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## THE CELEBRITY BURDEN: CELEBRITY CAMPAIGNS IN THE PURSUIT OF HUMANITARIANISM

Regina Akosua Dede Baiden  
*Michigan Technological University*

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THE CELEBRITY BURDEN: CELEBRITY CAMPAIGNS IN THE PURSUIT OF  
HUMANITARIANISM

By

Regina Akosua Dede Baiden

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In Rhetoric and Technical Communication

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2013

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This thesis has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE in Rhetoric and Technical Communication.

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## 2 Abstract

Celebrity participation in humanitarianism and politics has received a lot of attention in recent times. Though many researchers have sought to explain the reasons underlying this phenomenon, there appears to be little information as to the efficacy of these celebrity efforts. The present research thus undertakes an analysis of the celebrity's participation through a study on the effectiveness of the celebrity-led campaign. To achieve this, I conduct a discourse and visual analysis of media publications surrounding two celebrity-led campaigns. The research leans heavy on theories underlining the celebrity mechanism and Street et al's framework on celebrity participation in politics. The study confirms Street et al's argument that performance, legitimacy and organization are central to the success of the celebrity-led campaign. For campaigns aimed at initiating policy change, I propose an additional category of stakeholders' response which provides a means of evaluating efficacy. My findings show that organization, legitimization, stakeholders' response and performance are highly dependent on the actions of the lead celebrity, making these celebrities active agents in the production of discourse on the "third world". As celebrities engage in humanitarian work, they take up positions as representatives of the aid recipient. The result is the dispossession and silencing of the aid recipient. Out of my discussion of these practices evolves the concept of the celebrity burden.

### 3 Introduction

*“I am a very fortunate person, I have been lucky and blessed enough to be very successful in ways that I always wanted as an actor, writer, director, so on but, I got to a point where I felt like I am living this vacuous life... In 2002, I formed the East Congo Initiative... It is very rewarding for me ... This is what I believe in and I think it is the meaning of life: getting involved in something, helping others improving the fabric of the universe” (Affleck, 2013)*

These are the words of Ben Affleck in his introduction of the Eastern Congo Initiative, an organization that he founded in 2002. Affleck is not alone in this venture as more and more celebrities are today engaging with the non-profit sector. With similar confessions of commitment, devotion and selfless giving, celebrities speak of the campaigns and international organizations they work for. Halle Berry assists cancer patients, Oprah discusses education in South Africa, Salma Hayek supports female victims of domestic violence, Sting saves the rainforest, Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt eradicate extreme rural poverty. The list is endless. Like Affleck, many of these celebrities have more recently engaged in the creation of their own organizations rather than endorsing established non-governmental organizations. Their work within this sector has multiplied over the last few decades. “Look to the Stars,” a website dedicated to celebrity charity work, lists over 3090 celebrities involved with one organization or another (Look To The Stars, 2013).

With so many celebrities getting involved, there is a need to inquire into the effectiveness of such venture, particularly given the sensitive nature of humanitarian work. The effectiveness or otherwise of such humanitarian engagements bear grave consequences on the beneficiaries whose livelihoods are dependent on them. My immediate preoccupation is with the effectiveness of the celebrity’s efforts within humanitarianism. I define “effectiveness” as the extent to which the celebrity’s efforts facilitate the dissemination of critical information on the campaign and potentially lead to policy change. The bulk of research on the celebrities’ humanitarian work has been



largely limited to questions of: competence and legitimacy of the celebrity and the misappropriation of funds (Dieter & Kumar, 2008), oversimplification of humanitarian issues (Alleyne, 2005; Moyo, 2009), case studies on a particular celebrity's humanitarian work (Wilson, 2011) and research that historicizes the field (Wheeler, 2011). Most of these studies have concentrated on celebrities as agents of visibility as opposed to their creation of an organization. In this work, I concentrate on organizations initiated by celebrities. In some sense, the celebrity's creation of a not-for-profit organization can be considered as the epitome of commitment, investment, and dedication to humanitarianism. Though the majority of these organizations are careful in the selection of liberal issues such as poverty, disease and the environment, the association of a celebrity to an organization suggests a full political engagement since the organization becomes tied to the celebrity. Hence, the success or failure of the organization might affect the celebrity's fame.

### **3.1 The Celebrity: The Individual and the System**

“Celebrity” is not simply about fame, though the word has a long etymology which is often associated with fame, well-knownness (Boorstin, 1992), exultation, and notoriety. According to Marshall, the modern day usage of the word emanates from a metaphoric sense of value which is imbricated in the celebration of the individual and the power structures that make her or him possible. Ultimately, Marshall positions celebrity as “the empowerment of the people to shape the public sphere symbolically” (Marshall, 1997, p. 7). In his opinion, celebrity “describes a type of value that can be articulated through an individual and celebrated publicly as important and significant” (ibid). The celebrity emerges out of a carefully organized system composed of the representation of the individual celebrity and the collective subjectivity that accompanies it. The celebrity system is made up of producers, marketers, advertisers, makeup artists, promoters etc. The celebrity system creates and circulates the celebrity, thus forming the basis upon which the celebrity's power is acquired. Central to celebrity power is the ability to generate *affect* (I will broach this more fully in chapter 2), which influences fans and a

general audience to invest both financially and emotionally in their association with the celebrity. This sense of collectivity and oneness with the celebrity is maintained through a para-social relationship with him or her (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Horton and Wohl propose that the mass media (television, radio and movies) offers an illusion of a face-to-face relationship between audiences and performers. Audiences are therefore likely to develop a relationship with the celebrity through television programs and social media.

Although audiences (and particularly fans) are instrumental to the creation and circulation of the celebrity, celebrity is a fabrication of the celebrity industry (the mass mediated production of popular culture) driven by capitalist goals. Though the meaning of celebrity is constructed by the fans, it remains a product of cultural forms produced by the dominant culture (Marshall, 1997). Celebrity is a fabrication with the purpose of making monetary gains. Turner provides an explicit definition of this industry, as he stipulates the culture and economic processes that make it possible (Turner, 2004). According to him, the celebrity is the outcome of a process of “commodification, a negotiated cultural identity and the representational process employed by the media” (Turner, 2004, p. 4). In other words, the celebrity is constantly fabricated and regulated to achieve capitalist goals. Yet the celebrity image is not simply limited to the construction of the celebrity industry but it equally involves “the discursive and ideological context within which that persona could develop” (ibid, p. 7). The celebrity figure is created and circulated in a manner that appeals to audiences through the use of the media industry. It is these ideas of celebrity and the celebrity industry that inform my writing. However, my focus is not on the social and economic functions of celebrity but rather how these functions culminate as the celebrity takes up a political and humanitarian role.

### **3.2 From Celebrity to Humanitarian Activist**

In an ever-globalizing world, activities in one corner of the world affect and influence events elsewhere. There is constant reciprocal effect made possible by the ostensible free flow of information. A fertile ground is thus created upon which cultural diffusion

occurs. The expedited link between culture and media industry ensures that the celebrity like other cultural products is effectively disseminated globally. This transforms the celebrity into a transnational figure not limited to her or his country of origin. The result is a global citizen who is able to draw attention to anything associated with her or him including consumer products such as clothing, drinks, appliances etc.

The celebrity's capacity for visibility makes her or him an adequate agent in the dispensation of global humanitarian concerns. For this reason, a multiplicity of not-for-profit organizations employ the services of these celebrities. The popularity acquired through philanthropic acts make humanitarianism a prerequisite for consistent fame. According to Meyer and Gamson, nearly every celebrity in Hollywood is associated with one cause or the other (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). The celebrity's disposition to engage in humanitarian work is not restricted to entertainment celebrities alone, it equally involves entrepreneurial celebrities (e.g. Mo Ibrahim, Bill Gates), ex-government, public officials (e.g. Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan), and humanitarian activists (e.g. John Prendergast, Kenneth Roth) among others. In the realm of humanitarian work, references can be made to all these forms of celebrity. However, the political and entrepreneurial celebrities are beyond the scope of this research. Our focus shall be on entertainment celebrities who represent the majority of this population. These celebrities, according to Street, make "pronouncements on politics and claim the right to represent people and causes ... without seeking or acquiring elected office" (Street, 2004, p. 438). As of July, 2012, the United Nations alone had over 136 entertainment celebrities working for its agencies under the title of Goodwill Ambassadors (United Nations, 2012). The factors mentioned thus far make it necessary to study celebrities and their impact on the humanitarian discourse. It is based on this knowledge of the celebrity system and its potential for humanitarian engagement that I set off to investigate the success of celebrity participation in humanitarianism.

To better understand the celebrity-led campaign and its effectiveness, I examine the factors that enable the celebrities' participation in humanitarianism and the success thereof. To achieve this, I selected two celebrity-led organizations (ONE and Not on Our

Watch). For each of these organizations, I selected a campaign (No More Hunger and the Satellite Sentinel Project<sup>1</sup> respectively). My selection of these organizations is based on the fact that they are centered in Africa. The current exodus of celebrity projects towards Africa warrants a study of projects based on the continent. Fundamental to this research is the representational discourse formulated on the continent and the power relations emerging out of celebrity efforts. In sum, the following research questions guided the work:

1. To what extent is the celebrity's humanitarian work effective? i.e. Can this form of humanitarianism go beyond the politics of celebrity visibility?
2. What factors make the celebrity's participation in humanitarianism possible?
3. What are the implications of the celebrity's humanitarian work? i.e. Can the transnational celebrity represent the local population?

To answer these research questions, I undertake a discourse and visual analysis (to be discussed in chapter 3) of media publications on the two celebrity-led campaigns. I focused on how these media publications create a discourse on Africa and the "Third World" in general. I analyzed the media articles using Street et al's framework on the participation of musicians in politics. Street et al proposes three categories of analysis namely: performance, organization, and legitimacy. I studied the media articles using these categories. An additional category identified in my research was stakeholders' response. The stakeholder's response is a vital component for celebrity campaigns aimed at policy change. The efficacy of the campaign is analyzed based on how these categories interact in the dissemination of the campaigns' purpose, which leads to the political engagement among audiences and finally policy change at the state level.

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<sup>1</sup> Though the Satellite Sentinel Project is considered as a separate organization from Not on Our Watch, I study its evolution as a campaign initiated by a member of Not on Our Watch and funded by the organization. More importantly, I consider the fact that Not on Our Watch still acts as an advocate for the project.

### **3.3 Overview of Work**

In chapter Two, I trace the mechanisms of celebrity that make this humanitarianism possible. I commence by explaining the heightened engagement of celebrities in humanitarianism. I propose the concept of “celebrity burden” to explain the celebrities’ preoccupation with humanitarian work. My focus here is on the unique position within which the western celebrity is placed as a candidate for humanitarian activism. Through a review of literature, I reveal the enabling mechanisms of celebrity which are employed in the service of humanitarianism. To do this, concepts such as visibility, affect, authenticity, political economy, and cultural imperialism are highlighted.

Chapter Three starts with a review of Street et al’s framework and the methodology employed in the discursive analysis of the campaigns. I then take a detailed look at ONE’s No More Hunger campaign and the Satellite Sentinel Project. Both projects are celebrity-driven with Bono and George Clooney as the lead celebrities. For each of the campaigns I investigate the organization, performance, stakeholders’ response and legitimacy of the celebrity (ies) involved.

Chapter Four provides a discussion of my findings in relation to the literature reviewed in chapter two. I demonstrate through the findings of the case study the ways in which the celebrity humanitarianism is performed, legitimized, and organized. The efficiency of the two campaigns is discussed in terms of their impact on beneficiaries and what effect the campaigns may have had on policy change. Out of this discussion, I develop the concept of the celebrity burden. I then turn to explain implications of the celebrities’ engagement in humanitarianism. The final section of this research provides suggestions on how the celebrity burden can be improved to include beneficiaries and opens up areas for further research.

## 4 Chapter Two: Revisiting Research on Celebrity and Humanitarian Participation

### 4.1 The Humanitarian Celebrity

A multiplicity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have emerged over the last few decades, in the same way, more and more celebrities have been employed as advocates for these organizations. In this position, the celebrity becomes the medium of the campaigns—the diverse means by which the campaign’s message is sent forth to the public. Entering into humanitarian work, the celebrity presents a distinct form of activism. The ability to bring audience attention to a cause is regarded as the celebrity’s strongest asset (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). The saturation of celebrities in humanitarian work makes humanitarianism appear as though it was a requirement for the celebrity figure. It is as if the celebrity must have a cause. Celebrity involvement in humanitarian work is generally perceived as a binary which is either aimed at increasing popularity or an act of altruism. Regardless of the case, the celebrity has become a bearer of the humanitarian burden. I propose here a concept of celebrity burden, which I define *as the responsibility felt by the celebrity to engage in humanitarian that is set in a transnational context with implications for the aid recipient*. The celebrity burden reflects the heavy weight of humanitarian engagement that weighs on the celebrity figure. Humanitarianism has become an obligation that the celebrity must carry out irrespective of one’s interest or ability to effectively do so (will be discussed in chapter 4).

Holistically, the economic, psychological, and social make up of Hollywood predisposes its celebrities to engage in activism. According to Prindle, the choices of advocacy issues are distant from issues affecting the entertainment industry. The industry is often preoccupied with “symbolic politics” (Prindle, 1993). That is to say, Hollywood concerns itself with broader social issues than those affecting the industry. Hollywood has a strong leaning towards left-wing politics because of the industry’s social institutions, the high Jewish and homosexual community, and economic insecurity (ibid).

These factors push Hollywoodites towards the left. The left wing character of Hollywood means issues that have a conservative make up are avoided and many of its members engage with issues such as civil liberties, abortion, handgun control, AIDS, nukes, and homelessness (ibid). Given the capitalistic agencies and purposes within and for which celebrity is produced, the celebrity figure is much obliged to give back to society. For some, this is achieved through the employment of their media visibility in the service of global humanitarianism. In giving back to society in this manner, the celebrity appears to be rewarding the audience for their attention (Collins, 2007).

## **4.2 Humanitarianism on the International Scene**

The political participation of the celebrity on the international scene is arguably considered by some researchers as a diplomatic dispensation. Cooper and others have defined the phenomenon as “celebrity diplomacy” (Alleyne, 2005; A. F. Cooper, 2008; Wheeler, 2011). For Cooper, the celebrity diplomat is “largely a public phenomenon, defined by an activism on the world stage that is cast as the stylistic opposite from the insulated and secretive world of mainstream diplomacy” (A. F. Cooper, 2008). He draws a distinction between the celebrity politician and celebrity diplomat. This difference lies in the separation of political officials from the autonomous celebrity figure who is not restricted to national boundaries.

To define the celebrity’s humanitarian work in terms of diplomacy is problematic. The celebrity’s activism is often conducted outside the boundaries of institutional diplomacy, which normally requires state representation. Celebrities are not state representatives. As autonomous individuals, their humanitarian work is free from the confines of institutions and state allegiance. For many years, traditional International Relations theory and the literature on diplomacy has centered on the interaction between states as opposed to individuals. In recent times, the emerging field of Constructivist theory has theorized activism differently. The work of Constructivist theorists concentrate on the individual and organization’s engagement in politics and humanitarian

work (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Florini, 1996; Yanacopulos, 2004). The Constructivists theory of norm entrepreneurship offers a means of understanding the humanitarian efforts of celebrities on the international scene. The norm entrepreneur is an individual or an organization that detects faults in present conducts of appropriate behavior or norms and makes efforts at changing them. Celebrities can therefore be categorized under this group. Though celebrity efforts may not be outright diplomacy, they are members of the Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN)—a fundamental feature in norm entrepreneurship—by virtue of their engagement with causes beyond the boundaries of their country. For some celebrities, their engagement in politics and humanitarian work move beyond advocacy for an organization as they endeavor to create their own humanitarian organizations. These celebrities become members of this group (TAN) of “relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and a dense exchange of information and services” (Keck & Sikkink, 1999, p. 23). The celebrity who engages in the creation of a humanitarian organization becomes a member of TAN because of her or his ability to determine what issues are advanced internationally.

To understand the increasing involvement of celebrity in philanthropy, I investigate the mechanisms that make celebrity possible in the first place. The very factors that enable the production of celebrity facilitate its entrance into philanthropy. In what follows, I look at how factors such as the star image, visibility, affect and authenticity shape and enable the celebrity to engage in humanitarian work.



## **4.3 Factors enabling and sustaining the celebrity's efforts**

### **4.3.1 The Star Image and Authenticity**

The celebrity is a product of a carefully organized system of production, circulation and consumption. Celebrities are both the products and raw materials that fuel this system. According to Dyer, they are both products produced by the celebrity industry and at the same time the very means utilized in the generation of cultural products. Hence, the celebrity industry works to increase profit through a careful regulation of the celebrity's image.

The fabricated nature of celebrity means that the celebrity requires a consistent effort to attain authenticity among audiences. As Marshall says, the celebrity represents a false sign (Marshall, 1997). This is even more questionable when they participate in charity. Authenticity calls on the "real" behind the "reel" representation in the public sphere (Dyer, 2000). It is the extent to which the celebrity is perceived as being real, genuine, and sincere by the audience. According to Dyer, the film star must appear authentic both on-screen and off-screen. For audiences, the off-screen discourse represents the "real" celebrity. Despite knowledge of the celebrity's manufactured nature, the audience still looks to tabloids and press gossip columns for the reality of the celebrity's existence. Hence the production of celebrity often entails a blending of their careers with their personal lives. The private and the public must be considered as merging into one in order for the celebrity to be regarded as an authentic presentation of the celebrity self. In Dyer's analysis of the film star, authenticity performs a dual function in which it forms the basis upon which the star image is built and at the same time it authenticates the values embodied by the star (Dyer, 2000). Though his work focuses on the film star, analogies can be drawn from this work to explain other forms of celebrities.

Authenticity is derived differently by each of the celebrity forms. For the film celebrity, authenticity entails appearing authentic within extra-textual domains such as magazine interviews, television appearances etc. For the musician, it is drawn from an

affective association with the audience, and for the television personality, it requires a strong mass mediated-strategy where the television celebrity attempts to simulate a face-to-face interaction with audience watching his or her program (see Marshall, 1997). The authenticity of the celebrity's image is put to the test when the celebrity engages in activism. Collins confirms that for the celebrity to be considered as an authentic activist, there must be a consonance between the on-screen and off-screen representations of the celebrity (Collins, 2007). Both representations of the celebrity must be reflective of the celebrity's commitment to activism in order for audience to accept her or him as an authentic activist.

In the celebrity's humanitarian work, authenticity remains one of the most useful attributes. As the celebrity enters into humanitarian work, the loyalty, and commitment created between the celebrity and the audience is redirected for humanitarian ends. Generally, the everyday relationship between the celebrity and the audience denies the formulation of an intimate relationship, and entry into humanitarianism brings along a singular outlet that can be shared by both the celebrity and the audience. It is a common point which promises a strengthening of the relationship between the two halves. Legitimacy becomes the basis for deriving authenticity. The celebrity who gets involved in humanitarian work must first and foremost acquire "standing" on the issue or "a socially constructed legitimacy to engage publicly in a particular issue" (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). To obtain standing on an issue, the celebrity must be knowledgeable about the issue. In this regard, he or she must "make credible claims," which must be acknowledged by members of the organizations, the mass media, and political authorities (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). Similarly, Magubane argues that some celebrities build up authenticity and acquire standing by leaning on their past personal experiences (Magubane, 2008). Distinct examples of such celebrities include Oprah (who invokes race and gender) and Bono (whose experiences are connected to Ireland's colonial past and the famine of 1845). Magubane suggests that these experiences form the bases upon which celebrities rely to establish their role as equal "sufferers" with the Global South. For them, a shared history of race, poverty, and colonization becomes a legitimating factor in their quest to help (Magubane, 2008).

In many instances, a visit to the advocacy site is the most utilized form of validation. From Angelina Jolie to Alicia Keys, most of these celebrities narrate lived experiences within their project sites. These narratives enter a discourse of witnessing through which the celebrity is seen as having acquired standing on the issue. The word “witnessing” connotes the idea of providing testimony of what one has seen. For Kelly Oliver, witnessing goes beyond the act of testifying (Oliver, 2001). It involves the taking of a subjective position as one addresses and responds to others. In her view witnessing involves not just recognizing others but takes on “subjectivity and ethical relations” (ibid, 16). She argues that subjectivity is the process of witnessing. When one witnesses, she or he becomes responsible for the testimony given. Similarly, Ellis John attests to the responsibility to witness. In his opinion, once an event is viewed or experienced, there is an obligation on the individual to speak of it (Ellis, 2000). The witness is authorized to speak by virtue of having been present at an event (Peters, 2001). Peters argues that to “bear witness is to put one’s body on the line” (Peters, 2001). Therefore, the celebrity who views and experiences distant tragedies are obligated to testify to it. The celebrity’s testimony can never be compared to the individual who experiences these tragedies on a daily basis. Nonetheless, it is the celebrity—and most often the western celebrity—who bears witness to distant sufferings.

### **4.3.2 The visible celebrity and the power of affect**

As demonstrated so far, the celebrity possesses an audience–garnering mechanism. The celebrities’ ability to attract audience attention is thus the strongest asset of the celebrity who enters into humanitarian work. The ease of circulation of celebrity text means they are accessible to audiences. Collins defines circulation as the “process that works to distribute and promote celebrity for the purposes of creating sustained audiences for its consumption, whose attention ultimately deems the reproduction of celebrity status” (Collins, 2007). The circulation of the celebrity text combined with mass media circulation of the celebrity sign (or what Dyer refers to as the star image) allows the celebrity to attain a high level of visibility. Visibility occurs as a result of the continuous

production and distribution of the celebrity's work (music, film or a talk show). Through circulation, audiences start to recognize the celebrity and associate the individual with her or his work.

The visibility of the celebrity eases entry into humanitarian work. With the support of "tabloidization" (Turner, 2004), the prominence of soft news and the many media outlets available to contemporary celebrity, it becomes easy and rapid for the celebrity to be globally circulated allowing her or him to acquire transnational status. The celebrity is no longer limited to the country of emergence but is circulated to the extent that he or she is recognized globally. The attainment of such global significance is dependent on effective representation. The celebrity thus makes multiple efforts to move beyond the ephemeral nature of celebrity and to acquire a meaningfulness that transcends the simplicity of fame. It is this outlet that humanitarian work offers. According to Gamson and Meyer (1995), the celebrity can bring visibility to the campaign "by virtue of presence". It can therefore be inferred that the magnitude of visibility will be higher when the campaign is actually created by the celebrity. The celebrity's participation in a campaign allows it to reach a larger audience, but the ability to reach a diverse audience can be attributed to the celebrities' charisma, which Weber defines as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional quality" (Weber, 2007).

To undertake humanitarianism, the celebrity draws on the affective power of the celebrity sign. Affect is a resource that can be channeled for humanitarian ends. Affect, writes Grossberg (1992), is the energy invested in a particular cultural site. It consists of an investment made by the individual to a cultural text and is dependent on the individual "mattering map" (i.e. the individual's love for or will to invest in a particular cultural text) (Grossberg, 2001). This level of devotion displayed by one's mattering map is what separates the fan from other audience members. Unlike others, the fan engages in an active and pleasurable reconstruction of the cultural text (Fiske, 1991). The cultural text produced by the celebrity enables the audience to actively participate in the construction

of the celebrity by asserting meaning to their relationship with the celebrity. The affective relationship between the fan and the cultural text allows for a self-empowerment which can be further harnessed into political engagement by both the celebrity and the audience. Marshall argues that music's tendency to generate affect makes it a particularly effective for political engagement. Unlike other forms of celebrity, the musician is closely connected to audiences through the lyrics of her or his music and the possibility of a live concert where audiences can physically engage with the musician. Thus, music creates a sense of community among its audience especially among fans who become loyal to the celebrity and the music. For Marshall, the musician is the physical representation of the affective power of the audience (Marshall, 1997, p. 197). In this way, affect is clearly a resource that can be channeled for humanitarian purposes. Through an empowerment of the audience, celebrities encourage the audience to share in their humanitarian work. Hence, the burden of engaging in humanitarianism regenerates into a shared relationship between the celebrity and the audience. The celebrity's humanitarian work becomes another moment when the audience can identify with her or him.

### **4.3.3 Enabling the Whiteman's Burden: Celebrities aid the "Other"**

Literature on celebrity humanitarianism is referenced back to the colonial period. Berny Sebe mentions famous colonial figures such as General Gordon, David Livingston, and Cardinal Lavigerie who were world-renowned for their exploration and missionary work in the "Third World". Sebe refers to these individuals as the "celebrities of the colonial times" (Sebe, 2009). Though the fame of these personalities cannot be compared to our contemporary notion of celebrity—the capitalistic produced product of the modern cultural industry—the idea of colonial fame provides insight into the present engagement of celebrity in humanitarianism. Fundamental to the current study is the role that such colonial figures played in the "civilizing mission" of that epoch. Their position as helpers

and developers of the colonies places them in a similar discourse as present day celebrities. In other words, both groups invoke the Whiteman's burden.

Historically, the principal justification of the colonizing mission was to "save the other". On this saving mission, the West sought to liberate the "natives" from their primitive cultural practices through the imposition of the Christian religion and other cultural practices presumed to bring the "Other" into the ideals of the enlightenment. Yet, what this produces is a Social Darwinian discourse in which "help" is framed as the "burden of the fittest" (Spivak, 2004). Similar to the idea of the Whiteman's burden, the present day celebrity is positioned as a helper to the "Third World". For instance, the celebrity Bob Geldof has been described as a judge adjudicating promises made by Western politicians to support Africa (Yrjölä, 2011b, pp. 181-183). According to Yrjölä, Geldof is equally portrayed by the press as a discoverer who has acquired in-depth knowledge about Africa. The very notion of the discoverer and judge reminds one of the initial explorers of the 'new' world. Elsewhere, Bono (a renowned Irish musician and humanitarian advocate) in his forward to Jeffery Sachs' book *The End of Poverty* makes the following references; "It is up to us ... We can choose to shift the paradigm" (Sachs, 2005, p. xv). These statements are suggestive of a predominantly white population with the choice of changing the plight of the 'rest'. Easterly (2006) notes that western celebrity efforts are often considered as the "White" man's contribution to helping the poor. He categorizes such efforts under "Big Plans" that concentrate on aid-financed investments without focusing on the needs of the local population. It is believed that continuous large aid foreign aid will boost developing economies and this will lead to a self-sustained growth at some point. Easterly argues otherwise. He suggests that these efforts have been ineffective because they fail to engage local inhabitants (Easterly, 2006). It seems the messianic mission of colonization has trickled down to philanthropic acts by Western celebrities, echoing the age old story of the Whiteman's burden. Helping the Third World is considered a moral obligation that the West must fulfill and its celebrities take an active role.

Celebrity humanitarianism is highly populated by celebrities emerging out of the western entertainment industry. The magnitude of their engagement can be attributed to the global dominance of western entertainment industry such as Hollywood. Hollywood is strategically positioned in comparison to other cultural institutions around the globe and this places it in a dominant position which is often perceived as being negative in respect to Hollywood's domination of other markets. Music, movies, and talk shows produced by the West (and particularly Hollywood) are distributed around the globe, flooding the markets of the developing world. Not only have the products from this industry become global, its producers and entertainers have also gained global fame through these circulations. Such circulation of the western celebrity creates a geopolitical space for the exercise of western dominance. Dussel's notion of geopolitical space makes reference to the peripheral where the power of the center is acted out (Manoochehri, 2005). The idea of a periphery explains the constant presence of "captive markets" (Loomba, 2005) to consume Western products.

In *Global Hollywood*, Miller explains that globalization has shifted the power to regulate cultural production from states placing in their stead international capitalist institutions. However, the state still remains a regulatory body "in the internationalism of new communications technology, ownership and control" (Miller, Govil, McMurria, Maxwell, & Wang, 2005). In this realm of internationalism, it has more than ever become necessary for a state to protect and build a collective identity for its citizens through the production of cultural products. This places international dominant institutions such as Hollywood in a position where its cultural power and presence on the cultural market is consistently resisted and competed against. Its vast distribution of cultural products has left many countries on the defense.

Hollywood continues to hold an advantageous position in the mass media and information flow between North and South. The continual success of Hollywood is based on its early state intervention and control of the New International Division of Cultural Labor (NICL). From Miller's viewpoint global Hollywood is not situated in a particular place (California). Rather, Hollywood represents a multiracial production of films that

includes narratives and labor force from across the globe. However, this doesn't dismiss the fact that global film industry is dominated by a Caucasian population, and productions are constructed for an audience outside Hollywood.

Hollywood's position of dominance means its celebrities are strategically placed as they enter into humanitarian work. In other words, Hollywood's economic domination allows for the global circulation of its celebrities. The domination of western television programming leaves the western celebrity well-presented (globally) to the limitation of the local celebrities. These factors explain the western celebrity dominance in humanitarianism. Hollywood provides the platform upon which its celebrities can harness the audience-garnering capacity which becomes fundamental as he or she takes up a position of representation. In this endeavor, the attributes of celebrities remain at the forefront and their ability to wield power as cultural figures is instrumental.

The increasing circulation of western celebrities means there are more western products circulated in the "Third World". The inflow of western products hinders identity formation and leads to what Edouard Glissant would refer to as a "paralysis of cultural creativity" within the local context (Glissant, 1991). Western celebrities become highly visible in these local markets, dominating television screens away from their countries of origin. The domination of one cultural group over the other has been viewed by many as a form of cultural imperialism. Susantha Goonatilake defines cultural imperialism as "an imposition of a cultural package against the informed will of the recipients" (Goonatilake, 2005). Cultural imperialism is often a byproduct of political and economic imperialism. The introduction of these new cultural forms wrestles with existing cultural traditions which then serve as a prerequisite for subsequent dominations. According to Hamm, a neoliberal political and economic system lays the foundation upon which western media distribution takes effect (Hamm, 2005). Cultural imperialism is much more based on profiting capitalism and institutions of economic dominance rather than citizens of a particular nation. There is never a singular cultural control since culture domination escalates into pluralistic dominations, one which includes political, economic



and military domination. I suggest that cultural domination leads to a western celebrity domination as well.

As cultural imperialism facilitates a global circulation of the western celebrity, it creates the impression that they can speak about global issues. In other words, these celebrities become transnational figures who transcend their countries of origin. They therefore take up the role of representing the world's population. This idea of being globally known offers a pseudo mandate to celebrities who speak on behalf of the world's citizens irrespective of their geographical location. Magee posits that the current celebrity preoccupation with Africa invokes a "celebrity imperialism" which she considers as a reinforcement of power relations that place Africa in a "subordinate position and in service of the West" (Magee, 2009). Africa is presented as a continent that is continually dependent on the West. The discourse of helped and helper, or the dichotomy between the helped and the helper are aspects of the aid discourse that the celebrity is unable to avoid.

A lot of researchers have focused on the humanitarian efforts of celebrities (Huliaras & Tzifakis, 2010; Magubane, 2008; Richey & Stefano, 2008; Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos, & Huliaras, 2011; Wilson, 2011; Yrjölä, 2011a) but, to better understand it in view of the humanitarian burden on the celebrity, I look to Street et al's article on the political participation of musicians. This article provides a framework to guide the analysis of the campaigns presented in the next chapter.

## 5 Chapter Three: The Celebrity-led Campaign: Evaluation through Case Studies

### 5.1 Framework and Methodology

In the article *Playing to the crowd: the role of music and musicians in political participation*, the authors propose through the analysis of two music movements a framework to aid in the understanding and evaluation of music as a form of political participation (Street, Hague, & Savigny, 2008). Focusing on the role of the musician within political movements, Street et al's work centers on the *celebrity* politician who emerges out of the entertain industry without any form of political affiliation. This form of *celebrity* politician "refers to the entertainer who pronounces on politics and claims the right to represent peoples and causes, but who does so without seeking or acquiring elected office" (Street, 2004, p. 438). An analysis of music and the musician's political participation can only be validated through an inquiry into the conditions that allow for "the organization and legitimation of the link between music and politics" (Street et al., 2008).

Street et al suggest that it is public interaction that places leisure and symbolic participation at the center of political involvement. Nonetheless, music's role in politics is often regarded as a functional agent that either brings the political participation into being or allows the communication of its message. The authors argue for the need to look beyond this functional approach and to regard music's politics in terms of the context that makes the link between the two possible in the first place. To do this, the authors propose an organizing framework which blends three aspects of the link between music and political participation, namely: Legitimization, Organization and Performance. These conditions must be met in order for music and the musician to play a pivotal role in politics (ibid, 275).

Firstly, the concept of legitimization holds that the musician must gain political credibility on the cause which he or she represents. According to Street et al, "the

capacity to speak [to the cause] has to be produced, it can neither be assumed nor derived from general claims about popularity” (Street et al., 2008). These claims are similar to Meyer and Gamson’s concept of “standing,” which I mentioned in Chapter Two. For Street et al, Legitimization is acquired through mediation, that is, the ways by which press and media institutions recognize the celebrity as an expert on the cause. Secondly, there is the need to consider the organization’s infrastructure that underlines the celebrity campaign. This involves an understanding of the financial, cultural and social capital that fuel political movement. Lastly, the notion of performance pertains to the gestures and forms of expression that constitute the musical concert (Street et al., 2008). Here the authors focus on the musical concert (event) and its ability to move an audience beyond simply enjoying the music to taking action based on the lyrics. In essence, the use of music for political ends encourages its audience to physically engage in the campaign.

Street et al’s framework aids in understanding the musician’s participation in politics. The musician represents a powerful tool for humanitarian work given the unique ability of music to elicit affect and build a sense of community as Grossberg writes. In as much as each form of celebrity is different, so are the means they utilize in their humanitarian work. I therefore consider celebrity more broadly. Using Street et al’s concepts of Legitimacy, Performance, and Organization, I adapt the framework in the following ways.

For this research, *Legitimization* refers to the celebrity’s ability to maintain an authentic relationship to the campaign. I investigate how previous humanitarian work and other activities of the celebrity are brought to bear on the present campaign. I also look at how the continuous production and circulation of the campaign goals allows the celebrity to appear as authentic. Similar to Street et al, I focus on how media discourses on the campaign reflect the celebrities’ authenticity. Legitimacy remains a difficult criterion to measure since it is subjective in itself. The truthfulness of one’s commitment and devotion to a cause cannot be evaluated with certainty. Hence I evaluate the extent to which these case studies endeavor to exhibit authenticity.

*Organization* will highlight the features and structures of the campaign that serve as capital in the communication of its mission. Here, I concentrate on the framing of the campaign, the organization's structure, and publicity. Framing consists of the careful structuring or defining of an issue to the extent that the audiences are unable to disregard the importance of the issue. The construction and consistency of the framing eases audience acceptance of the issue's urgency. Framing enables the campaign organizers to fix meanings and alert others to the importance of the campaign (Barnett, 1999). In addition to framing, the organization's structure pertains to the levels and networks of authority set up within the campaigning body. I investigate the organization's structure with specific focus on the role of the organization's staff and the role of the celebrity in the campaign process. Lastly, publicity refers to the means by which the campaign's goals are articulated via the internet (the campaign's website, social media, etc.). I highlight how the internet is used by the campaign's staff to direct audience attention to their cause.

I consider *Performance* as the events through which the campaign is revealed to the audience. I refer to these events as acts of performance. Examples include musical videos, televised interviews etc through which the celebrities speak to audiences about the campaign. I analyzed media texts on these events to see how the campaign's mission was presented to the prospective donor or participant. I pay selective attention to events that served as avenues to reiterate the campaign's goal and allowed for a specific framing of the campaign's purpose. These events to be discussed were led by celebrities and presented the strongest exhibition of the celebrity's role.

Yet performance must generate some level of action in order to be considered as effective. The reaction of stakeholders is vital to the accomplishment of such action particularly when it is related to policy change. *Stakeholders' Response* consists of the viewpoint of critical countries and other governmental bodies on the campaign. By critical countries, I make reference to countries that have an important role to play in the resolution of the issue or problem. This group includes countries affected by the problem and countries aiding or who are in a position to aid in the resolution of the problem. I

recognize government officials and agencies as the main bodies capable of enforcing changes in policies. The Stakeholders' Response will thus include accolades and some criticisms made by critical states, e.g. Sudan, and the response from the campaign organizers. I consider this criterion a means of evaluating the campaign through the discourse presented on it. It also provides insights into the possible effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the celebrity campaign.

The analysis presented in this chapter is based on 206 publications on the selected campaigns. The collected data include trade press, popular press, self-published articles by the organization (press release, blogs, and website), transcripts of videos, interviews, and state senate proceedings. For the Satellite Sentinel Project, I selected all text referencing the campaign from September, 2011 to March, 2012. I conducted the search using the following database: LexisNexus, General OnFile, ProQuest, InfoTrack Newsstand and Reader's Guide Abstracts. The search generated 173 articles. Having skimmed through the articles on the campaign, it appeared relevant to focus on the events of March 13–16 since this week presented the most consistency<sup>2</sup> in terms of the campaign's Performance. Although the campaign's Performance centered on these publications, prior dated articles were essential in garnering information on the campaign's Organization, Legitimization, and the Stakeholders' Response.

The Hungry No More campaign was in existence for only three month. For this reason, all articles, blogs, videos, website publications referencing the campaign were taken into consideration. For the Hungry No More campaign, I conducted my search using General OneFile, LexisNexus, ProQuest, CQ Electronic Library, World News Digest, and Readers' Guide Abstract. However, the bulk of articles were obtained from LexisNexus and General OneFile since the other database did not generate any results. In

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<sup>2</sup> Consistency here refers to the continuous media coverage of the campaign. The week that I selected showed continuous reference to the campaign.

all, I collected a total of 33 articles on the campaign. In addition to articles, I included self-publications such as ONE's blog, website and press statements.

To analyze these publications I employed both visual and discourse analysis method. Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method which involves the analysis of language usage within a text. Text, be it audio, visual or written requires a context to render it meaningful. The meaning of the text can be derived through the study of the text in relation to other texts, the context of production, dissemination, and consumption. As a form of textual analysis, the discourse analysis enables the construction of meaning through a careful study of the language used within the text. In sum, discourse analysis involves "ascertaining the constructive effects of discourse through the structured and systematic study of texts" (Harding, p. 200, qtd in Phillips & Hardy, 2002). The proliferation of media texts makes them an adequate resource for discourse analysis. The method answers questions of representation, identity construction, and power relations that are fundamental to my analysis (Hesmondhalgh, 2006). I therefore employ discourse analysis because it allows for the consideration of multiple ways in which representations can be accounted for. The method provides means of understanding how media publications on the campaigns portray the campaign's message and its celebrities. Though discourse analysis is useful in identifying the representational practices occurring within these media texts, the method is often complicated in that a single lexical item can drive different interpretation of the same event. Hence, the text can be considered as polysemic and subject to multiple interpretations.

To avoid overburdening the analysis with personal interpretations and in an effort to allow the data to generate their own stories, the articles were first skimmed for emerging themes. For each article, I sought to identify themes that were in line with the theoretical framework (Legitimacy, Performance, and Organization), though I was open to identifying additional themes. The articles were then coded by using what is also known as a theory-driven code (Boyatzis, 1998). For each theme, I identified schema within the text that reflected this information. For instance under legitimacy for Clooney and the Satellite Sentinel Project, I noticed a continual reference to his visit to Sudan

during the campaign period. I therefore labeled this as “witnessing,” which constituted action in the legitimization of his role as an advocate for human rights. Having gathered these subthemes, I regrouped them as clusters under the main criteria (Legitimacy, Performance, Organization, and the emerging theme of Stakeholders’ Response). These criteria served as measures by which the campaign’s efficacy can be analyzed. Though the analysis was guided by Street et al framework, I use Kress and van Leeuwen’s grammar of visual design for an in-depth analysis of the visual text.

The grammar of visual design provides a descriptive framework grounded in social semiotics. The framework concentrates on the role of ‘signs’ in meaning making. Kress and van Leeuwen believe in the fundamental role of the “sign-maker” in the production of the text (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). It regards both text and images as visual representations and heavily depends on the works of Barthes, Pierces, Saussure and Halliday. The grammar of visual design is based on the grammatical structure of the image that makes its meaning possible. Key to this approach is how compositional (framing, salience, and information value), interactive and representational patterns aid in the creation and interpretation of the visual text. Similar to the syntactic structure of sentences, Kress and van Leeuwen believe that concepts related to the visual text (modality, framing, salience, information value, actor, goal, reactors, offer and demand) can be depended upon to transmit the message of the text (ibid).

The concepts addressed by Kress and van Leeuwen are instrumental in providing a descriptive analysis of the visual text as used by the two celebrity-led campaigns. My use of this framework is limited to elements of framing, salience, and information value. Here, framing pertains to color and line markings to distinguish or group visual elements together (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 203). A separation of elements through framing signifies individuality while a grouping of elements together symbolizes group identity. Salience has to do with contrast in tonal value and differences in sharpness of color. Information value reveals that the importance of element is dependent on where the element is placed in the visual text. Salience and information value aid in distinguishing

quintessential information in the text. The concepts I have outlined here become more visible through the analysis of the celebrity-led campaigns.

## **5.2 Case Studies**

In what follows, I undertake a discourse and visual analysis of media texts on the two campaigns: No More Hunger and Satellite Sentinel Project. As earlier mentioned, the analysis is conducted using Street et al's framework on the political engagement of musicians. Elements that speak to the Organization, Legitimacy, and Performance of the campaigns were identified as well as an additional category, Stakeholders' Response. I commence with an analysis of Bono's ONE organization. For each case study, I provide a brief history on the organization and the campaign followed by the analysis.

### **5.2.1 Analysis 1: Hungry No More Campaign**

ONE presents a merger between DATA (Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa) and the ONE Campaign. DATA was birthed in 2002 following the "Drop the Debt" movement (ONE, 2012b). The creation of the organization was a result of collaboration between Bono, Bob Geldof and other celebrities. With close to six years of work as separate organizations, ONE and DATA were merged under the name ONE in 2008 (ONE, 2012b). Since the merger, ONE has focused on various issues of development, education, energy, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, water, and sanitation; causes that were formerly undertaken by the separate organizations. Its mission is stated as follows: "to fight extreme poverty and preventable disease in the poorest places on the planet, particularly in Africa" (ONE, 2012b). The organization is run as a non-profit with a regular staff aside from its celebrities. It describes itself as:

*"a grassroots advocacy and campaigning organization that fights extreme poverty and preventable disease, particularly in Africa, by raising public awareness and pressuring political leaders to support smart and effective policies"*



*and programs that are saving lives, helping to put kids in school and improving futures.” (ONE, 2012b)*

As the above quotation reiterates, ONE’s mission centers on advocacy and organizing campaigns. ONE does not collect donations from its members. Membership is opened to the general public as ONE is determined to present itself as the voice of the wider population. ONE works in collaboration with other organizations including RED, CARE USA, Oxfam America, and the International Rescue Committee. Over the years, the organization has undertaken various campaigns. These include: the *ONE Baby Protest, Thrive, Trillion Dollar Scandal, Support Transparency and Hungry No More*. My focus for this research will be on the *Hungry No More* campaign.

The Hungry No More campaign was launched on 4th October, 2011 and ran until November of the same year. The campaign was initiated in response to the East African famine in 2011. Its mission was to petition world leaders to “invest in early warning systems and safety net programs” and to require donors to allocate resources towards improved agricultural practices in Africa (ONE, 2011). According to the campaign, droughts are natural disasters whereas famine is a manmade problem. The campaign identifies a lack of “political will” as being the main factor affecting the prevention of famine and its causes. Thus, the campaign outlines three main aims:

1. “to fill the \$600m financing gap for emergency assistance in the Horn of Africa and ensure that all those in need are reached. In the case of Somalia, greater regional and international political will is required to support an inclusive multi-stakeholder process-including a prominent voice for Somali civil society-that conclusively addresses the underlying causes of insecurity”.
2. “to live up to their (G 20) 2009 L’Aquila commitment to invest \$22 billion in agriculture and for African governments to fulfill their Maputo pledge to spend 10% of their national budgets on agriculture”
3. “invest in longer-term agriculture and food security initiatives to stop the cycle of extreme hunger, such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme” (Hunter, 2011).

### ***5.2.1.1 Organization***

Organization refers to the features and structures of the campaign that serve as capital in the communication of its mission. For the Hungry No More campaign, this consists of the framing of the campaign's message, the organization's structure and image, and the publicity constructed around the campaign.

Framing consists of the careful structuring or defining of an issue to give it maximum salience in terms of audience attention. To achieve this, ONE's managerial staff framed the campaign in terms of the three aims previously mentioned. However, the campaign's purpose became the signing of its online petition. The campaign first defines the issue (drought) as famine. By linking these two concepts (drought and famine), the famine conditions in the horn of Africa are framed as a human rights violation that can be solved through an investment in long-term agricultural practices. The simplicity of a slogan, "Drought is an act of nature, famine is manmade" (ONE, 2011) becomes the core around which the campaign is organized. Both press articles and ONE's website show a further framing of campaign goals through the identification of a location: the Horn of Africa. The selection of a location provides a focal point for the generation of audience attention. The campaign is targeted at the general public but its primary aim is to petition the G8, G20 and African governments to invest in long-term agricultural measures for the continent. Hence the Hungry No More campaign aims to change governmental policies through public cohesion. This is reflected by the role ONE plays in encouraging the general public to sign the online petition.

The Hunger No More campaign reveals the organization's image, that is, the identity built through press articles and self-publications by the campaigning body. The press coverage demonstrates a linking of the Hunger No More campaign to ONE's other roles. For instance, the *Entertainment Close-up* refers to ONE as an "anti-poverty advocacy group" (Entertainment Close-up, 2011). Similarly, *The Sun* describes the organization as a "campaign against poverty in Africa" (O'Brien, 2011). These

descriptions of the organization draw an association between the current campaign and ONE's role in poverty alleviation. Hence the campaign is defined in light of the ONE's institutional goals which help to build the organization's image and credibility. Apart from the press articles, ONE presents itself as an expert-based organization. Its managerial team includes technocrats in various fields and from all parts of the world. The organization's image is displayed on the website, which provides a list of its staff members, advisory board and board of directors (ONE, 2012a). The organization highlights the fact that it has an office on every continent, which seems to bring in local expertise. Aside from ONE's managerial staff, it also has a diverse board of directors including entertainment celebrities, business wo/men, policy makers, and others from the international non-governmental organizations. The celebrities on this board of directors are mainly the founders of the ONE. Though the organizational structure—the levels and networks of authority set up within the campaigning body—remains a distinctive blend of technocrats and celebrities, the Hungry No More campaign shows a distancing between the staff on the campaign and its celebrities recruits. The celebrities appear to be relegated to external roles mainly focused on publicity. Nevertheless, ONE's European director Adrian Lovett confirms in *The Huffington Post* that the campaign is dependent on its celebrities and “without them raising their voices” the famine would be disregarded (Morse, 2011).

The publicity of the campaign was the main means by which the campaign's goals were articulated. The Hunger No More campaign was partitioned into various sections. The campaign included a one minute Public Service Announcement (PSA), an online petition signing and a presentation of the petition. Each component of the campaign was therefore interlinked with the aim of acquiring 500,000 signatures to the campaign's petition, which was later presented to government leaders around the globe. As part of its outreach efforts, ONE created a webpage where the audience was invited to “act now” by signing a petition. The campaign's webpage has an easily accessible interface with a copy of the PSA, the campaign slogan, a brief synopsis and external links where the audience can learn more about the campaign. An example of the external link is the “about the campaign” link. This link leads to another page where a detailed timeline is provided on

the campaign's progress. The link may have allowed the signatories to follow up on the petition. The website also featured a simple dialog box in which the audience was required simply to enter their names and e-mail address (ONE, 2011).

Central to the publicity was the utilization of ONE's celebrity resources through the creation of a one minute PSA under the title "The F-Word, Famine is the Real Obscenity". Celebrities recruited for this video included K'Naan, Liya Kebede, George Clooney, Idris Elba, Bono, Justin Long, Annie Lennox, Youssou N'Dour, Colin Farrell, Bill Nighy, and many others. According to ONE's website, Bono, K'Naan, Annie Lennox and George Clooney offered to help once the idea was presented to them. The campaign was then organized by the ONE creative team under the leadership of Roxane Philson and Jeff Davidoff (Lovett, 2011). Whereas the idea of the campaign emerged from the internal organizational structures (staff and managers) of ONE, it was the publicity of its celebrities that saw to the dissemination of the campaign's goals. This makes the celebrities an integral part of the campaign process, though they are limited to publicity. It is worth noting that the data I collected showed very little publicity on the campaign until the initiation of the PSA (F-word: famine is the Real Obscenity). Even in this case, a great deal of the press articles was connected to the British ban of the PSA but these articles also highlighted the celebrity participants.

### ***5.2.1.2 Legitimacy***

Legitimacy refers to the ability of the celebrity to appear as an authentic representative of the campaign. The Legitimacy of the Hunger No More campaign is built on the narratives surrounding Bono and the role of the other celebrities engaged in the campaign. As cofounder of ONE, Bono takes the position of lead celebrity in the Hungry No More campaign. The data I collected revealed a continuous reference to Bono both in ONE's self publications and press articles. These publications show a highlighting of his role as co-founder of ONE, his career as a musician, and his humanitarian work.

Press coverage of campaign reflected an effort to authenticate Bono's role as lead celebrity and this position is used to create a relationship between him and the organization. On one hand, his role as founder of the organization is highlighted. Statements are used to authenticate Bono's leadership in the campaign and provide him with some level of standing on the issue. Examples include "a charity founded by Bono" (Europe Intelligence Wire, 2011a, 2011b; Sunday Mercury, 2011; The Independent, 2011), "Bono's campaign", "Bono's ONE charity", "Bono's Charity" (Asian News International, 2011; The Hamilton Spectator, 2011; The Sun, 2011; World Entertainment News Network, 2011a) and "a Bono campaign" (O'Brien, 2011). In some articles, an association is first drawn between Bono and the organization (ONE); this is then built upon to produce an association with the campaign (Hunger No More). For example, the October 4 article appearing in the *World Entertainment News Network*, commences with a listing of the celebrities (Bono being the first on the list) engaged in the campaign and the purpose of the campaign. It is only after this naming of the celebrities that the article mentions ONE and even here, it is further linked to Bono (World Entertainment News Network, 2011b). These levels of association seek to first legitimize Bono's role and then work at legitimizing the campaign by virtue of Bono's participation. The celebrity thus serves as an audience attraction to the organization and the campaign.

Additionally, the consistency of references to Bono's career legitimizes his role in the campaign. Apart from the press statement that names the careers of the other participants, Bono remains the only celebrity identified along with his career in all articles. The history of his music career is used to construct his identity: "U2 star Bono" (O'Brien, 2011; Sunday Mercury, 2011) "U2 frontman" (Daily Post, 2011; Europe Intelligence Wire, 2011a; The Herald, 2011), "U2 rocker" (World Entertainment News Network, 2011a). This association is further heightened when a link is drawn between his career, humanitarian work, and national identity: "philanthropic rocker Bono" (World Entertainment News Network, 2011b), "the Irish rock star Bono" (Daily Telegraph, 2011). Such emphases bring prior identity to bear on the current campaign. *The Sun* goes even further to make an association between one of Bono's songs and the campaign. The title of the article reads "Bono ad for charity stuck in a moment" (O'Brien, 2011). A

further reference in the body of the article reveals the connection between the musician, song and charity. It says “Stuck in a Moment You Can’t Get Out of singer’s charity ONE” (O'Brien, 2011). This presentation of the campaign connects the musician to his work and then brings this connection to bear on the campaign. These publications present an attempt to legitimize Bono’s role in the campaign through his career and the affirmation of earlier roles in humanitarian work. Bono is not the only one presented in this manner, though he is the only celebrity presented with much detail.

Other celebrities are presented in a bid to legitimize the campaign. George Clooney, K’naan, and Kristin Davis are constantly mentioned in most publications (Daily Post, 2011; Daily Telegraph, 2011; Europe Intelligence Wire, 2011b; GlobeNewswire, 2011; Sunday Mercury, 2011; The Herald, 2011). The substantive portion of the press statement presented at the PSA launching (I will focus extensively on this in the section on Performance) highlights Kristin Davis’ July visit to the Dadaab camp in Kenya. Her first hand witness of the famine serves as a validating credential for the campaign. K’naan also acquires an undisputed legitimacy for the campaign via his Somalian nationality. On the contrary, George Clooney may be recognized for his continual humanitarian efforts in the sub-region. Although these celebrities are mentioned in the articles, their careers are omitted. The articles presume that the audience already knows these celebrities and their humanitarian work in Africa. Apart from these three celebrities, the campaign also recruited political notables including government official Mayor Micheal Bloomberg and former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee (GlobeNewswire, 2011). Also, the campaign included other entertainment celebrities from across the globe.

### ***5.2.1.3 Performance***

Performance refers to the events at which the campaign is presented to the audience. These events constitute the acts of performance, which are enactments of the campaign’s Organization. For the ONE campaign, I shall consider performance in terms of events and actions through which the campaign message was presented. I do this particularly

because the campaign revolves around the Public Service Announcement (PSA) produced by the celebrities that I consider as a fundamental part of performance.

#### 5.2.1.3.1 The F-word: Famine is the Real Obscenity

The PSA is a one minute video in which celebrities reiterate the effects of the famine in East Africa. It starts with what appears to be a censored swearing of celebrities. These first few seconds of the video leaves the audience in a state of shock as the celebrities appear to be using expletives. The expressions on the celebrities' faces convey the disgust in their voices as the f-word is bleeped out. The bleeping out of the word is also shown visually with a black rectangular over their mouths. The rhythm of the background music and the tone of their voices gradually intensify as the celebrities' emphasize the obscenity of famine. Gradually, one realizes that the word being used is famine when Bono says "famine is the real obscenity" (Dylan, 2011). This phrase is followed by an uncensored section where celebrities say the word a second time and this time we hear the entire word—famine. In the proceeding sections of the video, the celebrities take turns to tell the audience about the famine in the horn of Africa. There is a repetition of statistics such as "30,000 children have died in three months", "the worst drought in sixty years", "12 million men, women, and children are on the brink of death" (Dylan, 2011). These statistics bombard the audience with what can be considered as valuable information on the famine. The repetition of the statistics places urgency on the issue as the celebrities further reiterate measures that can be implemented: early warning systems, food reserves, better seeds and irrigation, peace and security. The campaigns slogan—"drought is an act of nature, famine is manmade"—is also embedded into the video to ensure a connection between the video and the campaign. In the final seconds, the audience is directed to ONE's website to sign the petition. The final section of the video places emphasis on advocacy, which is central to ONE's image as an organization focused on campaigning and not fundraising. The organization's image is revealed when the video concludes with written texts stating that the goal of the campaign is advocacy not fundraising.

Framing the issue in one minute, publications on the PSA stress the brevity of the video. The media discourse emphasize the "one minute" or "60 seconds" duration of the

video (Europe Intelligence Wire, 2011b; GlobeNewswire, 2011; Manchester Evening News, 2011; World Entertainment News Network, 2011a, 2011b). The accentuation on the brevity may urge the audience to view the video. In addition to the minute time lapse, the framing of the video sets out to present famine as a preventable problem which can be solved through an investment in agriculture. The video defines the problem in simple accessible language which can be easily assimilated by the audience, but various other aspects of the video are employed to draw the attention of the audience.

One of these aspects is the recruitment of celebrities for the video. *The Sun* cites the “A-list” qualities of the recruited celebrities (The Sun, 2011). These celebrities included K’Naan, Liya Kebede, George Clooney, Idris Elba, Bono, Justin Long, Annie Lennox, and Bill Nighy. The cast covers celebrities from entertainment to politics, bringing in an extra credibility through the recruitment of politicians (Michael Bloomberg and Mike Huckabee). The association of these names to the campaign will likely draw in audiences who are interested in these celebrities. The director (Jesse Dylan) of the video and its producer (Leslie Owen) provide an extra attraction to the video. The director Jesse Dylan is renowned for his production of the Obama’s “Yes we can” campaign video (Hunter, 2011). The celebrity of the cast and the video producers brings in an added audience of fans and critics.

Additionally, the labeling of the video as “The F-word: Famine is the real Obscenity” could be a means of attracting public attention. The choice of title and the linking of famine to the f-word can be regarded as a display of inappropriate behavior. Here inappropriateness can be seen in the manner that obscene language is used to convey the campaign’s message. According to Finnemore and Sikkink, inappropriate behavior is a powerful tool for advocacy particularly in the framing of an issue (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). From this view point, it can be said that the Hunger No More campaign transforms obscenity into a tool of framing and advocacy. The f-word is not simply relegated to the title of the video but is even made more emphatic as the video shows celebrities engaged in what appears to be swearing. The campaign’s purposive



linking of the obscenity (the f-word) to famine demonstrates disgust for a 21st century famine.

At the center of the PSA are the visual techniques used in the video. In the PSA, the celebrities maintain a frontal view with the audience which seems to create an interpersonal relationship between the two. Depending on the individual's knowledge of the celebrity, this frontal view may work at heightening an intimate relationship which will result in the audience's participation in the campaign. The frontal view is enhanced by the use of direct eye contact with the audience. For most of the video the celebrities maintain direct eye contact with the audience. Bono's first appearance commences with his face turned away from the camera but he slowly turns his attention to the camera and the audience as he repeats the statement "famine is the real obscenity" (Dylan, 2011). His eyes and that of subsequent celebrities look directly into the camera and at the audience. This use of eye contact intensifies the relationship between the celebrity and the audience.

A single frame is used throughout the entire video. However, in some cases two figures are placed in the frame. These include two images of a single celebrity or two different celebrities. In these instances, the figures appear in different parts of the frame. In addition to the figures, the video uses an overlapping dialogue to keep the audience interested. A sentence is started by a single figure and this sentence is completed by the next one. Such relay of voices maintains the attention of audiences as the celebrities inform audiences about the famine.

In terms of information value, the most important information is placed at the end of the video. Here, written text is used to emphasize that the purpose of the video is to raise awareness. The written text further encourages audiences to get involved in the campaign. The text is written in a bolded white and placed on a black background. The choice of the typography makes it easy to read.

Another technique employed in the video is the use of close and medium shots. Close shots refer to the positioning of the camera so that the viewer has a close up look at

the person being filmed and medium shots refer to positioning of the camera so that one has a view of the upper torso of the person being filmed (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The majority of the video presents the celebrities in either a close or medium shot with their gazes directed towards the audience. Lutz and Collins propose that the camera's gaze allows for an evocation of intimacy and communication (Lutz & Collins, 2003). The positioning of the camera in the PSA heightens the feeling of intimacy. In this case the frontal view of the celebrities permits the viewer to identify with the audience, thereby drawing awareness to the campaign's message.

The use of color in the PSA achieves salience by placing emphasis on the celebrities. The salience is achieved through a differentiation in the foreground and background color. The use of color is limited to the clothing of the celebrities. The background screen is a blend of black and gray. Though these images bear resemblance to the local sceneries of Africa, the video places little attention on the background. The focus is rather placed on the celebrities. The contrast in tonal value and differences in sharpness of color between the clothing of the celebrities and the background color focus our attention on the celebrities. Besides the color of their clothing, a black rectangle is also placed on the lips of the celebrities when the voices of the celebrities are beeped out. The choice of this color is particularly interesting given the association with the expletive.

Apart from the above mentioned, facial expressions and the tone of celebrities' voices stress an abhorrence of the problem and urges the audience to take action. All the same, the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these elements is dependent on the perceived legitimacy of the celebrities. Another performance that received press attention was the launching of the video.

#### 5.2.1.3.2 Launching of the Public Service Announcement

Although the campaign had been launched earlier, it is the launching of the PSA (and subsequent British ban) that received the most press attention. Here, I will focus on ONE's press statement and other articles that covered the Washington D.C. launch.

Significant to this launch is the collaboration between the celebrities and the managerial staff. It presents one of the rare occasions in which both ONE's staff members and celebrities share their views in a single event. The launch centers on the purpose of the PSA, naming of the problem, the celebrities involved and the testimony of Kristin Davis.

To launch the campaign, ONE stressed the purpose of the campaign. The urgency of the famine is linked to the long term goals at eradicating famine. The press statement in particular outlines the three main goals of the campaign: One, "to fill the \$600m financing gap for emergency assistance in the Horn of Africa and ensure that all those in need are reached. In the case of Somalia, greater regional and international political will is required to support an inclusive multi-stakeholder process-including a prominent voice for Somali civil society-that conclusively addresses the underlying causes of insecurity". Two, "to live up to their 2009 L Aquila commitment to invest \$22 billion in agriculture and for African governments to fulfill their Maputo pledge to spend 10% of their national budgets on agriculture" and lastly, to "invest in longer-term agriculture and food security initiatives to stop the cycle of extreme hunger, such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme". ONE's president, Michael Elliott elaborated on the on-going efforts of the organization to stop the famine. He recalls previous roles played by ONE's members in 2009 when governments agreed to invest more in Africa's agriculture. The PSA is thus presented as a reminder of previous promises. The launch also portrays the PSA as a smaller section of an on-going global campaign to stop the famine.

The launch shows a careful framing of the famine as a human rights violation. The press statement focuses on the absence of basic life-sustaining needs and the fact that people are dying as a result of hunger. Here, the date and timing of the drought demonstrate the severity of the famine. The famine is described as the worst in 60 years, with a death toll of 30,000 children in 3 months. These statistics are similar to those presented in the PSA, thereby drawing a stronger connection between the two performances. Stressing the urgency of the problem, the press statement also names the underlying causes of the famine. According to ONE, the famine was caused by high food prices, governmental instability in Somalia, and the region's lack of long-term

agricultural measures. The reiteration of these causes aids in the framing of the problem as a denial of basic life needs.

The launching also provided a detailed list of the celebrities involved in the American version of the PSA. The press statement refers to the celebrities as the “biggest names from the world of entertainment, media and politics” (GlobeNewswire, 2011). The first few celebrities are identified by their careers. K’naan is described as “Somali-born singer and poet”, Bono is “ONE’s co-founder and U2 lead singer” and Mike Huckabee is “FOX news host and former presidential candidate” (Benzinga Staff, 2011). These descriptions of the celebrities verify their identities and seek to add some legitimacy to the campaign. The press statement is sensationalized as Bono tells the horrifying plight of the famine victims. According to him, “mothers [were] forced to decide who to feed and who to let die”. He then draws a connection between the children affected by the famine and those of the audience. Such use of pathos is aimed at eliciting an emotional response from the audience. This narration of death and hunger is further supported by Kristin Davis’ testimony of her visit to the affected region. Davis bears witness to the tragic circumstances of Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. She recounts the story of victims who had travelled several miles to reach the camp, the overcapacity of the camp and the insufficiency of humanitarian aid (GlobeNewswire, 2011). By virtue of this visit, Kristin is presented as one who has knowledge of the problem. Her expression of shock drives home the need to aid the victims by simply signing the petition. Similar to other performances for the Hunger No More, the launch of the PSA directs the audience to the signing of the petition.

#### ***5.2.1.4 Stakeholders’ Response***

Of the thirty-three press publications covered on the Hunger No More campaign, twenty-six of them make reference to the British ban of the Public Service Announcement. The seven publications that omitted this issue are those published prior to the ban.

In Britain, Clearcast, the television adverts censoring organization, prohibited the broadcasting of the PSA. According to Clearcast, the PSA was in breach of laws

sanctioning political advertisement on television. As stated by Clearcast, the ban was “based on the provisions of Section 321 of the Communications Act 2003” (Clearcast, 2011). Section 319(2)(g) of the Communication Act states that an advertisement breaches the law if it is “inserted by or on behalf of a body whose objects are wholly or mainly political in nature” or if it “is directed towards a political end” (UK Government, 2003). For this reason, the PSA could not be telecast.

The very purpose of the campaign prevented its circulation on British television. In other words, the fact that the ONE aims at changing governmental policies speaks to the political nature of the Hunger No More campaign. As quoted in the *Daily Telegraph* “ONE appears to be caught by this rule as they state that part of their raison d'etre is to pressure political leaders” (Daily Telegraph, 2011).

The ban elicited responses from both the managerial staff and Bono. In response to Clearcast, ONE’s European director Adrian Lovett stated that the organization was not a political party and had no political affiliation. He reiterated the fact that the campaign was aimed at highlighting the plight of the people affected by the famine (Daily Telegraph, 2011). Though ONE’s staff was at the heart of the deliberation with Clearcast, Bono was actively engaged in the publication of articles explaining the campaign’s purpose. For example his post on the *Huffington’s* blog explains the campaign’s use of the f-word and provides details on the famine (Bono, 2011).

In spite of the prolonged deliberation on the ban, the video was withdrawn from television and was never reinstalled. Clearcast warned broadcasters of the possibility of facing “statutory sanction by OFCOM” if they showed the advert (Clearcast, 2011). It is important to mention here that the campaign was not banned in any other country. As a government-appointed agency, Clearcast can be considered as a stakeholder in the Hunger No More campaign. Clearcast’s response may have undermined the message and purpose of the campaign. The limitation of the PSA circulation on British media

outlets<sup>3</sup> could have resulted in the campaign's inability to reach its target of 500,000 signatures.

Nevertheless, the Hunger No More campaign appears to have achieved its goal. A later blog post by Lovett reports that the G20 meeting resulted in discussion and recommitment of world leaders to long term and short term investment in Africa's agriculture (Lovett, 2012). Section 71 under the Cannes Declaration responds to two of the goals outlined by the Hunger No More campaign. In the declaration, G20 leaders promise to strengthen emergency and long-term responses to food insecurity. The declaration states a support for the implementation of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative and launches a platform for tropical agriculture. Additionally, the end of the global campaign (Hunger No More) period also shows pledges made by African leaders. Apart from the pledges, short term donations were also sent out by European Union countries aiding the reduction of the death toll during the famine period. However, it is impossible to tell if these changes were as a result of the Hunger No More campaign. Organizations such as the Red Cross and Save the Child were equally requesting aid for those affected by the famine. Though the crisis has subsided, it still remains to be seen if long term initiatives will truly be implemented.

## **5.2.2 Analysis 2: Satellite Sentinel Project**

Not on Our Watch is a celebrity created organization founded by Don Cheadle, George Clooney, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, David Pressman, and Jerry Weintraub, the cast of the world-renowned film *Ocean's Eleven*. The organization has been involved in both advocacy and humanitarian assistance in Sudan, Burma, and Zimbabwe. It states its mission as "focusing global attention and resources towards putting an end to mass atrocities around the world. Drawing on the powerful voice of artists, activists, and

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<sup>3</sup> The internet was not affected by the ban.

cultural leaders, our mission is to generate lifesaving humanitarian assistance and protection for the vulnerable, marginalized, and displaced” (Not On Our Watch, 2012). Of the three campaign sites, the Sudan region is the organization’s most emphasized campaign. The campaign that I will be analyzing, Satellite Sentinel Project (SSP), emerged out of Not on Our Watch. The founder of the Satellite Sentinel Project, George Clooney, was one of the founding members of Not on Our Watch. Not on Our Watch is fundamental to the current project since the organization funded the initial collection of satellite images and continues to engage in advocacy and fund raising efforts for SSP.

The Satellite Sentinel Project is a celebrity initiated campaign that allows for a continuous surveillance of the Sudan region through satellite images. The project which started in December, 2010 has enabled the detection of mass atrocities and continues to provide early warning signs of conflicts (Satellite Sentinel Project, 2012). The project consists of a collaboration between *Not on Our Watch*, the *Enough project* (a Not-for-profit organization), *Google*, *DigitalGlobe*, the *United Nations UNITAR Operational Satellite Applications Program* (UNOSAT), the *Harvard Humanitarian Initiative*, and *Trellon* (an internet strategy and development firm).

### ***5.2.2.1 Organization***

The Satellite Sentinel Project was launched on December 29, 2010 with the mission of gathering evidence and monitoring activities on the border lines between South and North Sudan. To achieve this mission, the data I collected reveal an organization of the campaign based on the framing of the issue, the organization’s structure and publicity.

The SSP project frames the Sudanese atrocities as a Human Rights violation. The campaign engages in the framing of the humanitarian crisis by making reference to Darfur and past genocides in Rwanda. The burning of villages and the killing of civilian population is defined in terms of “crimes against humanity” (Clarke, 2011; McClatchy - Tribune, 2012; Sheridan & Hamilton, 2011). The atrocities are described as “war crimes” (Fick, 2011; Morris, 2010), “ethnic cleansing” (Africa News, 2011c; BBC Monitoring,

2011), “state-sponsored ethnic cleansing” (McConnell, 2011a) and “ethnic slaughter” (McConnell, 2011b). Through the use of these expressions, SSP seeks to draw an association between these crimes and world-recognized prohibitions on inhuman actions. This framing is consistent with that of other NGO actors such as international organization (UN Human Rights Watch), local advocates (Bishop Elnail), and technocrats—Eric Reeves (New Zealand Herald, 2011). The campaign clearly states its goal, which is to “deter a return to full-scale civil war between northern and southern Sudan [by] deterring and documenting threats to civilians along both sides of the border” (Dziadosz, 2011; Ostwald, 2011). Though various aspects of the organization reflect this goal, press articles enhance SSP’s defining role.

Press references to the project establish its function as image gathering and provide a context for their work. The organization is referred to as a “monitoring project” (Hamilton, 2011) and “anti-genocide paparazzi” (Benjamin, 2011; McClatchy - Tribune Business, 2012b). These expressions aid in the building of the project’s image and they frame the work of SSP as evidence gathering. The SSP engages in what can be referred to as image advocacy. The main mode of advocacy for the project is the use of images which are often accompanied by a report analyzing the images. SSP makes reference to reports produced by other organizations including the United Nations and International Crisis Group to demonstrate the credibility of their work (Goodspeed, 2011). The images and reports enable a careful contextualization of the issue. The campaign contextualizes the humanitarian crisis in regard to the secession of South Sudan from Sudan and the southern oil region whose ownership is still contested by the two countries. The context provided by SSP validates the selection of the border region as a site for its project. Through the naming of atrocities, the goals of the campaign and its contextualization, SSP frames Sudan’s problem as a human rights violation which requires immediate assistance.

The Satellite Sentinel is a collaborative project undertaken by six organizations (Not on Our Watch, the Enough project, Google, DigitalGlobe, UNOSAT, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and Trello). The organization’s structure thus reflects the efforts



of each of these organizations. Press articles show an emphasis of the collective process used in the gathering of the satellite images and each of the collaborators plays a distinctive role in this process. For instance, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative is responsible for the analysis of the images provided by Digital Globe satellite, Tellon, and Google's Map Maker technology. The images are corroborated with direct eyewitness accounts and reports from the United National High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR). Harvard Humanitarian Initiative is in charge of the analysis of satellite images and eye witness accounts, the analytic reports, and the daily operations of SSP. For this reason, the team takes responsibility for the content and veracity of each and every SSP report (Africa News, 2011a). Hence the combination of satellite imagery, analysis, and field reports add to the validity of the evidence produced. These images count as evidence and they form an important part the campaign. After the analysis, the images are made available to the public through SSP website and advocacy groups (Not on Our Watch and Enough Project). The organizations engaged in the project contribute to the presentation of SSP as a genuine project which is truly concerned about Sudan's problem.

The publicity efforts of the campaign ensure the dissemination of images to the general public who are SSP's immediate audience. SSP considers the image and reports as evidence of the atrocities occurring in the region. All of the evidence (images and reports) gathered by the project is sent to the United Nations Security Council and the International Criminal Courts. The dissemination of these evidences is hence critical in validating the campaign's purpose. The images are disseminated though social media sites (e.g. twitter), television, and the campaign's website. Among the three, the campaign's website remains the main means of dissemination. The website is made up of easily accessible tabs with each devoted to a particular function of the project. The "our story" link provides a quick summary of the project's creation and background. It highlights the initial moments when Clooney first thought of creating the organization. Other links provide access to the blog, donation site, report and imagery, participation and an access to press releases. The greater part of the website is made up of images of atrocities committed in the South Sudan region. The images can be viewed using Flickr

for a closer view of its details. They serve first and foremost as confirmations of eyewitness reports. SSP's use of the website attempts to deter perpetrators from committing these human right violations. Aside from the website, another media outlet for the project has been the Music Television (MTV) network.

MTV participation in the project aids in garnering the attention of a younger audience. The television network joined the project during the election on South Sudan's secession from Sudan. MTV included the SSP in its on-air programs and website. Its role in the project was effective in reaching out to a younger audience (Africa News, 2011b; Anonymous, 2011). Though these media outlets have been essential to the dissemination of the campaign's goals, Not on Our Watch and the Enough Project remain the "megaphones" in the advocacy-creation network. Key to the publicity is the role played by George Clooney and John Prendergast—a former statesman who is currently a human rights activist and co-founder of SSP.

### ***5.2.2.2 Legitimacy***

The Legitimacy of SSP is presented through two means. First, the narrative surrounding George Clooney's involvement with the project suggests an identity-building process for both the SSP and Clooney. Second, press articles show an emphasis on his collaboration with Prendergast and the consistency of their visits to the troubled region. The press coverage of the campaign presents Clooney as a legitimate actor and Satellite Sentinel Project as a legitimate organization.

Press references to George Clooney build a narrative around his role as founder of the project, his previous participation in humanitarian work and his devotion to the SSP. Statements such as "Clooney's idea" (Buchanan & Ellis, 2012), "project initiated by actor" (Corporate IT Update, 2012), "co-founded by actor George Clooney" (Meldrum, 2011; Sheridan & Hamilton, 2011; UPI International Intelligence, 2012), "Clooney and his Satellite Sentinel Project" (Silcoff, 2012) bring visibility to both Clooney and the project. These statements present Clooney as actively engaged in the project's activities.

He is presented as having ownership over the project and at the same time the connection of his name to the project ensures continual media coverage of SSP's work. Additionally, Clooney's role as co-founder of Not on Our Watch, also serves as credentials for his involvement with the Sentinel Satellite Project (Washington, 2010). His years of service in Sudan through the activities of Not on Our Watch, enables him to appear as having acquired some level of knowledge on the problems of the region, and thus bring a level of credibility to SSP through his endorsement. Similarly, other narratives around Clooney also seek to demonstrate his devotion and sacrifice for SSP and for the people of the Sudan region. He is described by the *Daily Telegraph* as a "diehard charity campaigner" (Sharp, Christie, Casey, & Harris, 2011). In the August 21 edition of the *Daily Variety*, Clooney's sacrificial prowess are highlighted when he sells his 2008 Telsa Signature 100 Roadster to raise \$99,000 for the project (Tulich, 2012). His personal reflection on his commitment to visit the crisis region regularly adds some level of credence as well and further builds his humanitarian identity or persona. Lastly, the Men of Peace Award from the Nobel Peace Laureates and his position as UN Messenger of Peace are presented in press articles as validations of his legitimacy and the legitimacy of the Satellite Sentinel Project.

Despite Clooney's recognized role as an activist, his acting career is constantly referenced. Expressions such as "veteran movie star" (Sharp et al., 2011), "Hollywood liberal with a pet cause" (Harris, 2012), "renowned Hollywood star" (McClatchy - Tribune Business, 2012a) and "Hollywood heartthrob turned social activist" (Carney, 2011) demonstrate a linkage of his professional work with his philanthropy. The celebrity association is clearly an essential element that brings audience attention. It is possible to say that his film career provides a means of building upon his humanitarian identity. Clooney explicitly states this fact in an interview with *Time Magazine*: "We want them [Sudanese government] to enjoy the level of celebrity attention that I usually get" (qtd in Ostwald, 2011). He is assured of a consistent media coverage that he could utilize to the benefit of the cause. Nevertheless, Clooney is careful to distance himself from being seen as an expert on the issue. On several occasions he refers to his role as a "megaphone" "to give a voice to those who otherwise would not be listened to" (UPI NewsTrack, 2007).

The careful choice of metaphoric language such as “megaphone” articulates a representative role where his individuality and celebrity affords the liberty of engaging with Sudan crisis away from State institutions. To avoid the questioning of his expertise, Clooney aligns himself with John Prendergast, a former state official.

Clooney’s alliance with Prendergast emulates the prototype set up by Bono’s and Jeffery Sachs’s collaboration. Having worked with the National Security council, Prendergast’s involvement adds to the ethos of the Satellite Sentinel Project. The collaboration of the two men reveals a division of labor where Clooney is responsible for detecting the news accessible moments and Prendergast deals with the policy world. The celebrity’s collaboration with technocrats ensures a level of standing on the issue. Yet for many celebrities, including Clooney, a visit to the project site becomes the substantive demonstration of his devotion to the project.

George Clooney acquires knowledge of the Sudan condition to the extent that he appears in front of congressional meetings to attest to the humanitarian crisis from an eye-witnessed account. Clooney’s testimony becomes the backing for rights and humanitarian groups. He bears witness to the activities that he has seen and experienced during his visits. The danger of being killed and the deployable conditions of these visits confirms Clooney’s commitment to the organization and to human rights. These visits with Prendergast are documented by the press as “fact-finding mission(s)” from which he returns with a better knowledge of the problem. The visit thus becomes a legitimatizing factor in the celebrity’s humanitarian work.

### ***5.2.2.3 Performance***

The advocacy efforts of Clooney provide insights into the Performance of the Satellite Sentinel Project work. As mentioned earlier, Performance entails the engagement of the celebrity in specific events or actions (acts of performance) which draws audience attention to the campaign. For SSP, the acts of performance are undertaken by Clooney in collaboration with other activists. These are specific instances used by them to draw

media attention to SSP's cause. These occasions include interviews, instances of civil disobedience, videos, documentaries, visits to South Sudan and congressional hearings. I shall focus on three of these acts: the March, 2012 interview with Charlie Rose, a congressional hearing, and the arrest in front of the Sudan's embassy. These acts are particularly noteworthy since they all occurred in the same week after Prendergast and Clooney's return from Sudan. The proximity of these acts of performance is relevant to the attainment of the campaign's goal. They confirm Clooney's dedication to the project and demonstrate his ability to identify the kairotic moments in the news cycle. More importantly, these acts of performance ensure a consistent visibility on the southern Sudan since they reflect a whole week's coverage of the region.

#### 5.2.2.3.1 Interview with Charlie Rose

The interview with Charlie Rose serves to confirm Clooney and Prendergast's visit to Sudan. It takes place "three hours" upon their return from the region. The timing of the interview affirms the gravity of the Sudanese crisis. In the interview, the duo frames the crisis as a human rights violation and identifies Al-Bashir as the perpetrator. The larger part of the interview consists of a discussion of the region's crisis. The descriptions of bombing and dead bodies culminate in the definition of the problem as ethnic cleansing and a human right violation. The interview ends up presenting Al-Bashir and Clooney in a good versus evil dichotomy where Clooney is the savior and Al-Bashir the evil perpetrator of crimes against humanity. Clooney and Prendergast attribute the atrocities committed in the region to Al-Bashir's bad governance whereas Clooney is presented as aiding in the revelation of these atrocities.

Another element that becomes evident in this performance is the collaborative work between Clooney and Prendergast and the ways in which they employ both pathos and academic knowledge to discuss the Sudan crisis. In the interview, Clooney distances himself from policy issues. When asked questions related to this, he defers them to Prendergast. Prendergast thus takes on the role of providing concrete historical facts and policy issues on the region while Clooney takes care of the sensationalized stories from their visit. Clooney's careful description of death and injuries resulting from the bombing

are meant to elicit empathy within the audience. He further connects the issue to the local audience by emphasizing the economic implications that the Sudan crisis has on American citizens. Based on their analysis of the problem, Clooney and Prendergast identify China as a critical state in the resolution of the human right abuses. They view China's economic ties with Sudan as a means of regulating the actions of the Sudan government. They therefore make recommendations to the U.S government to influence China's policies towards Sudan. It is these same recommendations that Clooney and Prendergast present to the U.S government at the congressional hearing on Sudan. The fact that these recommendations are made public on national television prior to the congressional hearing reveals SSP's focus on attaining public support.

#### 5.2.2.3.2 Congressional Hearing

The congressional hearing was held on the 14 of March, 2012. As earlier mentioned, Clooney and Prendergast appear as co-witnesses. In this event, their speech and words are targeted towards governmental policy change. The purpose of this event is to testify to the human right violations being committed in Sudan and to present their recommendation on the crisis. Unlike other events, the congressional hearing offers a chance to speak directly to their targeted audience—government officials. This event makes evident the main purpose of the Satellite Sentinel Project. Its main aim is to garner public support which will in turn encourage the U.S government to put pressure on China. It is hoped that China will place economic restrictions on the Sudan government, hence reducing its access to weaponry. Though the final audience appears to be government officials, most of SSP's work is focused on a primary audience of American citizens.

Clooney's narration of his experiences in Sudan becomes a form of testimony. Bearing witness to what he saw during his visit to southern Sudan, Clooney shames the perpetrators of these crimes and presents recommendations. Throughout his presentation, he names what he refers to as "facts" on the issue. His continuous repetition of "that is a fact" builds his ethos on the issue (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). These facts include statistics of the death toll and number of people displaced. Based upon these facts, he

goes on to invoke memories of the war in Darfur and then frames the current crimes in the region as human right violations. According to Clooney, starvation is used by the Khartoum government as a “weapon of war” (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). He believes that the absence of food aid to the region has increased the death toll. As part of the testimony, Clooney shames the Khartoum government by linking them directly to the crimes. He does this by directly naming the perpetrators (Al-Bashir, Haroun, and Hussein). Clooney refers to them as the “greatest war criminals” (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). It is important to realize that this testimony follows a recent visit to South Sudan by Clooney and Prendergast. Clooney provides a detailed report of what he saw—“Antinovs fly overhead”, “a lot of dead bodies”, and people “holding signs saying stop attacking us” (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). These pathos-laden descriptions of the scenes from the trip set the stage for the acceptance of the three recommendations he proposes. He asks congress to freeze the accounts of the Khartoum government, implement sanctions and intensify diplomacy with China. These recommendations are actually part of the Sudan Peace, Security and Accountability Act of 2012 which is awaiting congressional approval. This knowledge shows Clooney’s currency on government proceedings.

#### 5.2.2.3.3 Protest and Arrest in front of Sudanese Embassy

The protest was part of a rally organized by the Enough Project (one of SSP’s advocacy bodies) and United to End Genocide (UWIRE Text, 2012). After a rally at Sheridan Circle, the protestors marched to the Sudan embassy where the planned act of civil disobedience took place. The *Washington Post* carried a story on the protest and the possibility of Clooney’s arrest a day before the event (Roberts & Argetsinger, 2012). This newspaper article may have encouraged audience participation. The arrested protestors included members of Congress, Clooney, his father, human right activists and religious leaders. As a moment of advocacy, some protestors wore a t-shirt with the inscription “united to end genocide” (CNN Wire, 2012; Technology Wire, 2012). Similar to the previous act of performance, the protest was framed as a moment of shaming the Sudan president Al-Bashir as the protestors shouted “arrest Al-Bashir” and “Bashir to the ICC”

(Technology Wire, 2012). The protest and subsequent arrest of its participants was a planned act of civil disobedience.

Primarily, the aim of the event was to attract media attention and inform the public about the Sudanese crisis. In a brief press presentation before the arrest, Clooney reiterated the purpose of the event. According to him, the purpose of the protest was to request entry of humanitarian assistance to the conflict region and for the Sudan government to cease the killing of civilians (CNN Wire, 2012; Khairy, 2012). He proposed that immediate humanitarian assistance should be sent to the region before the start of the rainy season. This proposal is in accordance with American ambassador to the United Nations, Susan E. Rice's, warning that the problem could escalate into famine if immediate assistance is not provided (Southall, 2012).

Media coverage of the event focused on Clooney's participation. Though many prominent people participated in the protest (Jim McGovern, Al Green, Martin Luther King III, etc.), Clooney is the only person referenced in most publications. The first line on most press reports place him in a leadership position. For example, reports like "actor George Clooney and several other prominent activists" (CBC, 2012), "The actor George Clooney, his father, Nick Clooney, and Representative James P. Moran" (Southall, 2012) demonstrate his leadership. The *NBC News* report references Clooney's activities during the entire week prior to the arrest (Mitchell 2012). The arrest thus becomes a conclusion to an entire week spent on advocacy. In her coverage of the event, Andrea Mitchell reported that the arrest was successful in raising audience awareness (Mitchell 2012). The report also highlighted Clooney's remarks during the arrest. Commenting on the arrest, Clooney refers to it as a humiliating period but one in which he takes pride since his father was at his side. According to him, the cause was worth having a criminal record. He is reported as saying that the protest was his first arrest (G. F. Cooper, 2012; Gregory, 2012). The arrest thus reflects his commitment to a cause for which he is willing to suffer humiliation.

Newspaper publications on the protest and arrest carry pictures of Clooney handcuffed in front of the Sudan embassy. These pictures occupy a predominant part of



articles in the Mirror, Dailymail, and the Washington post while the written text supports the images. For most of these publications, the pictures are placed in middle of the text. The positioning of the pictures makes them not only salient but also increases their informational value. In other words the inclusion of these pictures makes them a central part of the day's event. Though several prominent people were arrested for the protest, Clooney's pictures dominates most of the publications. The publication of these images serves to further legitimize Clooney's role in the campaign.

Even though the publicity received by the Satellite Sentinel Project has been wholly positive—in regard to the data I collected—questions still remain about the reliability of the images published and conflicts of interest that are voiced by both the Sudanese and some U.S government officials.

#### ***5.2.2.4 Stakeholders' Response***

Stakeholders' Response consists of the viewpoint of critical countries and other governmental bodies on the campaign. A complete analysis of stakeholder efforts in Southern Sudan will involve a breakdown of each and every collaborator's response. However, what remains relevant to this research is the response from U.S government officials and the accused Khartoum government. Unveiling the opposing viewpoints on SSP gives a holistic understanding of the discourse surrounding the Sudanese crisis.

From the response to the congressional hearings and the participation of government officials in the embassy protest, it can be deduced that government officials accept the fact that there is a humanitarian crisis in southern Sudan. The congressional hearings show massive support for the Sentinel Satellite Project. At the congressional hearing, Clooney and Prendergast's efforts are commended by Senators who praise their going "over there and [bringing] these images back" (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). Senator Kerry in his introduction of the two men refer to them as "people who have invested time and effort" in the realization of South Sudan's secession (Political Transcript Wire, 2012). In this statement Senator Kerry recognizes the previous efforts

made by Clooney and Prendergast. Other senators (Senator Udall, Senator Isakson and many others) congratulated Clooney and Prendergast for their work in the region. The senators' support for the SSP is further highlighted when they participate in the protest and are arrested along with Clooney.

The positive reaction of government officials to the campaign is different from previous comments on the campaign's work. In 2011, the U.S special envoy to the Sudan region was particularly skeptical of allegations made against the Sudanese government. On July 19, 2011, Princeton Lyman—U.S ambassador to Sudan and South Sudan—raised doubts about the images of mass grave sites recorded by SSP. In his report, Lyman cited the inability to confirm images of grave sites in Kadugli (Sheridan & Hamilton, 2011). Yet the U.S officials acknowledged that human right violations were being recorded in the region. The U.S government's contestation of the SSP's images questions to some extent the credibility of their work.

The Sudanese government has also denied the allegations of mass grave sites. According to Rabie Atti, the government's spokesperson, "the pictures do not show the truth" and are being proliferated by the rebels (Kron, 2011). In addition, he called on the international community to visit the region to verify, completely ignoring the fact that U.N Peacekeepers had been denied access to the region. In response to the fighting in the region, the Khartoum government claims to be disarming "northern militia aligned to the Sudan People's Liberation Army" (The Independent (Kampala), 2011). The website of Sudan's Suna news agency alleges that the SSP reports "stem from racial grounds and motivation" (BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political, 2011). The country's secretary of information, Prof Ibrahim Ghandur, called on Clooney to prove his allegations after SSP accused the Sudanese government of human right violations in Abyei. According to him, Clooney was "looking for fame" (BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political, 2011). By attacking the SSP through Clooney, the Khartoum government tries to undermine the evidence presented by the project. This, however, opens up a discussion of what role the celebrity plays in these endeavors. For the Sudanese government official to direct their

attacks at an individual rather than the entire organization reveals displacement of agency from the project's collaborators onto Clooney.

The Khartoum government's criticism of Clooney instead of SSP shows the intertwined relationship that exists when the celebrity engages in the creation of his or her own non-profit organization. What is revealed here is the interdependency between the celebrity and the created organization. The visibility of the campaign is highly dependent on the organization, legitimacy, and performance of the celebrity which engenders various responses from stakeholders. At the same time, the creation of the celebrity-led campaign solidifies the celebrity's engagement in humanitarianism.

## **6 Chapter Four: Implications of the celebrity's humanitarian work**

In this chapter, I discuss the Satellite Sentinel Project and Hunger No More campaigns in regard to theories and findings elaborated in the preceding chapters. The two case studies presented confirm that the effectiveness of the celebrity humanitarian work is dependent on the interplay of the organization and performance of the campaign, the reaction of stakeholders, and the legitimacy of the lead celebrity. The organization, legitimization, stakeholders' response, and performance are highly dependent on the actions of the lead celebrity, making these celebrities active agents in the production of the discourse on the "Third World". Nonetheless, the advocacy efforts of the celebrities generate representational practices that hold diverse implications for the aid recipient.

### **6.1 Organization**

The case studies present celebrities as embodiments of the organization. At the organizational level, celebrities who create non-governmental organizations (NGO) partake in the setting of the aid agenda. Most celebrity-led organizations have their causes predetermined from the onset. As founders of these organizations, the celebrity is in a position to determine which causes are worth advancing. The case studies make evident the association drawn between the lead celebrities and their organizations. Press coverage displays an organizational image drawn from references to Bono and Clooney. Despite what appears as a relegation of these celebrities to advocacy roles, it is worth noticing the fundamental role that both of these celebrities play in the running of the organization. Bono remains a key member of the ONE's board of directors. Here his influence in the choice of the campaign goals and detail planning of the campaign is clearly visible. George Clooney similarly engages in the funding and collection of data for the SS Project. His consistent visits to the region are instrumental aspects of the campaign's validation. Both celebrities and their organizations are part of the

Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN). This position places Bono and Clooney in a capacity to determine what issues receive world attention. Thus, celebrities are integral to the construction or framing of the campaign's message or issue.

In the framing of the issue, the celebrities direct audience attention toward the sufferings of distant others and initiate in the audience a desire to help. Framing ensures that audiences can make meaning of the campaign's purpose and goals. Therefore, an association is drawn between the current issue and a well-established norm. In my research, the campaigns frame their issues as human rights violations and they carefully contextualize the issue through the selection of a campaign location. The celebrity-led nature of the campaigns means informal modes of framing are used such as acts of shaming, civil disobedience and inappropriate behavior as opposed to more formal modes of framing such as speeches and writings of activists (McLagan, 2002). The initial framing of the campaign appears to change as these celebrities carefully select informal modes of framing. The targeted audiences in both cases are government officials (the U.S government and Sudan in the case of SSP, and G20 and African government leaders for the Hunger No More), but celebrity efforts reach out to the public who are more likely to accept informal modes of framing. For example, the Hunger No More campaign is able to draw over 400,000 viewers to its PSA through the use of inappropriate language and SSP garners media attention through Clooney's arrest. These actions confirm Marshall's views on the power of the celebrity figure. As an embodiment of the masses, the celebrity's use of her or his affective power can direct audiences towards the accomplishment of humanitarian actions. Audiences are more likely to sympathize with the afflicted population through the celebrity. This relationship may encourage audiences to participate in the campaign.

The case studies show a gradual movement away from apolitical issues to the engagement with highly political issues and the enactment of policy. These celebrity-led organizations push for policy changes within their countries and on the international scene. Though the goals of SSP and Hunger No More are different, they are all aimed at influencing policy changes in government. The SSP lobbies for the U.S government to

put pressure on China (a critical state in the Sudan crisis). The Hunger No More campaign attempts to persuade world leaders to increase agricultural aid to Africa. These two organizations deviate from apolitical issues advanced by most celebrity-led campaign such as education reform, AIDS awareness, malaria prevention and hunger relief. The case studies confirm Prindle's argument that these campaigns become a means by which celebrities give back to society (Prindle, 1993).

## **6.2 Performance**

The holistic Performance of the celebrity's humanitarian work as demonstrated through both campaigns enters into a discourse of selfless devotion and commitment. Performances are not always equal in worth. It is essential to collectively consider these acts of performance instead of viewing them as individual events. Selecting a single act of performance apart from other performances might make it appear unsubstantial. But combining all the acts together validates the effectiveness of the campaign through the celebrity's investment of time and money. The media remains an excellent tool in this venture. They help the circulation of the celebrity's cause as it provides the ideal outlet to propagate the campaign's message and draw support. This section focuses on performance as revealed through the case studies.

The Performance of the campaign constitutes a manifestation of the framing set up in its organization. Each event becomes a demonstration of the campaign's framing. Acts of shaming, naming culprits, and the use of inappropriate behavior enables the celebrities to draw audience attention to the campaign. Naming culprits and publicly shaming such individuals is a widely used strategy that has proven to be most effective in ensuring adherence to appropriate behavior. Shaming serves as a form of punishment by publicly drawing attention to the misdeeds of the norm offender. It works to reinforce the good behavior and encourages others to avoid violations. According to Wexler, shaming must be tailored to the values that the targeted country holds dear (Wexler, 2003). Hence Hunger No More's publication of a list of countries who had defaulted on their aid

obligations places the countries in a position where they are coerced to live up to their promises. SSP also makes use of shaming in its framing of the issue. Clooney in his testimony names what he refers to as “facts” on the issue and connects these facts to the crime’s perpetrators—Al-Bashir, Haroun, and Hussein (Federal News Service, 2012). These instances received high media coverage, an integral means by which the project reaches out to its targeted audience.

These campaigns could possibly aid in the creation of an interpersonal relationship between the celebrity and her or his audiences. The Hunger No More campaign attempts to initiate a para-social relationship through the PSA. The celebrities try to simulate a face-to-face conversation with their audiences. For instance, celebrities in the PSA gaze directly at the audience emphasizing the urgency of the famine. Their bodily and facial gestures reflect the dire nature of the issue. Though prepared and definitely rehearsed, the PSA is effective in demonstrating the devotion of the celebrities. The PSA reiterates what Gamson refers to as “fungible resources,” that is, the investment of the celebrities’ time, talent, and money (Gamson, 1994). The time invested in the production of the PSA displays the celebrity’s level of commitment and draws the audience into the campaign. The level of intimacy displayed in the PSA might have created a para-social relationship that encouraged the audience to sign the campaign’s petition. In donating and becoming part of the cause, the audiences are provided with another avenue to experience their celebrities and share in their lives.

The pathos-driven discourse of humanitarianism depends on the ability to evoke the emotions and interests of the audience. Images are utilized to achieve this aim. It is therefore not surprising that SSP appears to be engaged in what may be referred to as an image advocacy. The organization produces satellite images of the crisis region. The images presented by the project are categorized as evidence of atrocities within the region. The specificity and details are hence essential in a representation of the “truth”. Most of the satellite images (mostly maps) are difficult to interpret given spatial distance. For this reason, the satellite images presented by SSP are labeled, interpreted and often accompanied by reports ensuring that the audience understands what these images

represent. The reports accompanying the images serve to “anchor” the meaning of the image in an attempt to limit audience interpretation (Barthes, 1972). Nevertheless, audiences are still open to formulating their own understanding of the images and even though SSP corroborates its images with eyewitness reports, the veracity of such accounts is still questionable. That is to say, the testimonies provided by local citizens cannot be verified because of the need to protect witnesses from the alleged offenders.

For many of the audiences, these images become their single view of Sudan. The purposive selection of images means that SSP only portrays a single story of Sudan. Though the images might be effective in serving the campaign’s purpose of awareness creation, the selected images end up becoming the main representation of Sudan. The media discourse on the vast country is limited to an ideological representation of violence, death, and dictatorship. These images are presented as facts about the region. As forms of evidence, the images constitute “true” and accurate representations of the current conditions in Sudan, constructing meaning about the country and its inhabitants, in the fashion of what Barthes calls “myth” (Barthes, 1972). According to Barthes, the consistency of denotative and connotative investment with time take on signifying roles which produces connotative meanings even in the absence of denotative signs. Such continuous association forms a myth. The consistency of such representations means they become the dominant images of Sudan. With time, such images of African countries have participated in signifying practices sustaining a dominant representation of Africa as dependent on the West. SSP is contributing to this discourse. SSP’s actions go beyond merely signifying practices.

SSP’s activities constitute surveillance of a sovereign state. The images collected by SSP are gained through satellite surveillance of the southern Sudan region. This method is to ensure that the conflicted region is under continual surveillance with the hope that perpetrators will be deterred from engaging in human right violations. The monitoring of Sudan aims at placing the gaze of the world on the region, thereby encouraging self-regulation by the perpetrators of the violence. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in Sudan. What becomes most questionable here is the surveillance of a



sovereign state by an organization. The sovereignty of Sudan is undermined in the name of deterring human rights abuses. Though SSP may be doing this for a good cause, the surveillance allows for the accumulation of facts which provide knowledge on the country and its citizens. Domestic activities occurring in the region are exposed to the world through this surveillance. Meanwhile, the media presents the intrusion and policing of Sudan as a justified cause regardless of the fact that the companies (Google, Trellon, and DigitalGlobe) involved in the gathering of the images may have their own capitalistic motives. This raises questions on the limits of such moral obligations.

The pathos-driven elements of these performances are not limited to the images only. The careful selection of words and the use of acts of shaming are all part of generating empathy and eliciting an emotional response from the audience. Such a response is further worked into political action. The use of sensational narratives of hunger, amputations, and death aid both campaigns to direct their audience into engagement. For instance, Bono's narrative with respect to the plight of women and children conveys the moral impetus to aid. Comparably, narratives of child amputees are utilized by Clooney to spur public action. It is interesting to notice how these narrations converge around the African child. The innocence and purity of a child heightens the moral obligation to help. Consequently, the notion of innocence attempts to capture affect that can be directed into political action by the audience. Despite the possibility that these acts may be done with positive intentions, they nonetheless reproduces a discourse of Africa's eternal dependence on the West. In essence, the burden carried by the celebrity is the active consciousness that their activities may be misread.

### **6.3 Legitimacy**

Evaluation of celebrity's legitimacy remains the sharpest point of criticism in humanitarianism. Critics have been skeptical about such celebrity engagement as a media ploy to gain popularity (Dieter & Kumar, 2008). To counteract such criticism, celebrities endeavor to show a level of devotion to their causes. From the analysis of the campaigns,

it is evident that legitimacy entails an intricate relationship between the organization of the campaign and the legitimacy of the celebrities. On one hand, the legitimacy of the individual bears heavily on the legitimacy of the campaign. And on the other hand, the legitimacy of the organization validates the celebrity's efforts. In this section, I focus on the celebrities efforts to acquire legitimacy.

Coming out of the entertainment industry, it may be difficult for the celebrity to be regarded as serious when she or he engages in humanitarianism. The irony of their great worth in comparison to the funds they request others to donate is often a subject of discussion (Littler, 2008). However, in founding a charity organization, the celebrity takes an integral step in showing her or his devotion to the cause at hand. The co-founding of the organization places the celebrities in a position of great responsibility. These roles surpass that of simple advocacy as they become the public face of the organization. The responsibility to represent and engage intensifies. Nonetheless, this responsibility must be based on the building of a humanitarian persona which emanates from the celebrity image. In other words, what must occur is the transcendence from entertainment celebrity into a humanitarian activist. This involves careful identity construction.

The celebrity's roles as entertainment personality and his or her political engagement must reflect a commitment to the cause that goes beyond her or his role as an entertainer. Still, it is their position as entertainers that make it possible to engage in the first place. In light of this, the celebrity must be seen as truly committed to the cause. Authenticity must be reflected both within and outside their political engagements. For example, Clooney's current uptake of more political roles in recent films such as *The Ides of March* (2011) and documentaries such as *Half the Sky* (2012) show his construction of a political persona away from his entertainment roles but in conjunction with his political persona. These roles particularly solidify his humanitarian persona outside entertainment. This confirms Collins' argument that the consonance between these two halves of the celebrity's representation (on-screen and off-screen) works to validate her or his role as an authentic activist (Collins, 2007).

Similarly, Bono achieves authenticity through his music carrier. Even though this is not well-revealed in the present research, Bono's music career is one embedded with lyrics of empowerment making it a powerful means of mobilizing and channeling affect from fans and other audiences to his campaign (Andrews, Kearns, Kingsbury, & Carr, 2011; Fast, 2000; Kearney, 2009). It can be inferred that audiences of the Hunger No More campaign are already familiar with Bono's music. In his study of the media discourse surrounding Bono and Angelina Jolie's work in Africa, Duvall confirms the strong hold of Christian mythology in humanitarian discourses particularly those used by Bono (Duvall, 2009). The media discourse concentrates on casting the celebrity figure as a savior similar to the propaganda efforts utilized by colonial Christian missionaries to garner funds for their missionary work in the colonies. Relevant here is the image and representation of Africa constructed by the two groups: Christian missionaries and celebrities. According to Duvall, the use of Christian rhetoric and media framing not only affirms the moral and Christian identity of Western nations (e.g. America) but also works at legitimizing and justifying the celebrity's involvement in humanitarian work. The construction of this identity is highly represented in the manner that media discourses link the professions of these celebrities to their philanthropic work. Emphasis on the U2 star's (Bono's) charity and the Hollywood beau's (Clooney's) project demonstrate the need for celebrities to first establish their fame outside philanthropy prior to engagement.

However, entry into humanitarianism must be a gradual process. Both of these celebrities have previously undertaken roles as Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace with the United Nations. The rigor of training provided to United Nations celebrity advocates presents them as having been educated on the causes they present. These roles have been pivotal in legitimizing their creation of the current organizations. In this respect, both Bono and Clooney have built a humanitarian persona over time which facilitates their role in the campaigns discussed. Their previous experience presents them as legitimate spokespersons for the organization.

The quest to acquire legitimacy and the desire to appear as an authentic humanitarian is further achieved through a collaboration with technocrats. The

dependency on renowned figures from academia and the humanitarian world remain a means to acquire legitimacy. In building his persona as a humanitarian figure, Bono forged strong ties to Jeffery Sachs. It appears that Clooney takes a cue from this example. In Clooney and Prendergast's relationship, it is worth noting the dependency on Prendergast to provide the historical and theoretical backbone to the project. Though the two individuals engage in the advocacy of the project, Prendergast's advocacy is displayed as one imbued with ethos from his long service in government and humanitarian organizations<sup>4</sup>. Such display of standing is particularly essential since press coverage of celebrity humanitarian work focuses on the "passion and authenticity" of the celebrity (The Toronto Star, 2012).

The image of the organization is built on the fame, commitment and devotion of these celebrities. It is worth noting that celebrities will be news-worthy no matter what they do, thus, the celebrity who decides to get involved in humanitarianism moves into building a celebrity image that centers on caring, selflessness, devotion, and commitment. An illegitimate celebrity is likely to produce an illegitimate organization. It is the authenticity of the celebrity that presents her/him and the created organization as truth bearers, knowledgeable legitimate actors who care about the plight of distant sufferers.

## **6.4 Stakeholders' Response**

The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the celebrity-led campaign is based on the performance, organization, and legitimacy. It is these actions of the celebrities that stimulate responses from stakeholders. Therefore, the effectiveness of the campaign can be addressed by how well the stakeholders respond to the campaign's organization, performance, and legitimacy. Although celebrities are active in attracting public attention

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<sup>4</sup> Though Prendergast can be considered as a celebrity figure emanating from humanitarianism, space and the focus of this research does not permit an elaboration on this.

to an issue it still takes the will of governmental bodies and agencies to implement change. Some may consider this as a shortfall of the celebrity-led campaign since they have to depend on government officials. I believe this is not the case.

In shedding light on societal ills, the celebrity brings an otherwise latent issue into public discussion. The visibility that the celebrity brings to the campaign cannot be undermined. The ability of the audiences to accept the urgency of the campaign and its goals is most dependent on the celebrity's efforts. Any celebrity can bring visibility to a campaign but it takes an authentic celebrity to transform audience attention into action. The ability of the celebrity to appear as legitimate plays a central role in ensuring that governmental bodies and agencies implement the change. In other words, the celebrity's authenticity ensures that the performance of the campaign is recognized by the audience which then generates public opinion that will influence government response.

For each of the campaigns analyzed, the reactions of governmental bodies have a strong bearing on the outcome of the campaign. The reaction of these bodies draws our attention to the tensions of authority that exist between the governmental organizations and celebrity-led organizations. In the case of the SSP, the tensions in authority may be attributed to Clooney's leadership. Reaction particularly from the Sudanese government bases its criticism on what it perceives as a publicity stunt by George Clooney to increase his fame. It is fundamental here to consider the ease with which the Sudanese government addresses its criticisms at Clooney instead of the campaign. This reaction questions the legitimacy of the celebrity and undermines the very roots of the campaign. The Hungry No More campaign faced a similar problem with the British governmental organization (Clearcast). Clearcast can be said to have undermined the progress of the campaign in Britain and may have prevented its attainment of a larger audience. It is possible this breach in circulation prevented Hunger No More from reaching its goal of 500,000 signatures.

Nonetheless, ONE's presentation of the east African crisis may have succeeded in opening up public debate on the issue particularly among the G20 countries. The signatures collected by the Hungry No More campaign presented a general worldwide

consensus on the need to assist the famine affected regions of Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia. The response from the G20 demonstrates a consideration of the campaign's request for immediate assistance to the region. Looking at the Cannes declaration, it is possible to say that ONE influenced the change in policies or sequent pledges. The three main campaign goals outlined in the Hunger No More campaign correspond with the declaration made at the summit. At the same time it is worth considering that ONE was not the only organizations focused on the issue. The fact that these deliberations are often the collective effort of more than one organization makes it difficult to attribute policy changes to a single organization much less attributing the success to a particular celebrity-led campaign. Even so, the contributions of these celebrity-led campaigns must not be underestimated.

In summary, both the Hunger No More campaign and SSP were able to disseminate information concerning their campaigns. For the Hunger No More campaign, it was able to reach out to its target audience and could be said to have initiated the first steps towards policy change. Similarly, SSP was able to recruit members from its target audience to engage in the Embassy protest and arrest. Such participation of the target audience could possibly lead to some policy change in the future. From this analysis, it can be said that SSP and the Hunger No More campaign were effective in presenting their campaign to not only the targeted audience but the greater public. Whether or not these steps will lead to an eradication of famine or a cessation of the Sudan crisis cannot be readily determined.

## **6.5 Representation and the Celebrity Burden**

To better understand the implications of my research on the celebrity's humanitarian work, here, I develop the concept of the Celebrity Burden. The celebrity burden *is the responsibility felt by the celebrity to engage in humanitarianism set in a transnational context with implications for the aid recipient*. The celebrity burden entails a self-imposed obligation to aid distant others. At the center of this form of activism is the

notion of a devoted and caring celebrity who is committed to global humanity. To carry the burden of humanitarianism is to take up the responsibility of aiding and assisting others. In essence, the celebrity burden requires the utilization of one's celebrity in the service of others. In most instances, celebrities are recruited by non-governmental agencies to draw attention to a cause or project that is already underway. In such cases, the role of the celebrity is predetermined and their level of engagement is regulated by the agency. Though this engagement reflects a shouldering of the humanitarian burden, the celebrity burden becomes most evident when the celebrity creates her or his own organization. Here, the organization provides a platform from which the celebrity actively engages in humanitarian work.

In carrying the burden of humanitarian work, the celebrity displays an interest in humanitarianism that becomes a part of his or her identity. However, this persona is not easily acquired. For the humanitarian persona to become a legitimate part of the celebrity's image, the audience must accept the authenticity of this image. Hence the acquisition of this position is based on authenticity. Once the celebrity is considered as legitimate, she or he becomes the representative of the campaign, the affected region's inhabitants, and audiences who invest in the campaign. The celebrity humanitarian work allows for the following representational practices to occur.

The signifying practices resulting from the celebrity efforts present a means by which the celebrity's humanitarian work and its implications can be comprehended. In this manner, images, press releases, reports and speeches constitute a means of deriving meaning from the celebrity's humanitarian efforts. Language, in its entirety, constitutes an important "media" for representation and produces "signifying practice[s]" by which meaning is made possible (Hall, 1997, p. 5). The discourse surrounding the celebrity burden "connects with power ... makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities, and defines the way [humanitarianism is] represented" (ibid, 6). Though Hall's work on representation makes no reference to the celebrity, the representational practices generated through the celebrity's engagement can be considered in this manner.

The representative role acquired by the celebrity who participates in humanitarianism makes her or him a model of philanthropy. Associations made between the celebrity and other cultural products through advertisement builds the celebrity image as a representative of societal value. S/he becomes a label of identity for the broader community with many emulating and copying their definition of style, fashion, prestige etc. In a similar way that the celebrity has become the societal image of “consumption, success, ordinariness, love” (Dyer, 2006) so too can the celebrity be consider as an image of philanthropy. It is often the case that audiences long to identify with the celebrity and thereby construct themselves in light of that person. The celebrity is at once the embodiment of the audience and at the same time a product produced by and for the audience. The celebrity’s power lies in the ability to “represent the active construction of identity in the social world” (Marshall, 1997). She or he becomes a means through which the audience can rethink or reformulate their own identities by emulating the celebrity. The celebrity provides an avenue where audiences can equally engage in humanitarianism and at the same time build their identities as philanthropic individuals in the image of their favorite celebrity. From such a stand point, representation appears positive. The celebrity’s efforts are constructed around a discourse of aid and development. This discourse permits the celebrities to be visualized by the audiences as being embroiled in virtue and selfless giving. The propensity for the media to concentrate on the good acts of these celebrities disavows the power relations that exist underneath the celebrities’ efforts.

The representative role of the celebrity places him or her in the stead of the aid recipient in the “Third World”. This role requires an understanding of representation as it occurs in the “Third Word”. Spivak avers two forms of meanings emanating from “representation” on the Third World: one is “speaking for” in the sense of political representation and the second is “speaking about” or “re-presenting” in the sense of making a portrait (Spivak, 1988). These are the forms of representation that often go unquestioned. Scholars of representation conclude that the realm of representation remains an avenue for “political struggle” to ascertain self-image/identity and to escape domination (Hall, 1994; hooks, 1992). In terms of the celebrity burden, it is simply not a



representation of the individual but a representation of ideas and norms, and how these norms are framed in order to draw international attention to an issue. These acts of advocacy require the presence of a representative: one who—to borrow from Spivak’s terminology—“speaks for”. The carriage of the burden by the western celebrity has implications for the very people the celebrity claims to be aiding.

For instance, in witnessing, the celebrity subjects the “other” to classifications or processes of knowledge gathering that permit and justify intervention. By visiting their project sites, celebrities often claim to have acquired the ability to speak on the problems affecting these areas of the world. What they have seen, where they have been to and the conditions under which they have lived become part of their ability to bear witness. These occasions become “fact finding missions” from which celebrities claim to have acquired knowledge on the plight of the “Other”. From a week’s or a few months’ visit to these regions, the celebrity professes to have acquired the experiential knowledge that can only be borne by the victims that have lived these experiences from the very start. Agency for development is turned over to the celebrity as they take up the burden to “speak for” the afflicted population. According to Yrjölä, the narratives produced as a result of these visits create ideological constructions with the power to describe, locate and assert moral geographies and world-views (Yrjölä, 2011a). Thus, the efforts of these celebrities are reflective of colonial practices where the visits to the colonies brought stories of a people set in primitive archaic practices (Yrjölä, 2011b). Evident here is the similarity between present-day celebrity witnessing and Mary Louis Pratt’s travelogues from colonial periods (Pratt, 1992). Like the travelogues that told stories of the backward nature of the colonies and the struggles and the humanizing role being played by colonial masters, present-day witnessing by celebrities tells similar stories of the horrifying atrocities occurring in Africa and the moral obligation of the West to aid.

At the forefront of such discourses is the representative role played by the celebrity. For example, Clooney and Prendergast become Sudan’s representatives at the congressional hearing. They have gone “over there” and what the two men bring with them is evidence of the human rights violations occurring in southern Sudan. The brevity

of the visit is not questioned nor is the veracity of their acts of witnessing ever disputed. It is impossible to tell whether or not their recommendations tally with the wishes of the victims of the crisis. The actual victims of the crisis may never be heard. As Clooney says, all he is, is a megaphone for the Sudanese, but is it that the inhabitants cannot “speak” or are they incapable of being their own megaphone? It appears that it takes the visibility and “burden” of a western celebrity to be heard by the world.

### **6.5.1 Dispossession: Displacement of Agency**

Celebrity humanitarianism thus displaces agency from the afflicted population onto the celebrity. It often situates beneficiaries as targets and not actors thus resulting in a loss of agency on the part of the afflicted population. The representative roles taken by these celebrities means they are viewed as main actors in the humanitarian discourse on the “Third World”. What occurs is a dispossession of agency from the aid recipient.

Edouard Glissant provides a means of understanding the ensuing loss of agency. His concept of dispossession references the initial colonial displacement of the present Caribbean population from the African continent to their present location. According to him, this ‘transfer’ of a population constituted a critical outlook on the old order and a loss of collective identity (where the transferred population has the false belief of being transformed into the “Other”) but within it also is the force for resistance against domination. The initial impulse of the transplanted people is to “reverse” to the old order but with time such an impulse fades as ancestral roots are forgotten (Glissant, 1991). Glissant is not discussing celebrities but if we apply this concept to the celebrity’s humanitarian work, it reveals the disavowing relations underlying the positive media discourses on the subject.

Dispossession occurs as a result of cultural and economic inequalities that drive the continuous dependence on aid. Similar to the colonial Caribbean, “Third World” countries still wait for the “good news” to come from elsewhere (the metropole). By good news, I make reference to the dependency on aid coming from outside the “Third World”.

In light of the celebrity burden, I perceive two levels of dispossession occurring here. On one end is the displacement of agency from the “sufferers” onto the celebrity and, on the other hand is the displacement of visibility away from local efforts onto the western celebrity.

In the first instance, the celebrity takes up the position as the representative of the aid recipients, one who has the ability to determine what issues receive attention. This places the aid recipients in a position of dependency where their plight can only be globally considered with the help of a celebrity. For example, Clooney takes up the position as the “megaphone” for the southern Sudan region. The media discourse on the campaign show him carrying the plight of these people to the U.S Congress and to the American audience. Furthermore, in setting the humanitarian agenda, celebrities are most likely to shift audiences focus to issues that are of relevance to them. For Littler, placing the celebrity in this position means vital issues that require prompt attention are displaced for celebrity interest causes which are often simple band aids to the main problem (Littler, 2008).

In the second instance, as the western celebrity become increasingly visible on the campaign front, they are likely to displace attention from the organization and other local efforts (Hawkins, 2011; McLagan, 2002; Meyer & Gamson, 1995). As media discourse on the campaign concentrates on the celebrity, what results is a shared visibility with the campaign. The high level of visibility brought to the campaign by the celebrity’s presence could lead to a redirection of the campaign’s goals and purpose. Moreover, the fact that these celebrities take charge of the issue means local governmental and non-governmental bodies will displace agency onto the celebrity. Local institutions responsible for attending to the issue will move on to attend to other issues leaving the celebrity to find a solution.

To a large extent, dispossession is often camouflaged so that the dispossessed subject is blinded to its presence. In the Caribbean situation, for example, dispossession was technological, economic, and political. The plantation of the Caribbean required a continuous supply of cheap labor in the form of slaves. The economic system of barter

trade required and maintained a dependence on the French economy. According to Glissant, this system was subsequently changed into “pseudoproduction, then into false production and finally into an exchange system” (Glissant, 1991, p. 39). What resulted was an economic situation that prevented the slaves from recognizing the plantation owners (bekes) as “*the real enemy*”. The economic system maintained an abysmal growth in technological innovation and was equally not considered as collective activity of production. The non-autonomous nature of production in the long run changed the Martinique into a consumer colony. This has often been the subject of aid discussions that accuse the West of encouraging the dependence of the South through the provision of non-substantial aid. For instance, Moyo, estimates that sub-Saharan Africa has received over \$300 billion in development assistance since 1970 (Moyo, 2009). It is surprising that the continent has very little to show regardless of this massive investment. Moyo concludes that aid has been ineffective to the continent because it initiates a cycle of dependency. The fact is that this process of dispossession is left hidden from the oppressed. Imitation becomes the sole preoccupation of the dispossessed population, a constant urge to consume even that which it fails to produce itself, further ensuring a continued dependence.

As I have explained so far, dispossession makes the western celebrity the “voice” of the aid recipient thus rendering the aid recipient “voiceless”. The images and language employed by the celebrity appears to be ingrained in this discourse. The implication resulting from these power relations is a displacement of agency from the beneficiaries of the campaign onto the celebrities.

### **6.5.2 The Aid Recipient as Subaltern**

Dispossession places aid recipients in a subaltern position. The subaltern is often represented as voiceless and dependent upon the West. This relationship seeks to infantilize the non-western subject, once again engendering the messianic mission of the Whiteman’s burden earlier mentioned. The term Subaltern—first coined by Antonio

Gramsci—can be defined as “subordination in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language, and culture and was used to signify the centrality of dominant/dominated relationships in history” (Prakash, 1994). According to Kapoor, in developmental work, there is the unavoidable “developmental discourse” of Northern superiority over the South and knowledge based on Western values (Kapoor, 2008). It is this discourse that places the aided South in a subaltern position as dependents on the Global North.

In the position of dependency, the aid recipient is deprived of the ability to engage fully in solving problems. In *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, Spivak raises the question of silence on the part of the non-western “Other” (Spivak, 1988). She explains that this silence occurs because the “Other” is overshadowed by westerners who try to serve as spokesmen/women for the “Other”. In these cases the real interest of the “Other” is relegated to the peripheral as the West dictates their emotions and needs. The celebrity efforts may be liable of this fault; very few non-westerners are consulted as the celebrity determines which issues are of urgency and suggest solutions to these issues. For instance, the media discourse on SSP and Hunger No More provide very little information on how the inhabitants of this region were consulted in the proposition of solutions to *their* problem.

Although Spivak specifically addresses the Indian custom of Sati, this reading is equally useful in understanding similar cases of dispossession occurring in the post-colonial context. The continual circulation of images of aiding and saving of the “Third World” means these images become the defining discourse on the Global South. What emerges is a discourse that places the north and south in distinct categories of benefactors and beneficiaries with an emphasis on the dependency of the south and its inhabitants are presented as different from the West. According to Kapoor, the valorization of difference presents a means by which attention can be placed on the plight of the marginalized (Kapoor, 2008). Yet what effect does such an attention produce, when the marginalized are presented as incapable of voicing their plight? It is within this entwined web that the celebrity burden finds itself.

Fundamental is the need for Africans to participate in the production of discourses on their own continent. Humanitarianism and particularly the celebrity's engagement place the "Other" in a subaltern position where the western celebrity takes on the role of speaking for the "Other". The economic and political position of the western celebrities means they are well-circulated and well-known making it possible for them to represent the subaltern. As Robert Young notes, it is not the case that the subaltern cannot speak but rather the dominant fails to listen (Young, 2004). Hence, the need for a celebrity to speak on behalf of the subaltern. Yet, the celebrity-led campaign must include inhabitants from the afflicted regions in order for it to achieve its objectives. The possibility of a celebrity-led campaign in collaboration with a local activist or intellectual or a local celebrity-led campaign will be most effective. In light of this, SSP and Hunger No More are worth commending for recruiting inhabitants from the affected regions. In spite of their efforts, more must be done. I believe it takes local agency for policy change to occur. Celebrity humanitarianism must have local influence if it will be successful. It is only then that the celebrity's efforts will be considered legitimate, effective in its organization and performance and least likely to receive criticism from stakeholders.

## **7 Conclusion**

Celebrity humanitarianism is intertwined in a discourse of selfless giving in aid of humanity. The celebrity who takes up the humanitarian burden is presented as a benevolent individual. The moral impetus to engage in humanitarianism shapes the self-framing of the celebrity self and at the same time shapes media framing of the celebrity as good. Humanitarianism is a virtuous act that the celebrity must engage in given his/her ability to garner audience attention and the desire to give back. However, this act of benevolence is embedded in power relations, which are a condition for its existence, and that have implications for the beneficiaries. It is ironic to speak of benevolence when the inequalities of globalization have had a direct impact on the present conditions of the continent that the celebrity hopes to serve. In this research I have attempted to show the effectiveness of celebrity efforts while elaborating on the negative effect that it may have on beneficiaries.

### **7.1 Summarizing the celebrity burden**

In terms of effectiveness, a synthesis of performance, organization, stakeholders' response, and legitimacy combine to produce an effective campaign. The effectiveness of a campaign relies on the ability to frame its goal, to recruit participants with good standing on the issue, an outward performance of the campaign by its celebrities and finally the response from the campaign's targeted audience. Each of these elements is significantly dependent on how the lead celebrity carries the celebrity burden. The legitimacy of the celebrity affects not only the campaign but also influences stakeholders' response to the campaign. A celebrity who has highly invested in the campaign is more likely to draw the attention of stakeholder be it local or international leaders.

The celebrity's engagement in humanitarianism incites audiences to share in the celebrities' concerns for "Others". The celebrity brings a distinct framing to the campaign. Their uses of strategies such as civil disobedience, inappropriate behavior, and shaming can be effective in gaining public support. By virtue of their visibility, audiences

are drawn to celebrity campaigns and as fans they may invest in them. The celebrity burden appears beneficial to the celebrity since it allows for a portrayal of him or her in a positive light. Yet the celebrity who carries the burden is obliged to carry the burden effectively and responsibly since the outcome of the campaign weighs on him or her.

The celebrity's legitimacy reflects on the campaign and this may either advance the campaign or destroy it. Hence, the celebrity must show a true commitment to the campaign's cause. His or her failure or success holds grave consequences for the beneficiaries. This knowledge weighs heavily on the conscience of each celebrity that endeavors to carry the burden of humanitarianism. The celebrity's legitimacy means she or he is well-recognized by individuals within the field of humanitarianism. The legitimacy will mean that his or her performance of humanitarianism will be fruitful in opening up global discussion of the issue. The success of the campaign depends on how the celebrity organizes the campaign through strategic framing, acquires legitimacy of the selected issue, performs the framing and elicits positive response from stakeholders.

As civilians, the celebrities represent the housing of the dreams and aspiration of ordinary men. Her or his engagement in humanitarianism makes the celebrity a representative of the populace, a position that is already imposed on the celebrity by virtue of their careers in entertainment. Yet when the celebrity engages with the suffering of distant "Others" their involvement begs the question: who do they represent? As the celebrity takes up agency as representative of the campaign's beneficiaries, the beneficiaries lose the ability to represent themselves. Power relations place the celebrity in the lime light as a benevolent individual whereas the "Other" is dispossessed of the ability to speak for him or herself. The political economy of western celebrities places them at an advantage by increasing their visibility internationally. This increases their ability to assume a transnational role as representative of the "Other" placing the "Other" in a subaltern position. Dispossessed of the ability to represent themselves, the aid recipient must depend on the celebrity to send forth his plight.



## **7.2 Solutions to Dispossession**

The influential role played by lead celebrities such as Clooney and Bono cannot be undermined. Their influence may have opened up the issue to global discussion. Nevertheless, discussion is only the first step and longtime decisions have to be made in order for change to occur. Such change can only take place and be sustained if the inhabitants of the region take part in the decision making. The recommendations formulated to see to the solution of these problems must first and foremost be made in consultation with the local population. ONE and the SSP appear to have taken the first steps by engaging individuals such as K'Naan and Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail.

Collaboration with local intellectuals and celebrities may reduce some of the criticism leveled against the campaign. A celebrity-led campaign that places a local representative at the forefront will be more effective in arriving at a solution that will be acceptable to the local population. The selected local representative must be one accepted and selected by the people. It must be an individual who is recognized as a legitimate embodiment of the local populace. Such an individual will increase the legitimacy of the campaign.

Furthermore, it is about time that African celebrities created such organizations themselves. The media's preoccupation with the non-elite means it has become critical for African celebrities to equally engage in this form of humanitarianism. The African celebrity must carry the celebrity burden. Similar to the western celebrity, the African celebrity is also in a good position to help even though he or she may not have the level of international visibility that the western celebrity has. All the same, the African celebrity can bring a level of local visibility to an issue that can force both local authorities and the international community to pay attention. Similar to the western celebrity, the local celebrity must work in collaboration with local intellectuals and experts to legitimize his or her role.

## **7.3 Future Research**

With more and more celebrities engaging in humanitarian work, celebrity humanitarianism will continue to exist. The effective execution of celebrity campaigns will play an immense role in solving many societal ills. Therefore, further research is required in this area. Future research could look into the impact that the celebrity engagement has on local inhabitants of the project site. Surveys on the impact of the campaign on local inhabitants would be fundamental in measuring its efficacy.

Also a comparative analysis of the celebrity-led campaigns and organizations with other Non-Governmental Organizations will substantiate the effectiveness of the celebrity's humanitarian work. To do this an increase in the sample size of the organizations under examination (celebrity-led and a typical NGO) is necessary to establish the differences existing between the two and hence determine the efficiency of both kinds of organizations. Additionally, supporting discourse analysis with quantitative research will allow for generalization of the findings.

The celebrities have taken a central position in politics and humanitarian discourse. We must ensure that their engagement aids rather than worsens the plight of those whom they assist. I believe that this can only be done if the affected population is permitted to speak for itself. The aid recipient must be engaged in the solution process.

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