooperatives in Esmerelda, Ecuador which became a 'best practice' model for Overseas Development agencies of the era.

Development Education, the creation of informed public opinion, was seen of fundamental importance to any truly sustainable solution to hunger, with General Secretary Donald Tweddle stating that *"the vast resources required to solve the problem dictate that the ultimate answer lay with governments. To make a lasting impact, we must change attitudes; we must educate as far as possible the public at large."* Only this could create the will for action.

Over 1978-1991, FFHC supported development of 12 **Development Education Centres** (DECs) and projects across the UK, injecting £129,632 into activities for a generation of learners. As well as producing source books and resources for teachers, DECs organised model UN Assemblies, and conferences such as (in 1981) an all-Wales 'World Food Day' Conference with the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation.

Between 1983-86, a WCIA **Fellowship** for Development Education at University College Cardiff, led by Alison Heard, created an entire **AO level syllabus** for the WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee) and delivered / supported through CEWC Cymru (the Council for Education in World Citizenship) - a breakthrough in Development Education practice globally. A Teachers Guide and Handbook was supplemented by conferences, lectures, school visits and annual examinations, and the scheme was promoted internationally by Britain's ODA (Overseas Development Agency).

Over 1991-1995, FFHC expanded support to Development **Education initiatives worldwide** across 17 projects in India, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. These ranged from engineering apprenticeships developed in Ghana and Tanzania, to natural resource management in the Philippines, Laos and China. Coordination with Welsh **Higher Education** institutions also supported development of Technology Institutes in Zhua and Wuhan, China; as well the University of Nigeria.

The ultimate **legacy of the FFHC**, in conjunction with participating aid agencies such as Oxfam, Save the Children and Christian Aid, was to implant in the public mind that the ultimate solution lay not in charitable giving, but in 'helping the hungry to help themselves': making a household quote of the Chinese proverb *"Give a man a fish, and he will live for a day; teach him how to fish, and he will for a lifetime."*

Sources:

Tweddle, Donald (1974) *"The Freedom from Hunger Campaign in the United Kingdom"*

Davies, WR (1997) *"The Freedom from Hunger Campaign in Wales 1978-1997"*

Bunch, Matthew (2007) *"The [Global Freedom from Hunger Campaign](#): Inventing the International Development Movement"* accessed 29/10/21 at

<https://freedomfromhungerproject.weebly.com/the-freedom-from-hunger-campaign1.html>

1984 - [Live Aid](#) and the Ethiopian Famine changed the landscape of international aid and development, not just raising an estimated £150 million towards famine relief efforts, but prompting public debates around aid effectiveness that resonate to this day, and putting “*humanitarian concern at the centre of foreign policy for Western Governments.*” As well as playing its part through fundraising, a number of communities across Wales developed direct links with African nations following Live Aid, including [Dolen Cymru](#) (with **Lesotho**) and [Dolen Ffermio](#) (with Eastern **Uganda**), both of whom remain active today.

1986 – The **Chernobyl** Nuclear disaster in Ukraine led to the establishment of a number of aid organisations across Wales, mostly at a community level and volunteer-run (often as offshoots of local CND branches), raising funds and gathering clothing and other items to be sent to the thousands of families and children displaced by the disaster. Some of these organisations continued links with the Ukraine for nearly 2 decades.

Although development practice has widely acknowledged for some decades that material (rather than transferable / financial) donations can be of limited use to aid recipients - and indeed can harm local economies - such approaches have often been reinforced in the minds of the British public by disaster responses. On the other hand, the appeals power of such links lies in the emotional connection they can create between communities in Wales and the world.

1988 – WCIA launched ‘**The Humane Race**’ Appeal to mark the 50th Anniversary of Wales’ Temple of Peace, starting with what was thought at the time to be Wales’ biggest run – Sport Aid - with 24,000 men, women and children breaking the finish line outside the Temple. An estimated half a million pounds raised towards UNICEF projects was estimated to have ‘saved the lives’ of 10,000 children; and over the year, over £500k was generated to enable the global work of the Temple of Peace to continue into the future.



1990s: Devolution and Sustainable Development

The landscape of international development in Wales was greatly changed by the onset of devolution, debated over the 1990s and then enacted following change of government in 1997. With the creation of the National Assembly for Wales, civil society, NGOs and community groups in Wales had a new voice and focus for advocacy. However, the Assembly did not have devolved powers over International Development, or external relations generally.

The Millennium was ‘book-ended’ by two of the world’s biggest development campaigns to date, in which Welsh groups played a high profile role. From 1997, **Jubilee 2000** pressured rich governments worldwide to ‘Drop the Debt’ as a fundamental issue of social justice – many debts having been racked up through Cold War military and technical projects of little benefit to poverty-

stricken populations. Welsh activists were among 70,000 who encircled the Birmingham G8 Summit, ultimately leading to the cancellation of \$100 billion of debt for 35 countries.

This was followed in 2005 by the **Make Poverty History** campaign, which expanded calls on trade, aid and debt through a hugely popular campaign symbolised by the 'white band'. Again, Welsh development campaigners were among 100,000 marching on Edinburgh for the Gleneagles G8 Summit, as well as wrapping the summit of Snowdon in a white band (below), and raising £1,25m through the Tsunami Relief Cymru Concert in Wales' Millennium Stadium – the biggest charity concert since Live Aid in 1984.



Snowdon wrapped in a White Band

Despite its power limitations, the newly created National Assembly for Wales came under considerable public pressure to develop a distinct and tangible contribution towards global poverty and sustainable development. The introduction of the [UN Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#) in 1999 had provided perhaps the world's first anti-poverty framework around which governments, civil society and communities could mobilise. From 2002 Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) established the [Welsh Civil Society MDGs Task Force](#) as a forum to coordinate efforts not just by traditional International NGOs such as Oxfam and Christian Aid, but actors beyond the aid sector: communities, trade unions, educationalists, health staff etc.

In late 2005, The Welsh Government seconded a member of Oxfam Cymru staff to the First Minister's Office, to develop what became the [Wales for Africa framework](#) – launched in June 2006 and marking a new era for Welsh International Development activity, with civil society-led projects supported through small grants from Welsh Government. The year following saw launch of the Wales Africa Health Links Network and Wales Africa Community Links.

A 2010 survey exploring the contributions of [Welsh Civil Society towards the MDGs](#) identified over 930 organisations active Wales-wide, supporting projects in 107 countries worldwide – with about 25% of activities falling beyond the scope of the Wales Africa programme. The financial austerity of the 2010s, as with the 1930s, has proven a challenging period for Welsh internationalists and supporters, with insularity and crises in public confidence reflected in the Brexit vote of 2017.

However, the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) since 2015, alongside [Wales' Future Generations Act](#) and Wellbeing Goals, have given renewed impetus to development efforts - linking poverty to community action on one hand, and the climate change emergency on the other.

It is noteworthy to observe that Wales' International sector has evolved through major periods of change roughly every 25 years: 1920, 1945, 1970, 1995, and... **2020**. Are we 'in the change' right now? And if so, **what might be the next 'development era' – and how might we shape it?**

Welsh Civil Society and the Millennium Development Goals



2010 Report

Appendices: Understanding ‘International Development’

Origin of the English word is French, *D’envelopper*: to open and release what is within

International trade and international relations as concepts have existed for thousands of years; but it is only over the past century that international *development* has emerged as a body of practice. After World War 2, former colonies that had gained independence required new arrangements for free trade and financial aid: development was inherently framed between ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ nations (**imperial powers and former colonies**), with stated aims to build governance that would enable inhabitants to be “*free from poverty, hunger and insecurity.*”

From the late 1940s, [colonial independence](#) necessitated replacement of former empire trade flows, governance and infrastructure management, with **development aid** to enable newly independent nations to get established. Based in [Modernisation Theory](#) – the idea that all societies progress through similar stages of development – Globalisation was defined as the spreading of modernisation across borders.

Late 1960s this was overtaken by [Dependency Theory](#), the recognition that far from enabling underdeveloped nations to ‘modernise’, aid was reinforcing negative transfer of resources. Poor states are impoverished, and rich ones enriched, by the way poor states are integrated into the “[world system](#)“. By the early 1980s, [economic neoliberalism](#) was at heart of structural adjustment programmes, in contrast to ‘grassroots up’ approaches through civil society movements. UN agencies led a middle path spearheaded by ILO and UNICEF, leading to the UNDP pioneering the concept and language of ‘[Human Development](#)’.

Although global ‘development agendas’ have existed since WW2, the [UN MDGs \(Millennium Development Goals\)](#) of 1999 were the first international framework for poverty alleviation, supported by most nations of the world – 148 signed up to the Millennium Declaration of 1999. Not perfect, and took some time to bring in Civil Society. The [SDGs \(Sustainable Development Goals\)](#) in 2015 also place climate and the environment at the heart of human development. They provide the basis for Wales’ Wellbeing Goals, International Strategy, and much of the work of CSOs around the world today.

[Post-development](#) thinking questions the fundamental idea of *economic development* as the goal for improved living standards, as an ethnocentric approach that measures cultures in a hierarchy based on assumptions of wealthy Western cultures to be the ‘top’. Post-development approaches value solidarity, reciprocity, indigenous knowledge, cultural tradition and exchange as the heart of progress.

One of the main critiques and barriers to international development throughout history has been **corruption**, public narratives of which (in the west) almost always place responsibility and blame on recipient governments / organisations and individuals, rather than the ‘corruptee’. Sadly, this narrative endures through the ages.

The Language of Civil Society and Volunteering

The 'language' of volunteering and civil society movements has varied over time, and people continue to hold different notions today to describe similar activities. For example, current health link participants may see themselves as professionals doing capacity building or learning exchanges; whilst others would define that they are *volunteering* their time and skills. Different phrases have been in and out of vogue over time.

Volunteering is defined by [NCVO](#) (the National Council of Voluntary Organisations)¹ as

“any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and social action. Everyone has the right to volunteer, and volunteering can have significant benefits for individuals and society as a whole.”

Campaigning Activism is defined by the Encyclopaedia of Social Justice² as

“action on behalf of a cause, beyond what is conventional or routine: door to door canvassing, alternative radio, public meetings, rallies, or fasting. The cause might be women's rights, opposition to a factory, or world peace. Activism has played a major role in ending slavery, challenging dictatorships, protecting workers from exploitation, protecting the environment, promoting equality for women, opposing racism, and many other important issues. Activism can also be used for aims such as attacking minorities or promoting war. Activism has been present throughout history, in every sort of political system. Yet it has never received the same sort of attention from historians as conventional politics, with its attention to rulers, wars, elections, and empires. Activists are typically challengers to policies and practices, trying to achieve a social goal, not to obtain power themselves. Much activism operates behind the scenes.”

Social Movements

“Social movements are defined as networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities. It is argued that the concept is sharp enough a) to differentiate social movements from related concepts such as interest groups, political parties, protest events and coalitions; b) to identify a specific area of investigation and theorising for social movement research.”³

Civil Society

“Civil society is widely understood as the space outside the family, market and state (WEF, 2013). What constitutes civil society has developed and grown since the term first became popular in the 1980s and it now signifies a wide range of organised and organic groups including nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions, social movements, grassroots organisations, online networks and communities, and faith groups (VanDyck, 2017; WEF, 2013). Civil society organisations (CSOs), groups and networks vary by size, structure and platform ranging from international non-governmental organisations (e.g. Oxfam) and mass social movements (e.g. the Arab Spring) to small, local organisations (e.g. Coalition of Jakarta Residents Opposing Water Privatisation).”⁴

Third Sector

“Third sector organisations' is a term used to describe the range of organisations that are neither public sector nor private sector. It includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives.”⁵

¹ NCVO website, accessed 29.10.21 <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy>

² Gary Anderson and Kathryn Herr (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007), pp. 19-27

³ Diani, Mario (1992) *'The Concept of Social Movement'* in Sociological Review

⁴ Cooper, Rachel (2018) *"What is Civil Society, its role and value in 2018?"* University of Birmingham

⁵ National Audit Office [website](#) (2021)

The ‘International Sector’ in wider Civil Society

Welsh Civil Society is recognised and structured through the Government of Wales Acts, which make provision for a Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) - coordinated through Wales Council for Voluntary Action ([WCVA](#)) and drawing together 25 different ‘sectors’ across Welsh civil society (source – [Third Sector Report 2020](#)):

Sector	Representative / Coordinating body
Advice and Advocacy	Independent Advice Providers Forum
Animal Welfare	Animal Welfare Network for Wales
Arts, Culture and Heritage	Voluntary Arts Wales
Asylum Seekers and Refugees	Welsh Refugee Council
Children and Families	Children in Wales
Community Building	Communities Trust
Community Justice	Community Justice Cymru
Disability	Wales Disability Reference Group
Education and Training	Adult Learning Wales
Employment	Siawns Teg
Environment	Wales Environment Link
Ethnic Minorities	BAME Alliance
Gender	Women’s Equality Network Wales
Health, Social Care & Wellbeing	Health, Social Care, Wellbeing and Sport Planning Group
Housing	Homes for All Cymru
Local and Regional Intermediaries	CVC Cymru
International	Welsh Centre for International Affairs
Older People	Age Cymru
Religion	Interfaith Council for Wales
Sexuality	Stonewall Cymru
Social Enterprise	Social Enterprise Network
Sport and Recreation	Welsh Sports Association
Volunteering	Volunteering Wales Network
Welsh Language	Mentrau Iaith Cymru
Youth	Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services (CWYVS)

Movements within a Movement: Internationalist Identities

There are a number of ‘sectors’ within the international sector itself; these can be viewed either ‘top down’, as networks of organisations who coordinate with each other, or ‘bottom up’ as causes with which individuals identify and are motivated to support:

Sectors (‘civil society down’)	Identities (‘communities up’)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseas Aid Group (WOAG) • Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) • Community Links • Health Links • African Diaspora Links eg SSAC • Development Education eg CEWC • Climate eg Size of Wales • Activism & Campaigns eg Fairtrade Wales • Wider diaspora links & remittances eg India • International youth volunteering eg UNA Exchange • Town twinning & cultural exchange eg Llangollen • Wales Arts International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace activists and campaigners • Arms protestors • Environmental protectionists • Humanitarian interventionists • Development practitioners • Volunteer exchanges • Global citizenship educationalists • Sustainable tourism • Fair Trade and ethical business • Arts and cultural exchange • International trade

WELSH EFFORTS FOR WORLD PEACE,

1920-1927.

The CHILDREN OF WALES were the first to send by Wireless a greeting of goodwill to all other children in every land under the sun.

The WOMEN OF WALES were the first to send a message of Peace from the homes of one people to the homes of another.

The TEACHERS OF WALES were the first to teach the principles of the League of Nations in the schools.

The CHURCHES OF WALES were the first to make an annual offering in furtherance of World Peace.

LEADERS OF RELIGION IN WALES were the first to present a Memorial to Leaders of Religion in America on behalf of the League of Nations.

The Welsh National Council of the League of Nations Union makes its appeal for still further support to help Wales to become, more and more, a Missionary Nation for Peace amongst all the Peoples of the World.