

Christianity *and* Climate Change

Loving our Global Neighbours



Climate change and the poor

A changing climate may be an inconvenience to us but to many families living in extreme poverty it is a matter of life and death. Droughts, floods, and disasters are making it more difficult to farm and are destroying homes and livelihoods. But there's always hope. Through Tearfund, you can help equip local churches with the tools they need to adapt to these new challenges.

How a changing climate is affecting those living in poverty:



Hunger

Ten to fifteen years ago the rains were predictable and steady. Today, they come late or not at all. When they do come, they are no longer gentle, but torrential; washing away valuable topsoil. For the first time in decades, global hunger is on the rise.



Disasters

Disasters such as drought and cyclones are becoming more frequent and severe. **In East Africa, it was normal to have a severe drought once a decade. Now it is once in 3 years**—leaving families unable to recover. Without safety nets, families scape by and remain in perpetual poverty.



Conflict

The increase scarcity of resources such as food and water increases the likelihood of conflict between people groups. Many recent conflicts (Syria, South Sudan) has been caused in part or exacerbated due to climate change.

What the Bible says

‘For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers of rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.’

Colossians 1:16

God loves his creation. From the beginning, we see how God is intimately involved in creation—and how he called it good. From within the garden, God entrusted humankind to steward and take care of creation, to help tend to it and help it flourish.

Unfortunately, we know that it didn’t turn out this way. When the fall happened, it not only broke our relationship with God, but also with each other and creation itself. But amazingly, right from the start, God had a plan to make all things new.

We believe that Christ came not only for salvation but also to restore all of creation. Francis Schaeffer, an American theologian and pastor expressed it this way “The Christian message begins with the existence of God forever, and then with creation. It does not begin with salvation. We must be thankful for salvation, but the Christian message is more than that.”

Today as image bearers, we have responsibility for God’s creation. We are to be stewards of God’s world, working for the good of His creation. We cry out for justice and look forward to when Christ comes again and all things are fully restored.



‘Climate change resulted in a decrease in harvest which decreased our income...

...as a result, my children have dropped out of school.’

Lebiso has been a farmer for the past 15 years and lives in Hobicha, Ethiopia with his wife and 6 children. The landscape is picturesque – characterized by hilly terrain, large plains, valleys and gorges. But beneath the serene landscape, there is suffering.



“The climate has changed, and it has harmed us a lot and made farming difficult.” Lebiso tells us. “As the weather changes, it causes rainfall fluctuations and untimely rainfalls, which often destroys the crops.”

Like many families in the region, Lebiso relies on rain-fed agriculture for his livelihood and to feed his children. For many years, this was enough. Rains were predictable and steady. But now, thanks to a changing climate, things have changed. Last year it didn’t rain for 4 months. The usual way of farming doesn’t work anymore.

“As a result we have a low harvest, and thus a lack of food, and income. We have suffered. My children have suffered as well.”



Through these simple farming methods, Lebiso was able to increase his harvest yields by 71%!

“Before, even though we put in all the effort, it did not yield results or big harvests. After, the church taught us about soil development, I started harvesting much more! We have even been able to sell some in the market.”

“I have many plans for the future. Things happen according to God’s will and I am implementing the new farming practice across my farmland. There are plants that can I can plant to cover the ground. Not only do these prevent water loss, I can also sell them. That way, I can increase my income, and cover the school fees for my children.”

“Climate change is significantly eroding many people’s ability to thrive in the world’s harshest places. The good news is that living life to the full in the face of a changing climate is possible. With a renewed mindset and more sustainable practices using local resources we can co-create a future of opportunity and hope.”

Anja Oussoren
Program Manager - East Africa & South Asia



Our God is a God of Hope

Although climate change is a serious issue we believe that God created a world full of life and abundance—one where all can thrive. We know God is sovereign and working to make all things new! Together, we can make a difference for those affected most and work towards a future of opportunity and hope.

How you can make an impact:

Donate



Through your giving you can help farmers adapt to a changing climate. Your gift will teach farmers simple, new farming techniques that dramatically reduce the amount of water needed, provide them with new crop varieties that are drought resilient, help them plant trees to prevent erosion, and teach them in water management techniques. To make a donation please visit: tearfund.ca/donate

Pray



Prayer is the easiest and most powerful tool we have in the fight against a changing climate. Our God is sovereign and encourages us to lift up our petitions and prayers to him and promises that he will answer. To join our prayer list you can sign-up at tearfund.ca/pray

Talk



One of the most powerful ways to help is just to talk about climate change with your friends! Bringing awareness to the issue and how it is affecting the poor helps stir up hearts and actions. Don't know where to start? Tearfund has a number of great resources we can provide to help! To get started check out the Christianity and Climate Change videos by Katharine Hayhoe on the next page!

Resources for You

Tearfund Creation Care Main Page

Visit our main page that talks about creation care, the world's poor, and how you can play a part. On it you can watch videos, sign-up for our e-newsletter, and download resources for further learning.

tearfund.ca/creationcare

Christianity and Climate Change video series by Katharine Hayhoe

The topic of climate change may be new to you and maybe you have many questions. That's great! These are important questions!

Tearfund has partnered with acclaimed Christian climate scientist, Dr. Katharine Hayhoe, to produce a series of 9 videos will help you learn and facilitate conversations on creation care and climate change with your family, friends and church community.

Access at: tearfund.ca/christianity-and-climate-change/

Bible Study on Waste

What does it mean to throw something away? This three-week Bible study packet includes activities, discussions, Bible studies, videos, and stories to help understand God's plan for Creation and our place in it.

tearfund.ca/resources/caring-for-creation-waste-bible-study/

Prayer Video

This little video encourages us to pray for creation and the world.

youtu.be/f3Bws1tw1dg

The Effect of Climate Change on the Poor

Hear from Ramesh, CEO of our local church partner in India, EFICOR, on how he sees climate change affecting the poor in the areas they work.

vimeo.com/641976069/78b9c6780a

COP26 Video Sessions

In November 2021 Tearfund Canada attended COP26 to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable and provide a voice of hope in the midst of a changing climate. During the conference we advocated that more money be allocated to helping the most vulnerable adapt to the realities of a changing climate while shifting towards a more sustainable future.

Exclusive Onsite Update: vimeo.com/642717919/a77e1a44e0

Global Christian response to Climate Change Webinar:

vimeo.com/644496477/7ec615ca64



tearfund.ca

PO Box 3220 Stn Industrial Park, Markham ON, L3R 6G5 Canada

☎ (905) 415-8181 ✉ connect@tearfund.ca 📱📺📷 /tearfundcanada

Registered Charity No. 10822 2191 RR0001

tearfund