

Internationalising the struggle for justice in Bhopal: balancing the local, national and transnational

Tomás Mac Sheoin

Abstract:

The concept of transnational advocacy network (TAN) has been of seminal importance in interpretations of the internationalization of social movements and campaigns. This has resulted in the neglect of the national: the national advocacy network (NAN) concept has been proposed to address this and allow for exploration of the neglected 'process of local-national-transnational activism' (Kraemer et al 2013:5). These concepts are considered in a case study of the movement for justice in Bhopal, a movement and campaign which has operated on local, national and transnational scales.

Keywords:

Transnational advocacy network (TAN), national advocacy network (NAN), corporate campaign, movement for justice in Bhopal, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), shareholder transnational advocacy network (STAN), boomerang model, internationalization conflict coalition

Introduction

When we try to describe and explain how campaigns and movements internationalise, one of the concepts most used is transnational advocacy networks (TANs): TANs operate through the boomerang effect, where local movements use transnational allies to place pressure on their allies' governments and inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) to place pressure on the national government that the local movement has been unsuccessfully pressing. As noted by the seminal work on TANs, in the boomerang effect, local movements 'bypass their state and directly search out international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from the outside' (Keck and Sikkink 1998:12). One characteristic of TANs which is often noted is that international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) may have different aims to those of local groups, leading to accusations that INGOs are using local movements for their own ends and care little whether campaign results eventually benefit local communities and groups in struggle. This criticism is seldom levied against small solidarity groups but mainly against large INGOs like Greenpeace, Oxfam or ActionAid. INGOs in TANs are often accused of making local groups dependent on them for financial support, while others suggest local movements have reframed their struggles to satisfy INGOs and possibly moved dangerously away from the actual aims and motivations of local struggles. (Bob 2005, Lerche 2008).

Similarly victories by TANs at the international level may not be to the benefit of the local movement. The classic example here is the struggle over the Narmada dams which 'led to several unintended long-term structural changes in Washington, DC rather than in India' (Randeria 2003:316), while

'Transnational linkages with the campaign against multilateral banks led over time to a shift of agendas and priorities. Mobilization and strategic action came to be focused on the eviction of the World Bank from the valley just as grievances came to be articulated increasingly in terms of an environmental discourse with international legitimacy and translatability. Gradually a radical 'no large dams' agenda, for which there was growing transnational support, eclipsed concerns about appropriate technological safeguards, displacement, equity and justice. The vocabulary of the movement as much as the timing of local action was often determined by demands of the global arena and transnational constituency building instead of seeking to work through regional and national political institutions'. (Randeria 2003:315).

The TAN concept, partly due to its origins in the study of international politics, has mainly been confined to the analysis of campaigns targeting states and IGOs. McAteer and Pulver have adapted the TAN concept to a specific type of corporate campaign: 'a subset of corporate-focused TANs, namely ones in which corporate shareholders play a central role in the network. We call them *shareholder transnational advocacy networks* (STANs)'. (2009:2). STANs resemble TANs in that they emerge when local avenues are blocked: they occur

'when local communities, living at points of production or extraction, are blocked in their efforts to influence the operating practices of a corporate subsidiary...In such situations, local communities engage in the strategy of creating external linkages to other groups in order to drive change via top-down pressure on senior executives in the corporation's headquarters. The subsidiary's parent corporation becomes the target of activism. (McAteer and Pulver 2009 :3).

McAteer and Pulver studied connections between two local movements in Colombia and a growing movement in core countries which attempts to influence transnational corporations (TNCs) through shareholder activism and socially responsible investment. This type of network therefore calls on a very different range of groups: 'central actors in a STAN are large corporate shareholders, such as pension funds, religious communities, and socially responsible investment firms.' (McAteer and Pulver 2009: 5).

As den Hond and de Bakker note, McAteer and Pulver's work involves a valuable extension of the boomerang model to TNCs, but, by concentrating on shareholder activism it 'does not cover all possible pathways the boomerang effect could follow' (den Hond and de Bakker 2012). Having examined a number of cases of anti-sweatshop activism and Free Burma TANs, they conclude: 'the boomerang model is a broader phenomenon than is acknowledged in either the Keck and Sikkink or the McAteer and Pulver models. We therefore propose to refer to 'boomerang politics' as a general model in which NGOs and/or activist groups, on behalf of affected parties, exert pressure on primary targets in order for them to influence the ultimate target'. (den Hond and de Bakker 2012).

This transnational emphasis has resulted in a neglect of the national, a common characteristic of much writing about globalisation and global civil society (Laxer and Halperin 2003). However some recent contributions to the literature have begun to bring the national back in. McAteer and Pulver's work, for example, also pays attention to the national level, including tensions between the different levels of the campaign. In an article on Bhopal and Greenpeace Mac Sheoin (2012) argues that greater victories against Dow Chemical were scored by the Bhopal campaign's supporters and allies in India than were scored by its transnational supporters. Research has also begun to appear on regional and national variations in global campaigns. In a useful article on anti-sweatshop campaigns, Bair and Palpaceur (2012) argue that national political, cultural and economic contexts shape anti-sweatshop campaigns, reporting marked variation in the composition and leadership of these campaigns across Canada, Europe and the United States. Similarly recent research on the anti-globalization movement, originally presented as an almost-unitary, global movement, has begun to look at the existence and history of national anti-globalization movements, though only in the core countries of Europe and North America. (Della Porta 2007; Flesher Fominaya and Cox 2013).

A recent paper by Kraemer et al, based on a case study of opposition to London-listed TNC Vedanta Resources in Nyamgiri, Orissa, India, argues that 'too little attention has been paid to national advocacy networks (NANS) and the heterogeneity of local and national conditions under which domestic movements seek transnational support'. (Kraemer et al 2013:3). Critiquing the core/periphery boomerang model as failing to 'capture the full diversity of conditions under which local social movements transnationalise' (Kraemer et al 2013:5), they suggest the NAN concept can address the domestic gap in these studies and allow for the exploration of the neglected 'process of local-national-transnational activism' (Kraemer et al 2013:5). They outline their concept of NANS as follows

"NANS consist of national activists, NGOs, community organizations, research organizations and independent media groups that are engaged in national-level advocacy on behalf of the numerous local struggles in remote parts of the country. NANS, with their focus on domestic goals, operate alongside internationally oriented actors and, as we will show, this may result in collaboration but also in conflict and disruption. NANS can be conceived of as 'national social movement communities' (Staggenborg 2002) at the often neglected meso level of analysis in social movement studies. (McAdam 2003). Our assertion is that, at the domestic level, NANS operate according to the same principles as TANS –empowering local grassroots activists through the provision of technical and strategic know-how and leveraging local information into broader campaigns to influence national power holders. We argue that, rather than lacking influence at the national level as assumed in the boomerang model, NANS and the grassroots groups they support often do have various pathways of influencing the state and corporations.' (Kraemer et al 2013:5)

Kraemer et al identify four mechanisms of both internationalization and localization: for the former, they are scale shift, brokerage, recruitment and publicity, for the latter, scale shift, recruitment, politicization and strategic

adaptation. They note TANs are presented as static, while they are in fact dynamic and change over time as campaigns respond to changes in circumstances, in some cases transnationalising, in others returning to local struggle. These changes are shown when Kraemer et al proceed to trace the activities of local, national and transnational networks in relation to the struggle against Vedanta, outlining a history of the struggle in four phases: 'local resistance, NAN support and emerging international interest, rapid internationalization, and conflict and relocalization' (Kraemer et al 2013:9). Supplementing the boomerang model, which suggests movements internationalise as a result of political weakness, blockage or failure at the local level, Kraemer et al suggest that NANs internationalise to provide an additional area in which they may contest the TNC. They also suggest counter-organising by state and capital are important factors shaping localization and internationalisation strategies. They report on criticism of the Vedanta TAN by NAN elements, thus positing conflict between TAN and NAN as important to the development of campaigns. Finally, we should note that, while most research on TANs and networks has concentrated on organisations, research also has to take into account initiatives by individuals. Here Kreamer et al concentrate on one person, Jike, who acted as a contact for both NANs and TANs in obtaining access to the affected hill-people and who evolved, over the period, into a symbol of the resistance to Vedanta before switching sides to become a supporter of the Vedanta project.

Complicating the model

Kreamer et al's paper is a welcome addition to the literature on internationalising movements, as it helps complicate our view of how campaigns operate locally, nationally and transnationally and thus brings us closer to the messy reality in which social movements exist. As already noted, their paper is based on a case study of one movement in India. This article, also based on a case study from the same country, intends to support Kreamer's model by showing its applicability to another movement and thus adding to the empirical base supporting their argument. But it also attempts to further complicate things by adding some further observations about local movements, NANs and TANs based on the Bhopal case study.

To begin with, we must add to the reasons for internationalizing anti-corporate struggles the desire to fight the TNC not only in the country in which the project is contested, but also in the TNC's home country. This is based on the reasonably straightforward analysis that TNC decisions are ultimately made in the home and not the host country. Thus internationalising is a way of bringing the struggle home to the TNC and attempting to influence the TNC where its decisions are made. This is the rationale behind TANs attending company AGMs, shareholder activism, etc. As Zavestowski points out, the difference between the Bhopal campaign and the majority of transnational social movement organisations that have been the object of study is that for the Bhopal movement, 'transnational activism is not simply a tool, but rather

necessitated by the origins of a movement's grievance.' (Zavestowski 2009:386). It internationalised because of the nature of (one of) its target(s) –the US-based TNC Union Carbide. Moreover, this internationalisation became more important in the Bhopal case when Union Carbide abandoned the Indian market and the movement no longer had a corporate target locally and nationally. From that stage on, until Union Carbide was taken over by another TNC, Dow Chemical, in 2001, all anti-corporate organizing had to be transnational.

As Kreamer et al also note, TANs are presented as static, while they are in fact dynamic and changing. This is particularly obvious in the Bhopal case, with a wide ranging variety of actors involved at different times. Partly this can be explained by the variety of channels that the campaign used in its search for justice. On the legal front, those involved included Bhopal Action Resource Centre (BARC), the Permanent People's Tribunal, Earthrights, individual lawyers; on the medical front, International Medical Commission on Bhopal, Bhopal Medical Appeal, Medico-Friend Circle, Voluntary Health Association of India, Drug Forum. To further complicate the model, we should note that TAN members and initiators can also be members and initiators of NANs in their home countries. Here the example of BARC is useful: the first activity of the American TAN in 1985 was to hold a conference at which a NAN –the Citizens' Commission on Bhopal- was formed. Later, as well as initiating the International Coalition for Justice in Bhopal in 1986, it also initiated the Campaign for Justice in Bhopal in December 1995 'bringing together numerous American environmental and social justice organisations' in yet another NAN (Morehouse 1997). There are also tensions within TAN organisations themselves, which can result in changes in practice of organisations, leading to changes in campaigns.

However this emphasis on conflict within elements of the campaign must also be extended to conflicts between the NAN and the local movement, conflicts between different elements in the NAN and, finally, conflicts within the local movement itself. While Kreamer et al focus on problems and tensions caused locally by the TAN it should also be noted that NAN interventions in local areas can be problematic and a source of tension for local movements. We can also observe conflicts within the local movement in Bhopal, which are evident from the existence of different local groups: the local movement is fragmented, rather than united. We also need to note that NANs are also dynamic and often fragmented and conflictual. Kreamer et al note the importance of individuals, but confine this to the issue of which local individuals are recruited to represent the movement by the TAN. The Bhopal campaign also shows the importance of individuals, as well as organisations, in keeping campaign NANs and TANs active over a long period.

Finally there is the problematic term advocacy: the origin of the term in research on attempts to influence IGOs is central: TANs were by definition advocating or speaking on behalf of excluded groups in international negotiations and IGO meetings. Similarly Kreamer et al (2013: 5) suggest

“NANs operate according to the same principles as TANs –empowering local grassroots activists through the provision of technical and strategic know-how and leveraging local information into broader campaigns to influence national power holders.” But more than advocacy is going on in NANs: there is also action. Advocacy implies a polite presentation of positions in a rational process of negotiation and deliberation; it ignores the ways in which NANs in particular, but in some case also TANs, confront corporations and states in a most impolite manner through protest, occupation and various types of direct action. In the Bhopal case Greenpeace’s campaign involved not only the production of reports and lobbying of IGOs but also deliveries of barrels of toxic waste to various TNC facilities and locations as well as other protest activities involving action, direct action to be precise.

Bhopal: local, national and transnational networks

The Bhopal campaign is a useful example of such a complicated campaign for a number of reasons

- 1) The campaign has consistently operated across three scales –local, national and transnational
- 2) The campaign has operated at these scales because it has targets at each of these scales -the local state (MP), the national state (GoI) and TNCs (UCC and Dow)
- 3) It provides evidence of a national boomerang effect when the local movement, with support from NAN elements, pressured the national government to influence the behaviour and policies of the Madhya Pradesh state government
- 4) As the movement has been in existence for nearly 30 years we have empirical evidence of various attempts at alliances and coalitions both nationally and transnationally over a long time period.
- 5) This long time period allows us to observe changes in alliances, tactics and targets. As the campaign internationalised before the advent of the internet we can see differences in pre- and post-internet mobilization.
- 6) While TANs are understood to target the state and IGOs, the Bhopal campaign TAN is entrusted with running what is, in essence, a corporate campaign, using the whole range of tactics and allies such campaigns have available in their repertoire. Furthermore the TAN involved not only the mobilisation of transnational solidarity with the Bhopal survivors, but also the expression of solidarity by the survivors with other communities involved in toxic struggles, and also mobilisation of TAN

members to pressurise the national and local state in India. These actions extend our notions of what TANs can do. ¹

- 7) It also allows us to see tensions between various members of the local movement, NAN and TAN.
- 8) Finally the local movement itself is fragmented, consisting of a variety of groups, operating at different scales, in different systems, and choosing different tactics and targets.

Regrettably for space reasons it will not be possible to do for Bhopal what Kraemer et al did for Nyamgiri. Instead a number of individual episodes in the long struggle will be examined. The reasons for this are straightforward. Kraemer et al's study is of a LULU campaign, with a small number of INGOs (ActionAid, Amnesty, Survival) involved in the TAN and a similarly small NAN. In comparison the Bhopal struggle involved a multiplicity of issues and fora and mobilised a multiplicity of communities, groups, organisations and NGOs at different times.

Before turning to these episodes, it's necessary to give a broad outline of the campaign, which has two main bases –livelihood and justice issues. The campaign grew from the public response to a massive leak of toxic gases such as MIC from a Union Carbide pesticides factory in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India in December 1984, and to the failure by both state and TNC to adequately deal with the results of the gas leak, whether through providing treatment for its health effects, adequately compensating the survivors, investigating the causes of the gas leak or punishing the guilty. It's possible to discern two major streams of orientation and activity in the Bhopal campaign: one was concerned with the

¹ While TAN members are generally seen as being mobilised to put pressure on their own governments, corporations and IGOs, the International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal (ICJB) also mobilised them to put direct pressure on both the local and national Indian government. Two examples will illustrate this. The campaign called on its supporters in response to state repression and to support specific demands in particular campaigns. For example, in support of the *Jeene Ka Haq* (Right to Life) campaign which began on the 20th Feb 2007 with a *dharna* (sit-down strike), followed by an indefinite fast: over the first 25 days of the campaign, over 2000 faxes were sent by international supporters to the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister's Office and more than 400 telephone calls were made to various officials of the state government. (*Times Of India* 18/3/07). The following year, in support of the 2008 *padyatra* (long march) over 13,400 faxes from 18 countries were sent to the Indian Prime Minister's Office.

The campaign sought also to form alliances not only with INGOs but also with communities in struggle against TNCs and toxics. Most TAN activities are seen as elite-oriented: attendance at AGMs, pressure on investors and regulatory authorities, lobbying of governments and IGOs. However in the Bhopal case this elite orientation was accompanied by a grass-roots orientation, shown in various attempts to form networks of other contaminated communities and victim/survivor groups. Thus, as well as attending meetings or conferences in national capitals, Bhopal delegations spoke at meetings in communities threatened by toxic capital. In Ireland, for example, Bhopal delegations spoke in communities in Cork, Leitrim, Limerick and Mayo campaigning against the pharmaceutical industry, the oil industry, incineration and fracking, while in the US they spoke to communities around Union Carbide and other chemical factories.

material effects of the gas disaster and prioritised a campaign concerning economic and medical rehabilitation of the survivors; the demand of the other stream was for justice, investigation of causes and punishment of culprits. (BSMS 2009: 32-33). The campaign has consistently raised four demands – medical care, compensation, rehabilitation and justice- though some demands were emphasised over others at different times.

For a chronological account, the first period –from 1985 to 1989- involved local struggles over health, treatment and relief and rehabilitation programmes, while the national and transnational campaigns concentrated on the legal struggle against Union Carbide –first in the US, then in the Indian courts. From 1989 to 1991 the campaign centred on a legal and political struggle against the unjust settlement cooked up by Union Carbide and the government of India. After 1991 the campaign relocalized with a struggle over the disbursement of compensation from the settlement which took place in daily grinding attendance at local courts and offices of the Madhya Pradesh state bureaucracy. This was followed by a phase which concentrated on health and treatment issues, first documenting the continued ill-health of the gas-affected, then establishing a movement -controlled health clinic. At the end of the millennium there were major developments in the campaign, with the participation of a major INGO, Greenpeace, and the production of research reports confirming toxic contamination of ground and water by waste abandoned at the factory. The campaign was further reinvigorated when the original culprit corporation Union Carbide was taken over by Dow Chemical in 2001 and a new corporate target became available. The campaign to force Dow to take responsibility for Bhopal continues to today, accompanied by various attempts to force the government of India to discharge its responsibilities to the Bhopal survivors.

The episodes chosen are the two years in the immediate aftermath of the gas leak and the longer period of anti-Dow campaigning after 1999, along with the strategic switch to health campaigning at the beginning of the 1990s. The first period allows us to see what was essentially the take-over of a spontaneous local movement by national (or at least non-local) activists, as well as the autonomous development of a TAN with minimal links to the local campaign. By contrast, the later campaign against Dow shows us a very different pattern of activity, with the locally-controlled campaign mobilising a multitude of TAN organisations, while also mobilising locally and nationally against Dow in cooperation with NAN elements, while other autonomous local movements in India also opposed the TNC. The strategic switch to health issues in the 1990s is chosen in response to Kreamer et al noting the importance of state and corporate counter-organising, which I suggest should be extended to more general state and corporate action, in influencing in particular the internationalising of campaigns: this shows a campaign response to state action in appropriating the medical area as a state-controlled activity.

Targets

The main targets of the campaign were the local (Madhya Pradesh) state, the national state and two TNCs, Union Carbide and Dow. However, as is common in corporate campaigns, a variety of different targets with different connections to the main targets were also subject to action (Manheim 2001; Mac Sheoin 2014). Thus, for example, Dow's position as sponsor of the Olympics made the London Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (LOGOG) a target for TAN activity while various shareholders in the TNC were targeted, some of whom joined the TAN by placing resolutions on the agenda of the TNCs' annual general meetings. However TAN elements were also interested in targeting the international chemical and pesticides industry, as well as various state and international regulatory bodies.

On the state side, the federal structure in India creates fertile ground for a national boomerang model. In the case of Bhopal, the major administrative bureaucracy –the Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation Department (BGTRRD)- responsible for rehabilitation lies at the state level: however, funding and major policy decisions were made by the national state in Delhi. Most of the livelihood struggles targeted the Madhya Pradesh government and BGTRRD. However, when activists fail at the state level, they can turn to the national through petitioning, lobbying and protesting. Following the settlement in 1989, the main target moved from the national state to the local state, as the disbursement of compensation was in the hands of the MP bureaucracy. As Basu (1994) observes, from 1990 the local state became more important, with actions by the local state –some tinged with communal and electoral implications- affecting the movement's base, for example the closing down of the rehabilitation workshops that were the base for the BGPMUS, when compensation from the 1989 settlement was being doled out. Another example was the "anti-encroachment drive" (slum demolition) initiated by the BJP government in 1991 whose victims were overwhelmingly Muslim and gas – affected. ² (PUCL 1991).

Tactics

The full range of tactics used by social movements was used by different groups at different stages of the campaign. On both the local and national scale, the traditional repertoire of tactics inherited from the peasant and Gandhian movements was fully used, including the *dharna* (sit-down strike), the *rasta/rail roko* (road/rail blockade), *jail bharao andolan* (fill the jails movement), *brook hartal* (hunger strike) and *padyatra* (walking tour). (Gadgil and Guha 1994:120-121) Transnationally, corporate campaign tactics such as shareholder activism, resolutions at AGMs and appeals to financial and takeover regulatory authorities were used. Further, bearing out Kremer et al's

² While these demolitions were eventually stopped by a Supreme Court order obtained by the BGPMUS, some 628 families were relocated 11-13 kms from the old city.

contention that publicity is a prime tactic in internationalising campaigns, the campaign brought Bhopal to the world through visits abroad by delegations of survivors and brought the world to Bhopal through welcoming international tribunals, researchers, journalists and other visitors. The movement also responded to the new opportunities provided by the arrival of the Internet by using various online tactics, including the creation of fake and mock websites and engaging in an 'image war' with Dow Chemical. One major tactic involves consistently reframing the campaign, whether as nationalist/anti-imperialist (inside India) or anti-pesticide, anti-toxic, anti-corporate or anti-globalisation at different times and for different audiences.³

After the gas leak

Local level

The immediate aftermath of the gas leak saw spontaneous local organising in the affected communities, with the formation of local neighbourhood committees and groups, one of which filed a case against Union Carbide officials and factory supervisors on December 7th and undertook a survey of deaths, illnesses and losses within its own area. (BSMS 2009: 102) This was followed by the takeover of the local campaign in Bhopal by outside activists, who had come to Bhopal to assist and organise the survivors and who formed a broad front organisation, the Zahreeli Gas Kand Sangharsh Morcha (Poisonous Gas Episode Struggle Front, Morcha from now on), which subsumed the local organisations. In effect, while some local leaders remained, NAN elements took over the local movement. The Morcha began a series of agitations which were militant and strongly supported, including a march to the Chief Minister's house and rally attracting 15,000, with tactics ratcheted up to a *rail roko* in early February.

These protests were met by a variety of state responses and counter-organising, with meetings with protest leaders, concession of some demands, 'buying off of some members' (BSMS 2009: 103) and repression: some Morcha leaders were imprisoned for 20 days at the time of the *rail roko*. Disagreement over these radical tactics led to splits in, and defections from, the Morcha. A further split came with the formation of the NRPC (Nagrik Rahat Aur Punarvas Samiti, the Relief and Rehabilitation Committee), which wished to emphasise relief issues. Thus one dividing line in Bhopal organising was between demanding 'relief' and

³ This is one of the reasons I have problems with the three frames proposed by Scandrett and Mukherjee (2011) for the movement in Bhopal. The historical evidence shows a variety of different frames were used at different stages by different elements in the campaign: they include nationalist/anti-imperialist (Dow Quit India, Carbide Quit India, Mia Zaffir Awards), human rights violations (Amnesty) anti-toxic (Greenpeace) anti-corporate and anti-globalisation (when the movement was searching for allies in the anti-globalisation movement). As Pawas Bisht (n.d.) notes 'The main problem with such an analysis is that it ends up presenting these "abstractions" as stable categories, which explain the actions of groups, rather than viewing them as evolving constructions attempting to seek solutions for problems'.

demanding 'rights' or 'justice', with the 'reformist' NRPC identified with the former and the 'revolutionary' Morcha identified with the latter and each organisation viewing the other with suspicion: 'The NRPC viewed Morcha as doing politics instead of providing help, and the Morcha thought of NRPC as a bunch of reformists with dubious motives' (Sarangi 1996:100).

However these two groups came together in June 1985, with the support of NAN groups (MFC and Drug Action Forum) to set up a People's Health Clinic in the abandoned factory. A police raid later closed the clinic and the doctors and activists there were arrested. Demonstrators were attacked by police in May and June and emergency regulations were brought in to restrict public assembly. Individual activists were charged with murder to encourage them to leave Bhopal and smeared as Union Carbide and CIA dupes. The state strategy appeared to be based on a belief that if the middle class 'outside agitators' were removed, the movement in Bhopal would either wither away or at least become more manageable. The repression eventually wore down the outside activists, most of whom left Bhopal by May 1986, leading to a crisis in the Morcha.

The Morcha was a 'democratic centralist' organisation, with all that implies. It exhibited the usual personality clashes, leadership struggles and left sectarianism that would be expected, with activists expelled for breaking the 'party line'. According to Satinath Sarangi 'a group of out of town activists, all very dedicated workers, were falsely charged with planting bombs within the Union Carbide factory by the leaders and thrown out of the organisation' (BSMS 2009: 117), while he himself was expelled for querying the basis on which AP Singh brought a large number of survivors to the SUCI conference.⁴

Following the defeat of the Morcha, there was a relocalization and a return to grassroots struggles and local organisations with local leadership. These grassroots organisations started out with limited aims –to obtain interim relief, to defend livelihood (when the workshops, set up as employment-generating and rehabilitation projects for survivors, were in danger of closing), to obtain permanent status for stationery workers, but inevitably took on larger issues. State responses again varied from concessions to attacks on their bases (when the workshops were finally closed when compensation disbursement took place and some Muslim supporters moved out to outskirts of city during the 1991 slum clearance drive).

Among the groups that mobilised was the BGPMUS, a mass organisation of women employed in the rehabilitation workshops, Pension Bhogi, an existing pensioners' claimants' union which extended its scope to the gas-affected and the Stationery Union, a small union of women employed to produce stationery for the state. The first two organisations; action repertoire included lobbying, protest and assisting survivors in their interactions with the local courts and bureaucracy, while the union struggled through the court union registration and industrial relations processes. These groups were supported by the Bhopal

⁴ For comparison, A P Singh's account of the same period provides a very different picture, with strong criticism of 'outside activists' (BSMS 2009: 50-56).

Group for Information and Action (BGIA), a group formed by some outside activists who had not left the city and which was central to internationalising the campaign.

Transnational level

To turn to TAN activity, early international action on Bhopal shows how campaigns can be internationalised without the existence of a TAN and without contact with and cooperation from a local network or movement as existing national and international organisations took up the issue of Bhopal.⁵ Many of these groups were taking up the Bhopal case to raise questions about chemical safety in their own countries and in their own countries' chemical industries, both at home and in their foreign operations. The first appeal for international action was released in December 1984 by the Asia Pacific Peoples' Environmental Network (APPEN) while the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) sent out an investigatory team.

Initially the international campaign was not a TAN at all, but a collection of autonomous groups and organisations undertaking work, without any contact with the grassroots struggle in Bhopal, which –in its initial period- was highly suspicious of foreign groups or involvement, or with other groups working on Bhopal issues. In Japan 19 consumer, environmental and womens' groups formed the Bhopal Disaster Monitoring Group which, as well as picketing Union Carbide and the Indian Embassy, began to research the production and use of MIC by Japanese TNCs. In the USA a conference in New Jersey in March 1985 led to the creation of the Citizen's Commission on Bhopal, bringing together as many as 50 organisations. (Morehouse 1997). The first international network was formed in February 1985, when NGOs attending a meeting on environment and development launched the 'No More Bhopals Network'. When the first TAN of Bhopal solidarity groups, the International Coalition for Justice in Bhopal, was eventually founded in December 1986 the initiative came, not from the local movement, but from the BARC in New York.

This solidarity network developed in isolation from the local movement. According to Satinath Sarangi the Morcha 'wary of being vilified by the government for their foreign connections ... failed to make use of [this] spontaneous outpouring of international support' (BSMS 2009: 120).⁶ However some fruitful connections were being made between national and transnational

⁵ Another example of this phenomenon is provided by den Hond and de Bakker (2013) who note in the case of the Free Burma campaign that there was no contact between the TAN groups and any groups in Burma, though there was contact with expatriate groups.

⁶ Allegations of foreign funding and foreign involvement in civil society with malicious intent to undermine Indian national self-determination were a tactic used to attack NGOs in India as 'anti-national' by both the left and right. For example the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA, Save the Narmada Movement) was attacked in 1990, 1999 and again in 2006 for having received foreign funds, an allegation denied by the NBA, while the Mumbai World Social Forum also came under attack on the same grounds.

groups: one example was the cooperation between the Society for Participatory Research in Asia and the Highlander Research and Education Centre in the production of a report in May 1985 that examined both local and global aspects of the Bhopal disaster and Union Carbide: the report drew on information provided by groups in Belgium, Canada, Chile, England, Japan, Puerto Rico and the USA. (Agarwal et al 1985). A later example of similar international cooperation was provided by the connections between BARC in New York and the Other India Press in Mapusa, Goa, in copublishing a range of books on Bhopal. The first serious transnational engagement, at the London November 1985 conference organised by the Transnationals Information Centre London (TICL) and the Bhopal Victims Solidarity Committee took place in an environment of defeat and demobilisation locally in Bhopal. Contacts were initially with the NAN: at the London conference in November 1985 speakers were from Bombay Lawyers Collective and Bombay URG, along with Nishit Vora from the People's Health Clinic, who was also an outside activist.

Some indication of how wide-ranging solidarity work on Bhopal was in the first year can be seen from the list of organisations working on the Bhopal tragedy included in Appendix 15 of the International Organisation of Consumer Unions (IOCU) publication, *The lessons of Bhopal*, published in September 1985. (We may note, as an aside, that IOCU thanked both UNEP and the Japan Bhopal Disaster Monitoring Group for financial assistance: thus their project was financed both by international agencies and social movement groups). The geographical spread of the 69 organisations is as follows.

Australia 1; Denmark 1; Germany 2; Hong Kong 1; Hungary 1; India 26; Indonesia 1; Japan 1; Kenya 1; Malaysia 2; Switzerland 7; England 3; USA 21; Zimbabwe 1.

Subtracting the Indian NAN⁷ we are left with 43 organisations, nearly half of which were based in the USA. The high number of organisations for Switzerland can be almost immediately counted out, as six were international organisations, parts of the UN system headquartered in Geneva. This leaves us with 37 organisations with the majority based in the USA and a further eight in Europe, six in Australasia and two in Africa. Outside the USA, there are four environmental/green organisations, 3 consumer organisations, 3 labour groups, 3 Bhopal solidarity groups, and one each for youth, anti-corporate and research/communication groups. For the USA, discounting the World Bank, IMF and a number of other groups, we have 5 environmental groups, 3 Bhopal solidarity groups, 3 research/communication groups, 2 labour and one each for consumer and legal groups.

⁷ For the Indian NAN, the geographical spread is as follows: Ahmedabad 1; Bangalore 2; Bhopal 4; Bombay 7; Delhi 8; Hyderabad 1; Madras 1; Pune 1; Trivandarum 1, while the sectoral breakdown is 6 environmental groups, 6 research/communication groups, 2 consumer, 2 Bhopal solidarity, 2 health, and one each trade union and peace groups; the Bhopal-based groups were environmental NGO Eklayva, the Morcha, NRPC and the Bhopal National Campaign Committee.

National level

If the TAN to a large extent developed and operated autonomously from the local campaign, on the national levels connections were stronger, particularly given the large number of NAN activists campaigning in Bhopal. Furthermore the local campaign also searched for support, calling a national convention of supporters in February 1985, which resulted in the formation of an impressive-appearing NAN. This NAN suffered from the same sectarianism that affected the Morcha, while the involvement of some of the larger organisations might be described as token. Elements of the NAN also developed their own projects independently, with, for example, the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad calling for a boycott of Everready in 1985.

When we look at the NAN, we must first note those who are conspicuous only in their absence: the communist parties and their mass organisations and trade unions, on the one hand, and the main urban middle-class environmentalists, on the other. The absence of the former is most surprising given the disaster seemed tailor-made for an anti-imperialistic politics and response.⁸ The national support came from two areas, elements of the urban intelligentsia and other people's movements. The latter included the people's science movement, the people's health movement, the women's movement and a number of people's movements, both in Madhya Pradesh and other Indian states. For the NAN we can identify different types of groups that became involved at different stages of the campaign and we can also identify different individuals who, either on their own or through participation in collectives of various types, have assisted in the campaign. One group involved specialised intellectual groups involved not only in knowledge production, but also in action –MFC, Delhi Science Forum (DSF), Centre on Science and the Environment (CSE). A consistent NAN supporter was The Other Media (TOM) in Delhi, which provided logistical and media support for the local movement's protests in Delhi over decades.

Here we may note how, just as in TANs the aims and objectives of involved groups may differ greatly, so also in NANs groups and organisations may hold differing perspectives, leading to disagreement on both objectives and tactics. An early example is provided by the Union Research Group (URG) from Bombay which became involved in Bhopal through providing support to the workers at the UC plant. At least partly inspired by recent examples of workers' plans for alternative production, the URG proposed the decontamination of the Bhopal plant and its use for alternative production under workers' control. URG

⁸ It's worth considering that the explanation for this lack of support in both cases is that the survivors and victims of Bhopal were the wrong kind of people. (Thanks are due to Pauline Conroy for this suggestion). For the various CPs, they were not members of the organised working class beloved of the traditional communists nor members of the peasant class beloved of the Maoists: they were mainly day labourers from the unorganised sector, often recent rural migrants. Nor were they the noble indigenous or tribal groups fighting to preserve their culture and way of life of whom the romantic urban middle-class supporters of environmentalism were so enamoured.

suggested this plan would not only provide continued employment for the UC workers but also for some of the gas-affected, a proposal rejected by other local and NAN groups. In another example, the Delhi Science Forum stopped work on Bhopal, partly in response to criticism of science by the Morcha and disagreement over the prioritising the sodium thiosulphate issue.

If I may be allowed a personal anecdote here, as an illustration of how NAN differences may manifest at the TAN level, following the November 1985 conference in London, I was involved in the hurried organisation of a meeting in Dublin, Ireland, as part of a tour by the Indian speakers at the conference. Casting about for a meeting location and sponsors, I approached trade unions, emphasising the alternative production under workers' control aspect. The meeting was held in Liberty Hall, headquarters of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and chaired by the chairperson of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions third world committee. The speakers were Nishit Vora from the clinic and Anand Grover from the Lawyers' Collective. Unfortunately for my pitch to the unions, neither speaker mentioned alternative production: given this failure, I raised the issue in the question and answer session and both speakers dismissed the possibility technically and politically.

To summarise, the initial phase of the local movement involved spontaneous community organising which was swiftly taken over by NAN activists who relocated to Bhopal. The defeat and demobilisation of these activists led to a return to local groups and leadership, with support provided by those NAN activists who remained in Bhopal. At the national level a variety of organisations gave ideological, organisational and research support, though the major national opposition –communist parties and trade unions- provided mainly token support. On the international level, organisations mobilised without contact with the local movement, developing their own NANs and a variety of TANs, while initial TAN contact with the movement was through NAN connections.

Responding to state appropriation

Kreamer et al argue that state and corporate counter-organising are influential factors in the evolution of campaigns and movements, including their transnationalization and localization. One state action which resulted in changes to the Bhopal campaign was the state's appropriation of both legal and medical areas and the closing off of survivor access and voice in these areas. The state's appropriation of the legal area, though not unchallenged, led the movement to search for alternative legal arenas. Similarly the state's appropriation of medical research was an impetus for local work done by elements of the NAN. The strategic direction for this phase of the campaign came from the TAN, with the Permanent People's Tribunal initiated by BARC/International Coalition for Justice in Bhopal providing an alternative legal forum and the International Medical Commission on Bhopal (IMCB) resulting from a recommendation of the PPT. This search for an international

hearing resulted from the closing off of national and local spaces for examination of Union Carbide's crimes in an open hearing, on the one hand nationally through the out-of-court settlement which denied the survivors a hearing in open court and locally through the calling off of the judicial inquiry in December 1985 by the MP state government. While a TAN project, it operated both transnationally and locally, with one of the hearings taking place in Bhopal.

One recommendation of the PPT led to the formation of the IMCB, which involved a strategic shift from legal, compensation and rehabilitation to health issues on the part of the BGIA. Here again we can see internationalisation and localization in response to state action closing off domestic areas. Following the politicization of health and treatment in the year after the gas leak, the state took action to control and appropriate medical research through the Indian Council on Medical Research (ICMR), while also impeding local and NAN medical research. In 1991 the Indian government arbitrarily ordered ICMR to end all medical research on Bhopal. (Sathyamala 2009) Furthermore the ICMR has failed to publish results of their research. The campaign responded to the state appropriation of research by initiating its own research project, the IMCB. It involved cooperation between elements of the local campaign, NAN and TAN: organising work involved Satinath Sarangi from the BGIA (local), Deena from The Other Media (NAN) and Rosalie Bertell and Gianni Tognoni (co-convenors IMCB) (TAN). The geographical spread of the IMCB is shown by the countries from which its members came: three commissioners came from the US, two from England and one each from Belarus, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the People's Republic of China, Poland and Sweden. Elements of the NAN and the local movement also cooperated with the actual research work in Bhopal. 'Members of Medico Friends Circle and others from survivors' and activist organisations helped the IMCB in this work.' (Sarangi 2009:1) The work involved visiting Bhopal in January 1994, examining the gas-affected and looking at the state provision for the gas-affected, issuing a report in Delhi at the end of the visit.

Evaluation of the IMCB found both positive and negative results. It succeeded in its primary aim: 'it effectively countered the corporation and the government's denial that health problems were persisting among the gas victims even 10 years after the disaster' (Sarangi 2009:3) However tensions arose between some Commission members and the local movement. 'Several members of the IMCB distanced themselves from the survivor and activist organizations that were part of the organizing and implementation of the IMCB's work. Opinions of Bhopal based organizations were seen as too political and they were kept away from the planning of the work, which was thought to be the prerogative of the medical professionals' (Sarangi 2009:3). Here again we can see tensions resulting from the aims and perspectives of TAN elements differing from those of the local movement. Disagreements also arose between different members of the IMCB, resulting in the group's dissolution.

The IMCB was one result of a change of strategic focus to health in the 1990s. This internationalisation was accompanied by planning for local medical intervention, with the BGIA formulating plans for a local mobile health and research clinic in 1991 and 1992, with both proposals including detailed costings. This localization was to be eventually successful in setting up a movement-controlled health clinic, the Sambhavna Clinic, with the assistance of a new TAN organisation, the Bhopal Medical Appeal (BMA). In this personal contacts and individual effort were central: the success of the BMA can be traced to the story-telling and copy-writing abilities of Indra Sinha who was mobilised by a personal appeal from the BGIA's Sarangi on a visit to England (for a detailed account, see Sinha 2014), while for managing the funds another member of the TAN –the Pesticides Action Network- was pressed into service.

Here again we can see national differences in TAN activities and strategies: the initial advert for the BMA in the *Guardian* in England which was so successful, when reprinted in the US led to no funds, with the result that this initiative was confined to England and planned expansion of fundraising to the US was abandoned. Locally the clinic provided a local service to the gas-affected and gave BGIA credibility on the ground. It also provided office space and communication and support services in Bhopal to the new International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal (ICJB) set up by the BGIA and other local groups. Additionally the TAN work by the BMA not only provided funding for the clinic but also spread information and awareness, while also providing a flow of foreign volunteers to the Clinic. A further advantage was the impetus it gave to knowledge production by the local movement, with reports from the Clinic providing more data than the BGTRRD did, and providing the basis for articles in the medical literature, including such prestigious journals as the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. This reduced the local movement's dependence on outside experts, whether from the TAN or the NAN.

However the initiative also led to tensions within the local movement, with criticism voiced by various elements. One example is provided by an article by a former BGIA activist Vinod Raina. Having described the setting up of the BGIA as intended to provide professional support to the Bhopal grassroots movement, he continued:

'The advent of foreign money too upset such arrangements. A typical 'bleeding heart' advertisement in the *Guardian*, London, quite contrary to the assertion of rights that the victims were fighting for, brought in an enormous amount of money, which was galvanized by individuals within the BGIA to set up a separate Sambhavna Trust for medical research, effectively severing ties with the victims' movements. This changed the character of BGIA, deprived the movement of English speaking middle class support at local level, and gradually made them less visible in the English speaking international media. A space essential to sustain such complex struggles was, in effect, more or less appropriated by individuals supported from outside the country and their foreign counterparts like the Greenpeace and Corpwatch.' (Raina and Kumar 2004).

Other local activists complained that the foreign funds, instead of going to Sambhavna should have gone to local employment generation projects.⁹

Dow: return of the transnational corporate target

In 1999 the Bhopal campaign was reinvigorated by two major and a number of minor causes. First the Greenpeace report on toxic waste and water contamination brought a new issue to the fore and mobilised a new local constituency. Secondly Dow Chemical announced plans to take over Union Carbide. With the takeover of UC by Dow, we have a return of the TNC target, not only internationally, but also nationally, a struggle initiated on February 28 2001 when 33 survivors stormed into the Dow offices in Mumbai and occupied them,. Following a later meeting with Dow's country director in India, the Stationery Union, Pension Bhogi, BGPMS and BGIA on March 12 launched a campaign to hold Dow responsible for the gas leak and Union Carbide's other liabilities at Bhopal. Abdul Jabbar of the BGPMS said

'The Campaign for Justice in Bhopal is now being formed nationally and internationally. Trade unions, student organisations, women's groups and human rights networks in Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore and other cities have already expressed strong support to the struggle to nail the culprits of the disaster in Bhopal: the fight to make Dow accountable for Carbide's crimes in Bhopal will be very much a part of the movement against globalisation in this country.' (CJB 2001).

This period saw major INGO involvement in the TAN, initially by Greenpeace, then Amnesty, but also major local and national activity in the struggle over the proposed toxic waste cleanup, and in relation to Dow expansion plans in India. Here again relocalization of the struggle took place, not only nationally but transnationally, in response to both state and capital's actions. This struggle with Dow extends over a long period, and continues up to the present day. We will begin with an outline of some of the struggles that took place over this period, illustrating various tactics and changes in composition and activities at the local, national and transnational levels, before briefly looking at two aspects of the struggle, the campaign involvement of Greenpeace and the localization of conflict over waste disposal.

The emphasis on toxic waste contamination of local water supplies gave a major impetus to the campaign. Locally it involved the mobilization of a new group of victims and the formation of a new identity, the *pani peedit* (water affected) to join the already mobilised *gas peedit* (gas affected). Given that the damage caused by this contamination was different from the damage caused by the gas

⁹ In another example of tension in the local campaign resulting from foreign funds the awarding of the Goldman prize to BGPMSKS leaders was the cause of criticism, with Jabbar of the BGPMS querying corporate sponsorship of the prize (Raina and Kumar 2004) and rank and file members of stationery unhappy at the leaders' attention being diverted from the stationery struggle resulting in a split in the Stationery union. (BSMS 2009:183).

leak, the inappropriate toxic waste disposal having been both previous to the gas leak and not included in the 1989 settlement, it allowed a new cause and claim for damages against the TNC and ably sidestepped Dow's main argument that all TNC liabilities for Bhopal had been extinguished by the 1989 settlement. The TAN was reinvigorated by the involvement of large INGOs like Greenpeace and Amnesty, as well as student and diaspora organisations, while the NAN was also reinvigorated by the mobilization of new groups and other local movements also became involved in their own local struggles with the TNC. This latter included the involvement of what was then the strongest national movement in India, the anti-SEZ (Special Economic Zone) movement.

Nationally there was a variety of actions, some autonomous, some as a result of local movement or NAN initiatives and some in response to state and corporate actions. Dow became one of the targets of the most recent cycle of struggles against the Indian state's embrace of economic liberalization, when a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), of which Dow was to be an anchor or hub, proposed for Nandigram in West Bengal met with ferocious local opposition (Jones 2009). Further Dow expansion plans also stumbled, when a proposed R&D centre at Shinde, near Pune, Maharashtra, faced a local campaign of opposition in 2008 and 2009. In January 2008 local residents blocked the road to the Dow R&D site and in July invaded the site and set fire to company vehicles and an office. In January 2009 the state's Chief Minister announced the R&D Centre would not go ahead.

Other corporation plans and products faced opposition mobilised by local and NAN groups. In May 1995 a nation-wide boycott of the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) was called after IOC took out a licence agreement for UC monoethylene glycol technology for its new refinery in Haripur: the campaign lasted eight months and resulted in the cancellation of the contract at a cost –according to Dow- of \$1.5 million. An attack was made on attempts by Dow to recruit staff at Indian colleges when a campaign was launched by Indian Institute of Technology alumni and students to block Dow access to college campuses. The local campaign also called for the cancellation of the registration of a Dow product, the pesticide Dursban, and mobilised national and transnational support to oppose an effort by Dow and Dow apologists and proxies to persuade the Indian government to deny Dow's liability for Bhopal.

Transnationally the TAN saw major activity in the Dow campaign, with the addition of new groups, new targets and new tactics. One significant element was the mobilisation in the US of the Indian diaspora (Association for India's Development (AID)) and students (Students for Bhopal, SfB). For the latter, student activists pressed universities to disassociate themselves from Dow in an echo of the 1960s protests against Dow's production of napalm for the American war against Vietnam (Soule 2009:56). Students at the University of Michigan and Wheaton College (Ma) passed resolutions asking the colleges to disassociate from Dow, while in March 2005 the Berkeley Student Assembly called on the university to divest itself of Dow stock and refuse to accept donations from Dow. The student support seemed highest in 2004. According to Ryan Bodanyi of SfB

in 2004 'students from more than 70 colleges, universities and high schools around the world organised and participated in a wide range of protests, demonstrations and educational events to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Bhopal disaster. These events were organised by Students for Bhopal, Association for India's Development (AID) chapters, the Campus Greens and the Environmental Justice Programme of the Sierra Student Coalition (SSC), and represent the first mass student movement Dow has faced since the Vietnam War.' (Bodanyi 2005: 226).

Other TAN elements utilised traditional corporate campaign tactics, targeting shareholders and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives such as the sponsorship of the London Olympics (Botelho and Zvestoski 2014) and Live Earth. There were also interventions made with responsible regulatory and financial authorities. For instance, On 21 January 2000 Green Party Members of the European Parliament lodged an objection to the Dow/Union Carbide merger with the European Union Director-General for Competition, while on April 12 2007 Amnesty USA called for the Securities and Exchanges Commission to investigate Dow's pressurising the Indian government to rid it of liabilities for Bhopal.

There was also independent action by TAN members in advancing their policy aims. Amnesty USA used Bhopal as part of its Share Power project, a project which belied the image of Amnesty as a report- and letter-writing organisation when in April 2007 it organised the largest public demonstration in relation to Bhopal outside India when it mobilised over 1000 people to demonstrate outside the headquarters of J.B. Morgan Chase in New York, calling on the bank to support the shareholders' resolution Amnesty and the NY City Pension Funds had tabled for the Dow AGM the following month. Divestment resolutions were also targeted at city and county authorities. For Dow's annual general meetings, US activists 'filed at least four separate shareholder resolutions regarding Bhopal between 2004 and 2007... in May 2008 another resolution was introduced that charged that Dow has not yet disclosed the potential liabilities of Bhopal' (Soule 2009:122). The 2007 resolution received support from 8.5% of shares voted.

There were also intermittent campaigns targeting Dow advertising, CSR and sponsorship activities. Dow's sponsorship of the Olympic Games provided a target for English TAN members, while its sponsorship of the 2010 Live Earth Run for Water led to pressure being placed on organizing committees in Amsterdam, Atlanta, Boston, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Switzerland and Vancouver, with organisers of events in Berlin, Chennai, London, Milan and Stockholm either cancelling Dow-sponsored events or disassociating themselves from Dow. Attacks on advertising were mainly internet-based, where they formed a central part of an 'image war' between Dow and the ICJB (Erler 2009), though Amnesty also participated in targeting Dow's Human Element campaign. On the publicity front there was involvement by hoaxers the YesMen, while other internet activism included hoax websites.

Greenpeace

The arrival of Greenpeace into the Bhopal struggle led to an intensification and spread of transnational solidarity and protest. Greenpeace's involvement began in 1999 when, as part of their Toxic Free Future Tour, they released a report on toxic waste abandoned at the Bhopal factory and resulting water contamination. Greenpeace subsequently made Bhopal the top focus of its global anti-toxic campaign and invested some half a million US dollars in its work on Bhopal. In its 'Return to sender' campaign it physically delivered toxic waste and contaminated water from Bhopal to Dow premises in Australia, Brazil, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Thailand and the USA. At the 2005 World Economic Forum in Davos Greenpeace mobilised a 60-strong contingent wearing skeleton suits to call on Dow to clean up Bhopal. Thus the geographical spread of action by the TAN was extended due to Greenpeace's global reach. However problems arose over the issue of claiming credit for actions, with ICJB demanding all Bhopal actions in which ICJB members participated be credited to the ICJB, while Greenpeace wished to claim credit for itself. (Mac Sheoin 2012) This resulted in conflict within the TAN, with the local movement attempting to force the INGO to operate according to the agreed code of conduct. These disagreements were at least partly responsible for Greenpeace running down its participation in the Bhopal campaign. However the TAN survived the loss of Greenpeace, with another large INGO, Amnesty International, joining the TAN shortly afterwards.

Clean-up

On the cleanup issue there were conflicts, not only over who should clean up the abandoned waste (and who should pay for it) but also over the method of dealing with the toxic waste, and where the toxic waste should be disposed of. In India this involved the mobilization of previously uninvolved local communities, when communities at proposed landfill and incineration sites at Ankleshwar, Primampur and Vidarbha opposed their use for waste from Bhopal through protests and legal action. A further local target presented itself when Ratan Tata, managing director of the Tata group, volunteered in November 2006 to clean up the Bhopal waste, an offer rejected by local groups who suggested Tata would be better off cleaning up the wastes around his own factories and threatened to call a boycott of Tata products. Similarly plans to transfer the waste for disposal in core country locations also led to mobilization and opposition in these areas... A proposal to incinerate the waste in Germany ran into opposition from Greenpeace Germany and the environmental organisation BUND.

The demand for the cleanup of the factory site and its associated contamination became politicised locally, with understandable differences between those who wanted an immediate cleanup, even if it wasn't to the highest international standards, and even if the cleanup wasn't conducted or funded by Dow, while

other groups would not be satisfied unless the cleanup was to the highest international standards and was both conducted and funded by Dow. AP Singh, for example, contrasted the failure of the application in the US courts in 1999/2000 for Union Carbide/Dow to clean up the site to result in any positive move towards cleanup with his own application in the Jabalpur High Court in June 2004 which resulted in a judgement nine months later, saying while the questions of Dow liability were valid, the priority was to save the people being poisoned: therefore the government of India should pay for the cleanup and later claim the costs from Dow. "According to the order of the High Court the chemical waste should be removed and disposed of appropriately in Ankleshwar in Gujarat state or Pithampur in MP. Interestingly the campaign groups which were fighting to clean up the site in the US courts at the same time opposed the High Court ruling that the Government of India should clean it up'. (BSMS 2009:59). Here again we can see local tensions over the justice issue, with groups demanding Dow should undertake the cleanup on the 'polluter pays' principle, while also arguing that no other Indian community should be victimised in the cleanup.

Conclusion: balancing local, national and transnational

This article has considered some episodes from a campaign which operated locally, nationally and transnationally over a long period. The examples given hopefully extend and complicate our models of what local movements, NANs and TANs are, and what they do. To begin with the TAN, we see at the beginning the development of protest and research on Bhopal and its implications autonomously from the struggle on the ground in Bhopal. While contacts between NAN and TAN elements increased, the first TAN of Bhopal solidarity groups, the International Coalition for Justice in Bhopal, was organised by a TAN organisation in New York (and did not include either NAN or local groups). The health episode shows both a TAN-initiated project (the IMCB) co-organised with NAN and local groups, and also a new NAN organisation (BMA) initiated by the local movement to support a specific local project, the Sambhavna Clinic.

By the time of the Dow phase, as well as autonomous organising by INGOs, the new TAN –ICJB- was initiated locally and decision-making powers rested with the local movement: 'the campaign distinguishes itself in having the Bhopal based survivors' organisations as the final arbiters of all decisions involving their lives and struggles', in the words of Sarangi (BSMS 2009:121). The disputes between Greenpeace and the ICJB about claiming credit for joint actions shows how strongly the power balance has tilted towards the local. If the early TAN networks suffered from slow and expensive communications, the later networks benefitted from the global spread of ICTs and involved the local movement using the internet to document its actions and communicate with (organised and individual) members of the TAN.

We can also see changes to TANs and networks over the period. Attempts to set up a variety of networks foundered partly due to transaction costs. In the pre-internet period, operations of TANs were much more difficult than they are at present. Communications were primarily by post in the form of letters and newsletters, as the prices of international telephone calls were extremely high. The arrival of the internet reduced these costs massively and was a major contribution to the continuation and success of later TANs. Allied to this must be the increasing experience and sophistication of local groups, whose long experience of transnational activism enabled them, to challenge INGO behaviour in the TAN to enforce the primary position of the local struggle, as in the conflict with Greenpeace. INGOs were most involved with the local movement when there was a coincidence of interest between the groups: Amnesty wanted to extend the range of its human rights critique to include TNCs: Bhopal provided detailed and devastating examples of such violations, illustrating the need for the policy proposals advanced by Amnesty. Greenpeace was running a toxics campaign and also wished to establish itself in India: Bhopal provided the perfect vehicle for both. So INGOs used Bhopal and the Bhopal campaign used INGOs: 'the development of a symbiotic relationship with the global anti-toxics movement became a key tactic...On the one hand, the global anti-toxics movement could use the *idea* of Bhopal to push for regulation of industrial hazards and the rights of victims of industrial disasters... the Bhopal movement used the network of the global anti-toxics movement to ensure that the rest of the world would not forget the Bhopal disaster'. (Zavestowski 2009:391).

For NAN involvement in internationalising the struggle, we can see some involvement in the immediate aftermath of the gas leak, strong involvement by a limited number of NAN groups in the IMCB, but by the time of the anti-Dow struggle there was little NAN involvement, as the local movement was well able to deal with TAN elements without NAN mediation, due to its by then extensive international experience. If NAN elements were less important for transnational campaigns, they retained their importance in targeting the Indian state and the TNC in India, and in providing logistical, media and other support for the local movement.

The presentation of the local, national and transnational elements in the long history of the Bhopal struggle has hopefully helped complicate our notions of what local movements, NANs and TANs are and do. This is a useful enough accomplishment in itself, but it's also worth asking can anything useful be learned from all this by movement activists. I'd suggest a number of small lessons can be extracted. The paper has shown the dynamic nature of the TAN but it has also shown the existence of a core group of organisations and individuals who have been constant in their support for Bhopal. Most of these were small groups and often had one person who was central to that group's involvement (Ward Morehouse in BARC, Barbara Dinham and Indra Sinha in the BMA, Deena in TOM). There are a number of other activists who brought their support for Bhopal with them from organisation to organisation (Barbara

Dinham from TICL to BMA; Gary Cohen from the Environmental Health Fund, Healthcare Without Harm, National Toxics Campaign, Military Toxics Project).

Thus Kreamer et al's emphasis on the individual is worthwhile, but it must be extended from the narrow issue of which individuals are recruited to stand for the movement internationally to a general consideration of individuals and individual initiative. This shows the importance of individuals, as well as organisations, in keeping a campaign TAN active over the long term. This is another important lesson for activists, who may become frustrated and burnt out and doubt the effectiveness and usefulness of their activism. Individuals can, and do, make a difference. There is a tactical lesson here also for local groups and movements: identifying and cultivating specific individuals may be as useful as identifying and cultivating organisations while internationalising campaigns. Personal relationships can be an extremely successful method of ensuring continued TAN activity. Furthermore for successful transnational activism that responds to local requirements, a local movement may well do better with smaller, dedicated solidarity groups than with a large INGO. While large INGOs can give campaigns useful actions, analysis and assistance, especially major publicity, smaller solidarity groups can provide the backbone of a transnational campaign consistently over a long period of time, while INGO involvement may be for a short time only.

Secondly, as regards dealing with large INGOs, if INGOs have traditionally been defined as the more powerful element in TANs, the Bhopal case shows it ain't necessarily so. The Bhopal campaign shows that INGOs need not necessarily dominate TANs and local movements may successfully 'NGO shop'. When unhappy with the practices of Greenpeace, the local movement challenged the large INGO and when Greenpeace dropped out of the campaign, allied with another large INGO, while continuing its normal cooperation with those smaller solidarity groups that represented the core of the ICJB. Thus alliance and coalition composition may be changed due to the action of the local movement as well as through the actions of the NGOs. This is an important lesson, that local movements are not helpless in their relations with outside (TAN) supporters, despite the asymmetry of resources. One of the strongest critiques of INGOs, from both the right and the left, has been on the issue of representation and accountability: it is here that local movements are of critical importance to INGOs. If the Bhopal campaign used the medical credibility of the IMCB TAN members locally and nationally in the health struggle, then Greenpeace used the credibility of Bhopal survivors to bolster its own position in advocating its anti-toxic policies. Thus, local movements have their own capital, which could be called struggle capital or credibility capital, which is a not inconsiderable resource in dealing with TAN members while internationalising campaigns and movements.

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About the author

Tomas Mac Sheoin is an independent scholar who writes on the chemical industry and popular movements. He has written *Asphyxiating Asia* (Goa Press, 2003) about the chemical industry in India and co-edited the forthcoming special issue of *Social Justice* (vol 41 / no. 1-2, December 2014) on “Bhopal and after: the chemical industry as toxic capitalism”. He can be contacted at tmacsheoin AT gmail.com.