



The FUTURE
OF
FOOD

*And the
renewal of
our food system*



Presented by:



THE FUTURE OF FOOD REPORT AT A GLANCE

Secure, reliable access to food is one of the basic building blocks that make it possible for people to lift themselves out of poverty.

Even more than filling empty bellies, good nutrition paves the way for a whole host of flow-on benefits – things like better health, more reliable income and increased school attendance. That's why community development projects related to food are among the most common activities supported by TEAR Australia.



Our Global Goal: end hunger by 2030

As a global community, we have set ourselves the goal of ending hunger by 2030.¹

Chronic hunger is not inevitable – we already produce more than enough food to feed everyone.

But to end hunger and meet the nutritional needs of a growing global population, we will need to make some important changes to the ways we produce our food and manage our natural resources.



Ensuring a sustainable food future

We need to do more than just produce more food. We need to make our agriculture – and the larger food system – more productive, resilient and sustainable.

Working in step with God's perfectly designed ecosystems and habitats, we need to look for ways to make better use of our land, water and natural sources of energy and take care to do no harm. The majority of people who experience extreme poverty and chronic hunger live in rural areas and rely on small family farms for their food and livelihood. Through innovations in our food and farming systems, we can help to ensure these people have what they need to make a decent living and be physically, socially and economically safe.



Wise stewards and loving neighbours

In Genesis we are given a picture of God's love for all of creation. We read of the special role given to humanity: to work in partnership with creation and take care of it. God has given us all the glorious abundance of this earth to nourish and enrich our lives.

As we go about our work, as we love and raise our families – serving the church and our communities in the work of God's renewal – we need to reflect the biblical call to be wise stewards and loving neighbours.

We must consider our impact upon the earth through the lens of our love for God and for people, allowing it to shape how we live, how we eat, what we buy and how we pray.



We can effect change when we give, speak out and live differently

In the face of big, global challenges, we might feel that anything we do as individuals is so insignificant that it's not worth the bother.

But our actions do matter. The small steps we take may feel like a drop in the ocean, but they are in fact part of the changing tide. We can give generously to projects that empower people to overcome poverty and hunger. We can make changes in our own lives that will contribute to a more sustainable food future.

And we can speak the truth to power: calling on our leaders to do what is right.





FOOD IS A PRECIOUS GIFT

Food is a precious gift, generously given to us by God, and one that is so often at the heart of our fellowship. As we come together to share a meal with family and friends, we are nourished in body and spirit – giving thanks for the abundant provision of God.

*Through the sharing of food,
Jesus demonstrated
his power to renew and
restore the broken.*



On many occasions we see food at the heart of Jesus' ministry on earth: food for the 5000, meals with outcasts and gatherings with family and friends. Through the sharing of food, Jesus demonstrated his power to renew and restore the broken. When he gathered his disciples for one last meal together, Jesus turned the simple act of breaking bread into an enduring symbol of our restored communion with God and relationships with one another.

We know that for many people in our world today, getting enough food remains a constant challenge. We know that the way food is produced and the processes involved in getting it from the farm to our forks are often damaging to the earth and the people involved. We also know this isn't how God intends things to be.

As God works to bring renewal to all things, we, as Christians, are called to play our part – looking for and working for signs of hope.

We must work today to renew our food system so that this precious gift isn't wasted, so that no one goes to bed hungry and we protect the creation God has entrusted to our care.

We can't end hunger
if we don't tackle climate change.

Our failure to act could put millions more people
at risk of poverty and put our goal to end hunger
out of reach.





The Future of Food

We want to end hunger – everywhere

Between 1990 and 2015 our global community achieved something extraordinary. With collective ambition and a whole range of coordinated initiatives we reduced the prevalence of hunger in developing regions by nearly half.²

Then, in 2015, when the global community agreed upon the next set of global development goals, we set ourselves the target of ending hunger entirely by 2030.³

When we achieve this goal, it will mean that all people – everywhere – have secure and reliable access to enough good-quality food to live a healthy life.

We produce enough food but people still go hungry

To get there, we still have some work to do. Chronic hunger is not inevitable. We already produce more than enough food to feed everyone in the world. However, the latest figures indicate that around 815 million people – 11% of the world's population – still

go hungry each day.⁴ And what is particularly concerning is that, after years of steady decline, hunger appears to be on the rise again.

Our progress towards zero hunger is under threat

The reasons for chronic hunger are many and complex. They include conflict, political instability, forced migration, global trade and economic factors, poor governance and social barriers. But what makes things worse, seriously undermining our ability to end hunger once and for all, are the increasingly frequent and unpredictable natural disasters and altered weather patterns associated with climate change.⁵

The climate is constantly changing, but the rate of change occurring at the moment is unprecedented.⁶

Scientists have concluded with an overwhelming consensus – supported by an enormous bank of scientific evidence – that this rapid change is occurring as a result of human activity.⁷ Our global community is already feeling the impacts, especially our neighbours in developing countries.



The earth is the Lord's ...

... and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.⁸ Truly, we live in a wonderful and beautiful place: a world created by God for His purposes and entrusted to our care.

At TEAR, we believe that Christians are called to follow Jesus by acting justly in our relationships with people and with God's creation. We believe that caring for the world God created and loving our neighbours means that we must take action on the challenges presented by climate change. It is one of the greatest injustices of our time: the people least responsible for climate change are often the most vulnerable to its impacts; they produce a tiny fraction of the total greenhouse gas emissions yet they feel the effects the most.

We all need to recognise our connection with the people who are suffering the most from climate change and demonstrate our love and concern by taking action personally and politically to tackle the problem. All that we have achieved in our efforts to help people lift themselves out of poverty could be undone if we don't take action now.

Transforming our food system

To end hunger and meet the demands of a growing global population we need to do more than just produce more food.

We need to transform our entire food system – from farm to fork.

We need to adapt our food production to an already-altered climate and make changes throughout the food system to ensure it is productive, resilient, just and sustainable into the future.

The future of food must be climate-proof.

Our failure to act will put millions more people at risk of poverty⁹ and put our goal to end hunger out of reach.

And while transformation will need to encompass every element of the food supply chain, one of the most critical pieces will be supporting small-scale farmers in their efforts to adapt to climate change and building the climate resilience of poorer rural populations.



Strengthening the resilience of small-scale farmers

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood and income for the world's poorest people. Small-scale farmers - who are primarily subsistence farmers relying on unpaid family labour - are the backbone of food security in these communities. That's why community development projects related to food are among the most common activities supported by TEAR.

Rising sea levels, changes in rainfall patterns, temperature variability, more frequent dry spells and drought, greater intensity of extreme weather events and changes in the location and incidence of pest and disease outbreaks are all consequences of climate change that pose a serious threat to the ability of farmers and fishers in vulnerable communities to provide for themselves and their families.¹⁰ Women, who

make up a large proportion of the agricultural workforce in poorer parts of the world, are especially vulnerable to climate risk. Gender inequality and discrimination mean women have less access to the resources and finance they need to manage and adapt in a changing environment.¹¹

When it comes to securing a climate-proof food future, we can make a big impact by supporting small-scale farmers around the world to adopt innovative sustainable farming practices, diversify their on-farm production and develop additional or alternative sources of income and employment.¹²

Addressing the gender gap will play an important part in this. With equal access to productive resources, women smallholders can substantially increase their food production and make significant improvements in their own lives and the lives of the families and communities who depend on them.¹³



*...Take your everyday,
ordinary life – your sleeping, eating,
and walking-around life – and place it before
God as an offering.*

Romans 12:1-2 (Message)



Sitabi's Story

When Sitabi and her husband lost their rice crop to flooding, they were able to rebuild thanks to Partnership for New Life (PNL), one of TEAR's partners in Nepal. Through her PNL Self-Help Group, Sitabi accessed both the know-how and the credit to start a new crop – vegetables. Now their pumpkins and other vegetables are not only feeding their own family, but there's enough to sell at the local market. What they earn is being invested in the next generation – paying their grandchildren's school fees.

Sitabi's family's story is an all too familiar scenario unfolding in communities experiencing poverty today. A repeated situation where small-scale farmers, especially women, are dealing with the adverse effects of a changing climate

on their food production and livelihood. In this instance, increased occurrences of flooding and unpredictable weather events highlight clearly the need for small-scale farmers such as Sitabi to adapt to climate smart agricultural practices including diversifying their crops.

In part to meet this need in the Terai (flat) area of Nepal near the Indian border, TEAR's partner PNL shifted focus to more of a community development approach in 2012-13. This has since led to the formation of 32 Self-Help Groups mainly comprising of women as well as some men and people with disabilities. The Terai area is highly fertile and densely populated but is prone to flooding damage towards the end of the monsoon season.

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With increased population, deforestation of the Himalaya, climate change and a general lack of preparedness this flooding is increasingly leading to property and crop loss as well as to the loss of life.

Sitabi's experience, and that of her community, is that through participation in the PNL established Self-Help Groups, they have witnessed a significant increase in community cohesion and resilience. In a recent report, a PNL staff member writes "We've seen from recent natural disasters that these groups are very effective at getting community members to work together in response and recovery mainly because of the better links people have with each other, government and the skills in problem solving".

Central to PNL's work has been the training and support offered to small-scale farmers to adapt to the growing impact of climate change on their households. As such, PNL's work is a strong and growing example of how TEAR's partners, in working to address global poverty in marginalised communities around the world, are working now to directly strengthen the resilience of small-scale farmers such as Sitabi's to climate change impacts.



FAITH IN ACTION: PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS A RENEWED FOOD SYSTEM

Jesus' command to love God and love our neighbour is meant to infuse and shape every aspect of our lives – even the seemingly mundane details such as how we go about getting breakfast, lunch and dinner on the table. As Paul writes in Romans, we are to take our “everyday, ordinary life – [our] sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life – and place it before God as an offering”.¹⁴



As Christians in Australia there are many practical ways we can work to renew our food system and contribute to a sustainable food future. These include:

+ Reducing food waste

Food waste is a major contributor to the greenhouse gas emissions that are changing our climate. If it were ranked with countries, food would sit just behind the United States and China as the world's third largest emitter.¹⁵ Australian households throw away 3.1 million tonnes of edible food every year.¹⁶ Take steps to reduce your food waste by planning your meals, using a shopping list and making the most of your leftovers. Some food waste is unavoidable – like eggshells, banana skins or tea leaves. The best option for unavoidable food waste is to set up a home compost, rather than send it to landfill.

+ Eat a plant-rich diet

If we have the privilege of choosing what we eat, then we are amongst the most affluent people in the world. The majority of the world's population eat what they can get.¹⁷ Moving away from the typically meat-centric Western diet to a diet rich in plants can reduce your climate impact because of the lower greenhouse gas emissions associated with plant-based food compared with meat production.¹⁸

+ Cutting down on food packaging

Avoid food that is over-packaged, packaged in non-recyclable material or even packaged at all. This reduces what we send to landfill and cuts down the resources and materials we use to produce and manufacture our food.

+ Making ethical and sustainable food choices where possible

Try to buy food that is Fairtrade or otherwise ethically and sustainably sourced. Eat seasonal, locally-grown food when you can and make use of the growing number of tools, websites and apps that are designed to make ethical and sustainable shopping easier. The Shop Ethical Guide is one that can help you to make better-informed choices on your everyday grocery items.





Lisa's Story:

TEAR supporter Lisa Boyle is someone who experiences God effortlessly in the environment. A true artist, she sees this world as God's masterpiece and believes that it tells a story about the character of God.

Lisa explains, "Why do the autumn leaves have to be beautiful? They could have been grey and dull, but in the creative process, God put a part of himself into the work of creation. It all helps us see God's character, God's true nature. God made the trees the way they are and we can see part of his character in them."

Lisa claims that she is not a "global person" but that she and her husband have always tried to do what they can to live simply, cheaply and generously. Recently however, they have both been embarking on the challenge of consuming with more intentionality and urgency.

Inspired by the Zero Waste movement to decrease household waste, their household kitchen is now full of creative ways to package food. Avoiding plastic at all costs, Lisa buys her

pantry ingredients from bulk food markets so that she can bring her own material bags and jars. In the pantry, you'll see all of her loose pantry items, such as legumes, lentils, nuts, flour and sugar stored in passata jars. "They're tall, they look wonderfully neat, they keep the pantry clean and vermin-free and I don't need to be constantly throwing out packaging."

In her fridge, Lisa uses damp pillow cases to store fruit and vegetables - which in fact keeps them fresher than in plastic bags or sitting there on their own. Imagine a veggie tray full of old floral pillow cases with twists at the top and you get Lisa's fridge!

Read more of Lisa's story and find other ideas to inspire you to consume food more sustainably at www.renewourworld.org.au

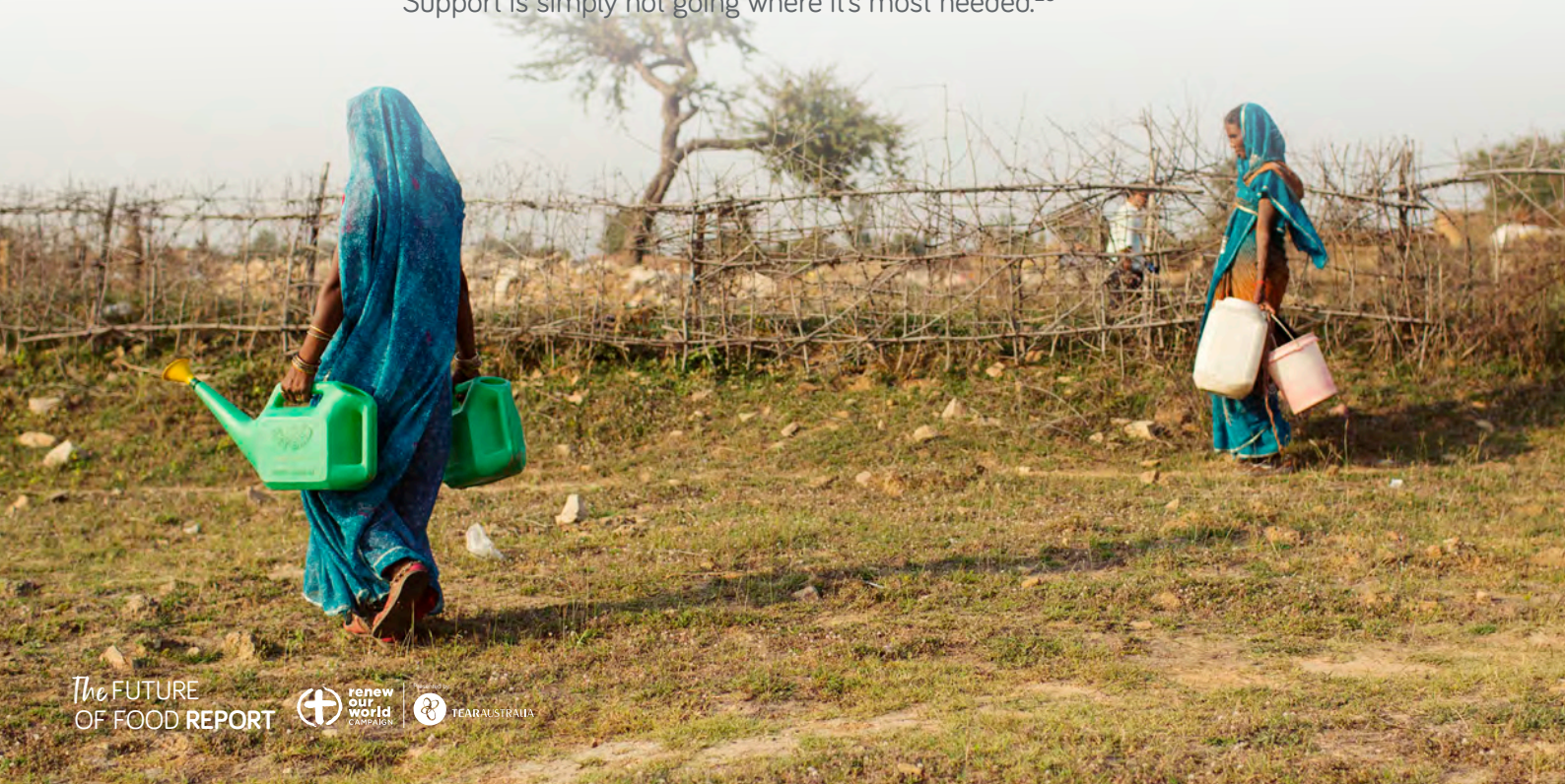


The inspiration to care for God's creation that has recently led Lisa to join the **Renew our World** campaign. "I'm thrilled to be joining with other Christians from around the world in this challenge to live well in God's beautiful creation"



THE PART WE PLAY AS A NATION

The Australian Government has formally recognised that climate change is straining the world's resources and undermining our progress toward zero hunger.¹⁹ However, despite its stated support for basic food security internationally, its investment in practical steps towards a renewed food system does not match this recognition. It's not just that not enough money is invested, it's also where that investment is directed. Support is simply not going where it's most needed.²⁰



WE CALL ON AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL LEADERS TO OUTLINE HOW THEY WILL DO MORE TO HELP SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

— the global poor, particularly women, who produce food for local consumption —

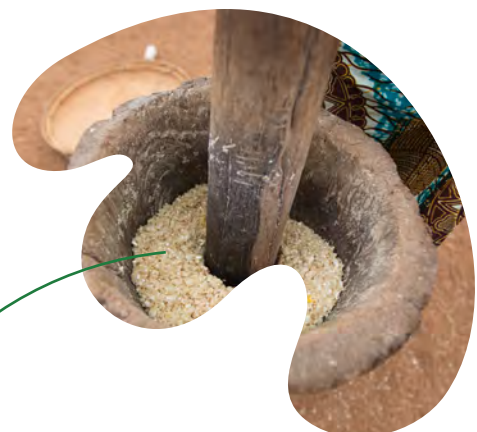
BUILD RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

Australia's financial contribution and global influence can play a significant role in the future of food. As the backbone of food security in rural communities, small-scale producers are the most vulnerable to chronic hunger, and the most neglected by investments to address climate change.

There are ways forward. Our Government can continue to support organisations like TEAR as we partner with those investing in climate adaptation for small-scale farmers. They can also significantly scale up investment in global solutions such as the Green Climate Fund which allows developing countries to respond to the challenges of climate change and use their influence for where that money is directed.

In more detail, we want to see affected communities participating in decision-making regarding adaptation finance, and full accountability and transparency in the way that adaptation finance is used. Small-scale farmers themselves, particularly women and landless labourers, must be actively involved in designing policies and programmes for sustainable, resilient smallholder agriculture.

Join us in calling on political leaders from all parties to outline how they will support small-scale farmers to secure the future of food in the face of climate change.



Take Action Now!

You can amplify the impact of your own lifestyle changes by advocating for a more sustainable food future. Join TEAR in calling on political leaders from all parties to outline how they will secure the future of food in the face of climate change. **Sign now www.renewourworld.org.au**

Tell our political leaders that you care about ending hunger and creating a more sustainable food future.

When they know that Australians care enough, both in their own lifestyles and in the shape of government policy, they can act to shape the future of food.

Here's what you can do:

+ Go to

renewourworld.org.au to write your online message in the petition.

+ Create

Personalise your message *(add extra creativity by including a photo of yourself or of the lifestyle actions you're taking. This is an added option, but fun!)*

+ Share

You might like to organise a group of people to write physical messages. Take photos of your messages and email advocacy@tear.org.au or post to: **PO Box 164 Blackburn VIC 3130**

+ Send

We will collate all the messages and produce a creative and impactful handover to political leaders from all parties.





Pray together

Lord, the scale of global poverty and hunger is beyond our understanding.

Give bread to those who are hungry and a hunger for justice to those of us who have bread.

Grant us the faith and persistence to sow seeds of righteousness that might take years or even generations to bear fruit.

Amen



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The FUTURE OF FOOD

TEAR Australia:

We're focused in places of great need, partnering with local Christian agencies to end poverty, challenge inequality and build sustainable communities. Together, we act with courage, tackling injustice in order that all may experience fullness of life.

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