

Research paper

Restorative revolution:

A movement of the church to transform wealth, power and communities for a flourishing world



Contents

Contents	1
Summary	3
The invitation	5
1 Where are we?	6
The world we live in	6
The critical moment	13
2 Why are we here?	15
The problem: extreme wealth and exclusive power	15
The root of the problem: broken relationships and the human heart	20
3 Where should we go?	21
God's restoration story	21
Communities and societies transformed for a restorative economy	23
4 How do we get there?	27
The role of the church	27
Abundant churches	29
A growing and connected movement	32
5 What does a restorative economy look like?	34
Inclusion and agency for all	35
Dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives	37
Flourishing for the whole of creation	39
Your invitation	41
Appendix 1: Policy recommendations for a restorative economy	42
From exclusion and elite power to inclusion and agency for all	42
From hoarded wealth and extreme poverty to dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives	43
From extraction and degradation to flourishing for the whole of creation	46
Appendix 2: Bibliography	49

Lead author: Julia Kendal

Contributing author: Joanne Green

A huge thank you to all who have contributed to this vision. Being a collaborative process, not all the contributors necessarily endorse everything in the final text. We ask for grace from both contributors and readers on this journey of discernment together. Contributors: Adam Aucock, Alastair Bateman, Alex Avard, Alex Evans, Anne Mumbi, Asha Kurien, Belinda Calaguas, Ben Niblett, Ben Osawe, Beth Saunders, Bikita Mahdi, Billie Anderson, Buddy Owen, Catherine De Souza, Catriona Dejean, Chalwe Nyirenda, Charles Bakolo, Charles Maina, Chris McDonald, Clark Buys, Collins Lungu, David Couzens, Deborah Hancox, Dennis Nthenge, Dorothy Tang, Durga Upadhyay, Earnest Maswera, Emmanuel Murangira, Ephraim Tsegay, Esther Trewinnard, Fredrick Njehu, Fwangmun Oscar Danladi, Geoffrey Tamayenda, Hannah Bowring, Hannah Lloyd, Hannington Muyenje, Hendrix Dzama, Jack Wakefield, Jane Boswell, Jane Pleace, Jessica Bwali, Joan Kariuki, Jon Swales, Kevin Maina, Lauren Agnew, Lesmore Ezekiel, Liu Liu, Liz Muir, Lorraine Tew, Lucy Tanner, Mari Williams, Maryline Ngoroje, Megan Rowland-Deverell, Miles Giljam, Naomi Foxwood, Naomi Witherick, Nercia Cumbe, Nicola Temple, Nigel Harris, Paul Cook, Paul Kunert, Philip Powell, Pranaya Chhetri, Promise Salawu, Rachel Carnegie, Rachel Mash, Rich Gower, Rod Green, Ruth Valerio, Sam Davis, Sam Perriman, Samuel Chiu, Sarah La Trobe, Sarah Wiggins, Sas Conradie, Sheba Muchabaiwa, Simone Veira, Sophia Varley, Stephen German, Thomas Giblin, Tinashe Gumbo, Tonderai Muzhinji, Ulan Garba Matta. Thank you also to the Tearfund teams in Africa, Asia, Eurasia and North America, and Latin America and Caribbean regional teams, the Abundant Africa consultations, and the All Africa Conference of Churches consultations.

Copy editing: Seren Boyd

Any part of this report may be copied, reproduced or adapted by individual persons as part of their own work or for training purposes, provided the parts reproduced are not distributed for profit and that credit is given to Tearfund. All photos should be credited to Tearfund. For other uses of the material, including the reproduction of images in other contexts, permission must be obtained from Tearfund.

We welcome feedback on our publications and would be delighted to hear how you have used this resource. Please get in touch using the contact details below.

Published by Tearfund. A company limited by guarantee.

Registered Charity No 265464 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity No SC037624 (Scotland)

Tearfund is a Christian charity determined to see an end to extreme poverty and injustice. We mobilise communities and churches worldwide to help ensure that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential.

📷 Front cover illustration: Amy Levene/Wingfinger.

© Tearfund (2023)

Summary

What stories will be told of the 21st century? This is a pivotal moment for churches and Christians to come together, secure in the Creator's love for us, to recover our place in God's restoration story and to realise our collective power to shape a fairer future. A flourishing world where each of us has the economic agency and power to meet our basic needs while protecting the earth's life-support systems. This is the restorative economy.

The current economic system is accelerating inequality and the breakdown of God's world which we all rely on. It is marked by extreme wealth and exclusive power, built partly on the legacy of slavery and colonialism.

Wealth and power have been connected throughout human history. But we need to reckon with the scale and scope of how they are currently intertwined, enlarged and guarded at the expense of the majority – and those living in poverty most of all.

The root of all of this is humanity's ancient problem: peace was interrupted and broken when sin entered the world. Our relationships were broken – with God, with ourselves, with each other and with the rest of creation. And the fruit of this includes broken systems, greed, corrupt governance, injustice, colonialism, dehumanisation and a failure to value the whole of creation. This is the disorder we find ourselves in and contributing to, with varying degrees of complicity and choice.

But this brokenness is not God's plan. This moment which looks full of difficulty and hopelessness is a critical window for stories of redemption, reconciliation and restoration to be enacted.

This is an invitation to churches and Christians around the world to re-covenant with God, ourselves, each other and creation. To rediscover our place in God's ongoing redemption story. To break free of the narratives that have commodified or colonised us, and to recover our stories and roles as prophets in this world.

If we are to do this, it must be together, as co-labourers and partners with God, to cultivate and connect:



Abundant churches and communities embodying Jesus locally

Salt and light together resisting the practices and habits of greed, extreme individualism and prosperity at the expense of others and the natural world, and instead living lives of generosity, simplicity and justice



Abundant businesses disrupting the current broken system and modelling restorative alternatives

Purposeful in seeking to contribute positively to societies everywhere and to the whole of creation flourishing



A globally connected and abundant movement, building collective influence to speak truth to power until change comes

A movement that enables all of us in our world's diverse communities to grasp and use the power we have to drive the rebalance of power, transform global and regional markets, businesses, governments and their institutions, and hold each other and powerful decision-makers to account

Three key strategic shifts are needed to take us closer to a restorative economy. Together, communities, businesses and movements can act for and call on governments, businesses and multilateral organisations to deliver large-scale change across these three shifts:

1

From exclusion and elite power to inclusion and agency for all.

A rebalance of power between citizens, communities, governments and business. Accountability, transparency, equity, inclusion and trust at the heart of a system that serves.

2

From hoarded wealth and extreme poverty to dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives.

Work and livelihoods that are creative, fairly paid and beneficial. An economy that works for us all.

3

From extraction and degradation to flourishing for the whole of creation.

The worst of the climate catastrophe averted. The wholeness of people and the richness of the natural world restored.

We offer this invitation to churches and Christians around the world to partner with God in cultivating abundant churches and communities locally. To unify in a global movement and drive a restorative revolution that realises the scale of change we need. To see God's kingdom come.

On earth, as in heaven.

The invitation

This is an invitation to churches and communities to discern and forge a way forwards, together.

In 2015, Tearfund published the *Restorative economy* report¹, which asked how we – or our children – would look back on the world shaped over our lifetime and handed on to those who would follow. We recognised that the future held the potential for great promise or peril – and that the choices that we made would set a trajectory for generations to come.

Almost a decade later, the vision of a restorative economy – where we all have the economic agency and power to meet our basic needs while living within environmental limits – remains vital. But insufficient action since then means that the challenges named in 2015 have been brought into even sharper focus: by a pandemic that struck us all but not equally; by injustices that have long existed but are now gathering more attention; and by the environmental crises that are truly upon us.

But this critical moment is an opportune time for the church and Christians to align with God's heart for justice. In a restorative economy, each of us has sufficient economic agency and power to meet our basic needs – but not at the expense of other people or the natural world. This means that no one can have too much or too little. It means the earth's life-support systems – the animals, plants and ecosystems that we all rely on – are protected, not overstretched or harmed.

The scale of change we need to make this reality requires a restorative revolution. Revolution means to turn, to create wide-ranging change in favour of a new system. Jesus - as an agent for change, revealing injustice and challenging excessive power - is our model for a restorative revolution. This is an invitation to see hundreds of thousands of churches acting as a global movement, finding our place in God's restoration story, and acting with courage and hope.

Many of the ideas and recommendations presented here draw from theology, learning and practices around the world. Some of them are initial changes that could be achieved in the shorter term, while others will take longer to become reality. None of them can be enacted alone; at the heart of this message is the power of a movement of God's people. As Tearfund, we offer these ideas as part of our contribution to this movement and we bring this message as much to ourselves as to friends and allies around the world.

The ideas are the result of wide, international consultation with partners and allies around the world. This includes intensive consultation and review with churches, activists and movements, as well as integrating learning from previous and ongoing collaborations, such as the development of *Abundant Africa: Our decade to shape the African century*, a co-published vision shaped by the African church for the African church.² We recognise that the ideas and recommendations here do not draw perfectly or evenly from communities around the world. We ask for grace from both contributors and readers. These ideas are not an exhaustive list – but we hope they are a next step in a collaborative journey of hearing and following God's voice together.

So we offer this invitation – imperfectly, learning, compelled to seek. Compelled by our prophetic mandate to see Jesus' kingdom come.

On earth, as in heaven.

¹ Evans and Gower (2015).

² See *Abundant Africa* (2021).

1 Where are we?

This is a story about what is possible when millions of Christians across hundreds of thousands of churches follow Jesus with our whole lives. It's a story about how small seeds can sow global restoration in the hands of God. About how the global church, with the Holy Spirit's leading, can be the most powerful agent for change.

Describing the world we live in means articulating painful stories; we cannot be ignorant of or naive to suffering and brokenness. In this section, we name some of the particular challenges we are experiencing this decade. But we can face them with confidence in God's love for us, his restoration plan for the whole of creation, and with expectation of the ancient and coming vision of Jesus' kingdom. So we can respond with faith as well as with tears and repentance. With peace in our hope for eternity as well as for today.

A story: See what can happen when a movement of God's people prays and acts

The word of God offers us many examples of times where justice and peace seemed far off and the people of God were in despair and danger. And yet with courage individuals stepped out in faith to bring transformation: Esther. Moses. Nehemiah. Their situations – impending genocide, enslavement, a city and community in ruins – match the worst we see around us in the 21st century. But God placed each of these people in a position to make change and called them to be part of his restoration story. There were many challenges to overcome – challenges of the heart as well as marginalisation and opposition. Yet they mobilised a movement of God's people to pray, trust in God and take action. As his people stepped forward, God stopped the genocide, rescued them from slavery and restored the walls and reformed the community in Jerusalem. Today's call on the people of God remains the same: we can also step out in faith and courage, prayer and action, to bring transformation in a world of injustice.

The world we live in

For decades, big strides were made in reducing poverty globally;³ between 1990 and 2019, more than 1 billion people lifted themselves out of extreme poverty.⁴ But at the heart of the system delivering this progress was a paradox: economic growth at the expense of the environment and equality. This threatened to undo the great steps forward and to increase poverty on a massive scale for many generations to come.

And we are now reaping what was being sown. The current economic system is accelerating inequality and the breakdown of the natural world we rely on. It is failing to protect people from emerging crises or manage existing risks. It is driven by the hoarding of wealth and power while those on the margins are scapegoated, creating polarisation and fear.

This is the world that we live in.

³ World Bank (2022a).

⁴ Ibid.

Extreme poverty is on the rise again

Ninety-nine per cent of us became worse off because of the Covid-19 pandemic.⁵ The pandemic reached us all – but impacted us unequally. For every life lost in a high-income country, four people in a lower-income country died.⁶ Within some countries, people in poverty were nearly four times more likely than the wealthiest to die from Covid-19.⁷ Black, Brown, indigenous and other communities of colour were often at greater risk of catching the disease and dying from it.⁸ Women and girls often lost out most.⁹ Low-income countries have been set back in their poverty reduction by eight to nine years,¹⁰ and all but one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals due to be delivered by the end of this decade are in jeopardy.¹¹

But even before this destructive virus swept the globe, the cracks in the system were already showing. In 2016, global hunger rose for the first time in a decade – largely driven by the impacts of conflict and the climate crisis. And since then, the world has only gone backwards in its efforts to end hunger and malnutrition.¹² If we continue as we are, by the end of this decade 574 million people – nearly seven per cent of the world’s population – will be trying to live on less than US\$2.15 a day.¹³ Most of them will be in Africa, in conflict-affected areas and in rural communities.

Meanwhile, extreme wealth is concentrated in the hands of the few

The current global economic system fails to serve all the world’s citizens. New wealth, and the power that brings, has accumulated in the hands of a few, leaving those at the bottom unable to afford to meet basic needs. Prior to 2020, the world’s richest 22 men owned more wealth than all the women in Africa.¹⁴ Since then, the richest one per cent have accumulated almost two thirds of all new wealth.¹⁵ While inequality between countries has shown signs of decreasing, economic inequality within countries has increased significantly.¹⁶ Globally, economic inequality has accelerated to reach the same extreme as in the early 1900s.¹⁷

⁵ Oxfam (2022).

⁶ As of February 2022, 54 per cent of all Covid-19 deaths (10.6 million people) had been in lower-income countries; with 14 per cent of deaths (2.7 million people) in high-income countries. Oxfam (2022).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ For example, in Brazil and the US (Oxfam, 2022) and in the UK (UK Government, 2020).

⁹ There are multiple reasons for this: women and girls’ livelihoods, healthcare and education are disproportionately affected. Globally, women make up 70 per cent of the health and social care workforce, and so are at greater risk of exposure to the virus. In times of crisis, gender-based violence increases. Oxfam (2023a).

¹⁰ Sánchez-Páramo et al (2021).

¹¹ As of July 2023 we are halfway through the delivery period for the Sustainable Development Goals, due by 2030. Progress on over half of the targets is weak and insufficient. On a third of targets – and at least one target in 16 of the 17 goals – it has stalled or even reversed. United Nations (2023a).

¹² FAO et al (2022).

¹³ World Bank (2022a).

¹⁴ Coffey et al (2020).

¹⁵ Christensen (2023).

¹⁶ Over the past two decades, the gap between the average incomes of the top ten per cent and the bottom 50 per cent of individuals within countries has almost doubled. Chancel et al (2021).

¹⁷ Ibid.

God's creation has been ransacked

We have not cared well for the whole of creation. This is not a new problem – but our capacity to do large-scale damage has escalated since the Industrial Revolution and expansion of the use of fossil fuels. The plundering of natural resources and widespread biodiversity loss endanger everyone, but especially those on the margins and future generations. In this, we are not equally responsible. The profits of slavery played a role in catalysing the Industrial Revolution,¹⁸ which led in turn to unprecedented technological advances and drove our fossil fuel dependence and the current climate crisis. The Industrial Revolution also helped to fuel colonialism through creating the drive and ability for European nations to expand geographically and economically, increasing demand for products and catalysing rapid economic growth. Among other impacts, this led to: the pillaging of resources and land; the devaluing of people to mere – and often forced – labour to be exploited; the displacement of local industries; and the destruction of communities, cultures and ecosystems.



📷 Open-cast mining in Hambach, Germany. Photo: Chris Münch/Unsplash

This is not just a recognition of historical injustices. Colonialist and extractive practices continue to drive environmental catastrophe;¹⁹ some multinational companies persist in exploiting people and the land and resources that communities have long depended on. Environmental defenders are often the target of unaccountable extractive companies and state security forces and risk imprisonment, violence or even death. In 2021 alone, nearly four people a week were killed defending the natural world that God made.²⁰ This is the pursuit of profit with little regard or concern for the devastating impacts on both local communities – often Black, Brown, indigenous and other communities of colour – and on the wider world.

¹⁸ For example, see <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/slavery-and-british-industrial-revolution>

¹⁹ IPCC (2022a).

²⁰ There were 200 recorded lethal attacks on land and environmental defenders in 2021. Over three quarters of them were in Latin America. Global Witness (2022).

Multiple and interconnected environmental crises are upon us

All this means that we face biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, pollution and climate catastrophe on an unprecedented scale. These crises combine to threaten the earth's life-support systems: the air, land, water, plants and animals that we rely on to live, and that are loved by the Creator who made them.

In the last 50 years, wildlife populations have declined by more than two thirds.²¹ Latin America has seen the greatest regional loss of species abundance.²² The UK has lost – or destroyed – nearly half of its biodiversity since the Industrial Revolution,²³ and now ranks as one of the least biodiverse countries in the world.

We have polluted the air, land, rivers and seas that we depend on due to our take–make–dispose economies; this is the unintended consequence of industrialisation. The number of people dying from such modern pollution increased by 66 per cent over the last two decades.²⁴ Pollution now takes the lives of more than 9 million people every year.²⁵ Half of all the plastic produced is intended to be used just once,²⁶ and so mountains of it are dumped or burnt around the world. Globally up to a million people die every year because of mismanaged waste.²⁷ Moreover, almost all plastic is made from oil and gas, so making it releases harmful greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, exacerbating the climate emergency. If plastic pollution were a country, it would be the sixth-largest greenhouse gas emitter – and it's only getting bigger. Plastics are now the fastest-growing source of industrial greenhouse gas emissions in the world.²⁸

We have a dysfunctional global food system dominated by enormously powerful agribusiness companies making vast profits while the number of people going hungry has doubled since 2020.²⁹ Conflict, economic instability and the climate crisis have driven recent increases in food insecurity, but at the same time, the global food system also propels climate and environmental breakdown.

Climate catastrophe is the most intense culmination of these interlocking crises that we face this decade. Our world is rapidly and unequally changing; the Middle East and North Africa are heating nearly twice as fast as the global average.³⁰ Extreme weather events, driven by the climate crisis, are already painfully familiar. In 2021, communities in California, US, were confronted by the state's worst drought in more than 1,000 years³¹ – and the accompanying wildfires that raged through homes and razed acres of forest to the ground. In 2022, flooding in Pakistan left one third of the country underwater, killing more than 1,700 people and destroying 2 million homes and almost 1 million livestock.³² 2023 saw the worst hunger crisis in decades, with 46.3 million people across seven countries in East Africa experiencing severe hunger following repeated climate shocks, including drought and flooding.³³

²¹ Almond et al (2022).

²² Ibid.

²³ RSPB (2021).

²⁴ Fuller et al (2022).

²⁵ Examples of modern pollution include ambient air pollution and toxic chemical pollution. Fuller et al (2022).

²⁶ United Nations Environment Programme (2023).

²⁷ Williams et al (2019).

²⁸ Centre for International Environment Law (2019).

²⁹ WFP (2023).

³⁰ Miller et al (2022).

³¹ Environmental Defence Fund (2023).

³² OCHA (2022a).

³³ The seven countries are: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda. WHO (2023).



📷 A woman and child struggle through flood waters in east Jakarta, Indonesia. Photo: Kompas/Hendra A Setyawan/World Meteorological Organization

World leaders have agreed to avoid the worst of the climate catastrophe by limiting heating to 1.5°C, but are far off track from making this reality.³⁴ Governments' current climate plans mean the world is headed for a devastating increase of 2.5°C.³⁵ Every fraction of a degree matters; rising temperatures can mean the difference between life and death for many people and cultures, living creatures and ecosystems.³⁶ So every action can make a difference and must be taken; we have a rapidly closing window this decade to secure a liveable and sustainable future. Slow and insufficient action to reduce emissions and adapt to this increasingly volatile climate could make parts of our world, where billions of us currently live, uninhabitable by the end of this century.³⁷

Wealth and consumption are unevenly distributed – and carbon emissions follow this pattern. Those of us in the world's top one per cent of emitters produce more than 1,000 times more carbon dioxide than the bottom one per cent³⁸ – and show little sign of slowing down. In 2021, the average person in North America emitted 11 times more in the use of energy than the average person living in Africa.³⁹

We are also not equally affected: we have known for years that low-income countries and communities are hit hardest, partly due to infrastructure and livelihoods being at higher risk and lack of resources and capacity to respond. Women, children, indigenous peoples and other communities of colour are disproportionately impacted. The climate crisis is expected to increase inequality within every single country around the world.⁴⁰

³⁴ IPCC (2023).

³⁵ Above pre-industrial levels. UNFCCC (2022).

³⁶ IPCC (2022b).

³⁷ Nigeria and India are at particularly high risk. Lenton et al (2023).

³⁸ International Energy Agency (2023).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Castells-Quintana and McDermott (2023).

We are divided

Conflict and instability – sometimes part of the legacy of colonialist practices that concentrated power along ethnic or religious lines – are persisting and deepening on multiple fronts and across most regions. Since 2008, more than 120 countries have been involved in at least one conflict beyond their borders.⁴¹ One in four of us lives in a conflict-affected country.⁴² In 2022, the number people dying related to conflict nearly doubled; it was the deadliest year since the 1994 Rwandan genocide against the Tutsi.⁴³

Conflict is driven in part by unstable global supply chains, superpowers jostling for dominance and influence, competition for reduced natural resources due to environmental crises, and rising extreme poverty. Safety and security are relational: nations and communities can only feel safe when their counterparts feel safe, but national and global security systems are based on the threat or reality of militarised approaches. In 2022, global military spending exceeded \$2 trillion⁴⁴ – far outstripping the \$51.5 billion⁴⁵ that would be needed to meet humanitarian needs (the majority of which are driven by conflict)⁴⁶ in 2023. The carbon emissions from the military are barely reported – but are estimated to be as much as five per cent of global emissions.⁴⁷

The number of people being forcibly displaced keeps increasing, often because of persecution, conflict, violence and disasters. By the end of 2022, more than one in 74 people had been forced to flee their home.⁴⁸ The 21st century has been marked by the fortifying of borders on every continent. At the end of the second world war, there were fewer than five border walls; now there are more than 70, most of them erected in the last two decades.⁴⁹ A growing feeling of division and economic anxiety are contributing to many of us losing faith in those in power.⁵⁰ As power sits in the hands of the few, often the most marginalised are ignored or worse, demonised and blamed. In some spaces where people feel powerless, hopeless and fearful, violent ideologies or populist narratives can take root and polarise, sowing disinformation, disconnection, divisive nationalism and conflict. This can be a vicious cycle as polarisation fuels further distrust.⁵¹ Low levels of trust hinder trade and reduce the effectiveness of institutions that are meant to serve.

We fear – and experience – crisis after crisis

Many of us are fearful that we will stumble from crisis to crisis in this decade.⁵² The Covid-19 pandemic – and the failure of the richest governments to create an effective collective response to it – have underlined the injustices within the global system. And the number of communities facing complex, protracted humanitarian crises is increasing.⁵³

⁴¹ Institute for Economics & Peace (2023).

⁴² United Nations (2022a).

⁴³ In 2022, fatalities from organised violence increased by 97 per cent (from 120,000 in 2021 to 237,000 in 2022). ‘Organised violence’ includes deaths from state-based armed conflict, non-state conflict and one-sided violence. Davies et al (2023).

⁴⁴ Bayer and Rohleder (2022).

⁴⁵ OCHA (2022b).

⁴⁶ World Bank (2022b).

⁴⁷ Ali Rajaeifar et al (2022).

⁴⁸ At the end of 2022, 108.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order. This includes refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people worldwide. UNHCR (2023).

⁴⁹ Vallet (2022).

⁵⁰ Edelman Trust Institute (2023).

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Turnbull (2022).

⁵³ OCHA (2022b).

At the same time, the world is experiencing increasing economic volatility. We face soaring costs around the world because of rising inflation. This is being particularly fueled by the price of oil and gas. The cost of fossil fuels has been rising in response to growing energy use globally and exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, given Russia's significant proportion of oil and gas supplies. 2022 brought us into the world's first global energy crisis.⁵⁴ Our over-dependence on fossil fuels means that their raised price affects virtually everything we spend money on (including food, transport, powering and heating our homes and businesses) – but our wages have not kept up with costs. It is likely that about 75 million people worldwide who only recently gained access to electricity will no longer be able to pay for it.⁵⁵ Existing renewable energy supplies have already lessened the financial impact of this energy crisis⁵⁶ – but if governments had invested in clean energy more quickly and extensively, we would not be facing the economic pressure we do now. Meanwhile, fossil fuel producers have pocketed an extra \$2 trillion as a result of this energy crisis.⁵⁷

This has put added pressure on already stretched households, communities and governments. As of 2023, 54 countries are in debt crisis – up from 31 in 2018.⁵⁸ Unequally gained wealth means that for every \$1 of new global wealth earned by a person in the bottom 90 per cent, one of the world's billionaires gained around \$1,700,000.⁵⁹ And almost all of that wealth remains in their hands: for every \$1 raised in taxes, a mere four cents comes from wealth taxes.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, three quarters of the world's governments are planning spending cuts on vital services such as healthcare and education over the next five years.⁶¹ Those of us who are women and girls, youth, people living with disabilities, indigenous peoples, Black, Brown or from other communities of colour are often disproportionately affected by these systemic challenges.



But we neither enter nor emerge from times of crisis on an equal footing. Having wealth means being less likely to be affected by shocks in the first place – with money in the bank, stronger, safer homes located further from risks, and insurance policies for emergencies. If the price of food rises, it is paid. If the power goes out, a generator is bought. If water pipes run dry, bottled water will do.

📷 **High-rise buildings in Mumbai, India.**
Photo: Vinay Darekar/Unsplash

But living in poverty means having far fewer resources to withstand and recover from crises, disasters and shocks. It means fewer savings, assets or access to government support to rebuild or relocate. It means having to choose between money for life-saving healthcare and protection from a life-threatening flood.⁶²

⁵⁴ This energy crisis is considered the first truly global energy crisis because it involves all fossil fuels, unlike eg the 1970s' oil price shocks, and the global economy is more interlinked than it was 50 years ago, magnifying the impact. International Energy Agency (2022).

⁵⁵ International Energy Agency (2022).

⁵⁶ For example, between March and October 2022, renewable energy capacity saved the EU 99 billion Euros in avoided gas imports. De Pous et al (2022).

⁵⁷ International Energy Agency (2022).

⁵⁸ A debt crisis is any situation where debt is leading to human rights being denied, or even being put ahead of life itself. For more and up-to-date information, see <https://debtjustice.org.uk/countries-in-crisis>

⁵⁹ Christensen (2023).

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Tearfund (2022a).

Younger generations face an uncertain future

In 2020, the number of young people not in education, employment or training globally jumped to more than one in five.⁶³ That's the highest level in 15 years. The 282 million young people affected may feel the impact for many years of these Covid-19 pandemic-related setbacks to their learning and working lives. This is a global problem, unequally felt. Youth unemployment is lowest in high-income countries and highest in lower-middle-income nations.⁶⁴ Around half of young people say that fears about the climate crisis interfere with their daily life.⁶⁵ Three in four say that the future is frightening.⁶⁶ For millions of us who are young, our present and future seem marked by environmental breakdown, high unemployment, failing infrastructure and broken trust between and within generations.

The critical moment

What stories will be told of the 21st century? Prior to 2020, the decades to come seemed full of 'mingled promise and peril'⁶⁷ – depending on how we moved forward together. But several years on, we experience and anticipate the dangers more starkly. Without rapid, urgent action, many of these impacts – particularly in relation to the climate crisis – risk becoming locked in for the long term. As a result of all this, living in poverty means being least responsible for – but most hurt by – this storm of inequality, environmental crises and division.

The choices we make this decade will set the trajectory for generations to come and determine how severely we damage the world's climate, poison each other's land and rivers, and prop up and trap each other in a broken system – and therefore whether we continue to make poverty worse for many generations. But we know from scripture and the life of Jesus that paradoxically God is able to bring transformation and redemption even when suffering is at its greatest. So we do not lose heart (2 Corinthians 4:16–18).⁶⁸

This moment which looks full of difficulty is a critical window and opportune time for millions of Christians across hundreds of thousands of churches to enact stories of renewal as part of a restorative revolution. Stories in scripture and from churches around the world (for example, see the box on the next page)⁶⁹ show us the power and potential when the people of God unite across divides, allying with those on the margins and challenging structures of injustice. Churches and Christians around the world can play a powerful role in partnering with God in his redemption story. In shaping a fairer future marked by a rebalance of power, accountability and trust. In creating an economy that serves us all and the flourishing of the whole of creation.

But to go forwards, we must understand how we got here.

⁶³ ILO (2022a).

⁶⁴ The gender gap is largest in lower-middle-income countries (17.3 percentage points) and smallest in high-income countries (2.3 percentage points). ILO (2022a).

⁶⁵ Results from a survey of 10,000 children and young people (aged 16–25 years) in ten countries (Australia, Brazil, Finland, France, India, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, the UK and the US; 1,000 participants per country) about climate anxiety. Hickman et al (2021).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Evans and Gower (2015).

⁶⁸ 'Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.'

⁶⁹ See *Footsteps 118: Community-led advocacy* (Tearfund) for more stories of churches and communities challenging injustice and seeing change in difficult situations.

<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/footsteps/footsteps-111-120/footsteps-118>

A story: God's faithful promises with his people and all creation

In the beginning, God made a world that was good and full of potential (Genesis 1). And he made people as his partners in nurturing all that potential (Genesis 1:28–29; 2:15). But people rebelled, trying to make the world on their terms. Relationships were broken between God, people and the rest of creation.

But the creator God is also a covenant God.⁷⁰

In a covenant, God makes promises and asks his partner to fulfil certain commitments – and the purpose of these covenant relationships is to renew his partnership with everyone else⁷¹ and to redeem the brokenness within creation.

Throughout the Old Testament, we learn how God initiated covenant relationships. With Noah – a promise with him, his descendants, every living creature and earth (Genesis 9). With Abraham – that through this one family trusting God, all the nations of the world would be blessed (Genesis 12). Abraham's family grew into the tribe of Israel, whom God asked to obey laws for living well as a community of his partners. In turn, God promised to bless them and then they as a people would represent him to the rest of humanity. God asked David to lead Israel and do what is right and just. God promised him that through his descendant, God's kingdom of peace and blessing would come to all nations.

But Israel broke these covenant relationships with God, worshipping other gods and allowing injustice. Loss of land and exile followed.

In a time that seemed hopeless, Israel's prophets talked of a hope coming, of the new covenant.

Jesus came. And he fulfilled all of these covenant relationships. Jesus is from Abraham's family, so brings the family blessings to the whole world. He's the faithful Israelite able to obey the law. And he's the king from the line of David – extending God's kingdom of peace and justice to the whole of creation. Through Jesus – the faithful covenant partner – God has opened up a way for any of us to be in renewed partnership with him.

Throughout the pattern of history, among the broken relationships, we also see transformation and hope when people of God re-covenanted with him. We saw that when the church was part of movements calling and acting for justice, such as the anti-slavery, anti-colonialism and civil rights movements. And we are faith-filled that as we re-covenant with God, we will see such transformation again.

⁷⁰ See this BibleProject video to learn more:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/covenants/>

⁷¹ Wright (2005).

2 Why are we here?

This evidence of injustice, oppression and exploitation stands in stark contrast to Jesus' promise of abundant life (John 10:10). If we are to carve a different way ahead, we need to understand what is at the heart of the times and the world we live in.

The problem: extreme wealth and exclusive power

Wealth and power have been connected throughout human history; understanding them together is not a new idea. But we need to reckon with the scale and scope of how they are currently interlinked.

The present economic system drives both short-term thinking and the long-term hoarding of wealth by elites in corporations and governments, whose interests have become increasingly intertwined. Unequal societies are often marked by neglected economic justice. Rising inequality can boost the power of the wealthy, enabling them to secure their position despite wider public opinion.⁷² This is associated with less legislative attention to the policies that would create a fairer distribution of wealth.⁷³ As wealth inequality becomes more of a problem at a global level and within countries, the loss of democratic accountability makes it even harder to address. This 'new corruption'⁷⁴ locks out the interests of communities in poverty and other marginalised groups (for example, women and youth) in a number of crucial ways:

Elites enlarge their wealth and solidify their power

Wealth creates a number of privileged routes to influence politics (through, for example, more personal contact with officials or donations to political campaigns) and public opinion (through, for example, financing politically aligned think tanks or buying media outlets). This can be true for wealthy individuals⁷⁵ and for corporations.⁷⁶ So a small number of financially powerful people and groups wield significant influence, which they then use to further enlarge their wealth and solidify their power (for example, see the story on the next page of companies that dominate global grain and seed markets). These groups have used this influence to secure policy changes that both increase their control and money-making ability (such as the abuse of intellectual property protection)⁷⁷ and decrease regulation of their activities. It is difficult to know exactly how much revenue is being lost globally to tax avoidance and evasion, and other forms of illicit financial flows, but estimates are in the order of \$49–193 billion in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa alone.⁷⁸ Their position strengthens, while poverty and environmental damage increase. And meanwhile they use their disproportionate bargaining power to extract more profit from workers, consumers and supply chains. The world's 722 biggest companies collectively made more than \$1 trillion a year in extra profits from the global energy and cost-of-living crises in 2021 and 2022.⁷⁹

⁷² *The Economist* (2018).

⁷³ For example, see this exploration of economic and power inequalities in Europe and the US (LSE, 2020): <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2020/06/11/does-rising-economic-inequality-create-a-representation-gap-between-rich-and-poor-evidence-from-europe-and-the-united-states/>

⁷⁴ Wedel (2014) and Navidi (2017).

⁷⁵ For example, see LSE blog (LSE, 2020).

⁷⁶ For example, see <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/corporate-state-capture/>

⁷⁷ Intellectual protection policies have the potential to protect indigenous rights. For example, in South Africa the local Khoi and San people are now officially recognised as the rightful knowledge holders of Rooibos tea after years of foreign business dominating the Rooibos tea industry. But there are also instances where intellectual property rights have been used to secure profits at the cost of people in poverty, such as refusal to temporarily waive patents and certain other intellectual property protections for Covid-19 vaccines, which could have been key to addressing the unequal rollout of vaccines that left millions in low-income countries unprotected. Furlong et al (2022).

⁷⁸ UNCTAD (2020).

⁷⁹ This includes energy companies, food and beverage corporations, banks and major retailers. Oxfam (2023b).

A story: The eight companies creating a stranglehold on our global food chains

Four grain traders (Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge, Cargill and Louis Dreyfus, known collectively as ABCD) have dominated global grain markets for decades. And four corporations (Bayer, Corteva, BASF and Syngenta) now control more than 50 per cent of the world's seeds market.⁸⁰ These are known as oligopolies, where two or more companies control the market, and therefore wield significant influence. Such oligopolies – and the lack of market transparency that follows – create a stranglehold on our global food chains. Meanwhile, four out of five people living in extreme poverty live in rural areas;⁸¹ those growing the food exported to communities around the world are too often left with nothing to eat.

The seed companies have used biotechnology to patent GMO (genetically modified organisms) seeds which return larger profits; these patents give them greater control of the supply chain – all the way from farm to fork. Restrictive seeds laws in some countries force farmers to buy these patented, high-yield seeds. This displaces millions of smallholder farmers, who traditionally exchanged indigenous seeds, from the production cycle, or forces them to procure these patented – and expensive – seeds (which also can require intensive use of pesticides and chemicals, to the detriment of God's creation). The Covid-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine and climate crisis have disrupted supply chains and sent the prices of seeds, fuel and fertilisers soaring, making food even less affordable and available for people in poverty.⁸²

Markets are highly unequal

Inadequately regulated global, regional and national markets are particularly efficient at one thing: producing as much as possible from a finite amount of resources. They do this irrespective of the soaring carbon emissions, of the destruction of forests and rivers, plants and animals along the way. They do this through the daily labour of people who in return are often treated badly and paid very little.⁸³ Many global supply chains channel resources into making unnecessary goods for those of us who are wealthy, while pricing those with the least out of markets⁸⁴ and excluding many from meeting basic needs. Inequality raises the potential for crime and conflict. It strips us of access to natural resources and degrades our local environment. It exacerbates disparities in power and decision-making. Inadequately regulated markets will continue to drive further inequality, which keeps skewing production towards the needs and wants of the wealthy. Without intervention, this is a vicious circle.

⁸⁰ CAFOD (2023).

⁸¹ International Fund for Agricultural Development (2023).

⁸² Arteta and Kasyanenko (2022).

⁸³ It's estimated that more than half a billion people are in 'working poverty', defined as a household with at least one person in paid employment that is living below the poverty line. ILO (2022b).

⁸⁴ For example, the rise in global food prices drives up hunger in both high-income and lower-income countries, but disproportionately so in lower-income communities.

Exploitation persists

The historical drivers and unequal impacts of the current global markets have roots in colonialism⁸⁵ and the policies and approaches that followed to maintain and strengthen power. Despite the supposed end of colonialism when countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America achieved political independence, a dynamic of exploitation remains its ongoing legacy.⁸⁶ Entrenched colonialist economic and power structures continue to facilitate the flow of natural resources from lower-income countries to higher-income nations, driving dependency and volatility. Cold War policies of the US and USSR supported and armed particular leaders and groups during civil wars; some conflicts are still fought around the boundaries and power divides they inflicted and with the weapons they provided.⁸⁷ Economic systems imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on lower-income countries from the 1980s forced borrowing that reduced investment in public services; the long-term structural effects on unemployment, poverty and inequality are still felt today. The use of 'soft power' – indirect power from economic and cultural influence, not coercion or military strength – by some nations, such as China, can often continue this extractive dynamic. Many of us from formerly colonised countries – as well as vulnerable communities within higher-income economies – continue to have our labour exploited and ecosystems destroyed by unaccountable businesses while being unable to meet our basic needs.

Political systems are shedding accountability

Governments have often shown themselves to be unable or unwilling to take the necessary steps to curb the power of large companies and oligopolies. They have not created and implemented sufficiently well-designed national and regional legislation. In the majority of nations, corruption levels are stagnating or even getting worse.⁸⁸ The growing influence of multinational companies hampering international efforts to tackle the global challenges we face, such as the climate crisis,⁸⁹ is concerning. Our political systems and leaders are neglecting their responsibility to those whom God intends them to serve.

As the mutually reinforcing power of the market and the state grows stronger,⁹⁰ accountability and transparency become even more important. But the social structures that could enable us to hold this power to account are being weakened, leaving people increasingly vulnerable and isolated. Civil society space across the world is shrinking as states enact laws and use emerging technologies to restrict the power of people to protest and influence for change.⁹¹

More and more of us are becoming financially vulnerable

All of this means that too often, wealthier governments' policies favour the richest households and companies, and withdraw support from the majority and the marginalised. This injustice was clear in the economic response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which boosted the wealth of billionaires and many large corporations.⁹² Meanwhile, as costs rise but wages don't, there are even fewer winners from this system. The middle classes in many countries are becoming increasingly financially vulnerable and indebted in the context of soaring inflation and living costs.

⁸⁵ For an example, see <https://fpif.org/british-genocide-in-kenya-time-for-a-reckoning/>

⁸⁶ To read more, see Abundant Africa (2021) Chapter 1:

<https://abundant.africa/report/chapter-1/a-shining-and-tragic-historical-legacy/>

⁸⁷ For example, in Mozambique and Angola.

⁸⁸ Transparency International (2023).

⁸⁹ For example, see www.tni.org/en/publication/funding-for-profit-multistakeholderism

⁹⁰ Cavanaugh (2003).

⁹¹ A 2021 Institute of Development Studies report of ten African countries found almost twice as many examples of digital technologies being used to close civic space as to open it. Roberts and Mohamed Ali (2021). Egypt and Zimbabwe are among governments that have bought surveillance technology from the US and China to use on their citizens. Across Asia digital surveillance has considerably increased in many countries during Covid, from China to India to Vietnam.

⁹² Christensen (2023).

The church has often failed to overturn the tables of injustice

Throughout history, many churches have followed Jesus' example in serving wider communities (see example on the next page), overturning the tables of injustice and affirming the dignity of every person, often in defiance of their societies. But this is not sufficiently the norm. All too often, the church has colluded with, been complicit in, and contributed to various forms of greed, exploitation and unjust systems of society. In too many cases, the church has been silent in the face of injustice, or silenced those who would speak out. Too many times, churches have bowed before idols and empires instead of aligning with God's heart for justice.

This collusion and contribution has taken on many forms. For example, 'prosperity gospel' preaching promises individuals a shortcut to 'health and wealth' without having to deal with the root causes of economic poverty and social injustices. Such preaching promotes boundless consumerism while ignoring the supply chains behind the consumption. As such, this distorted theology is a contributing factor to exploitative over-consumption, which ultimately harms those who are marginalised in particular as well as wider creation.

In some parts of the church, the biblical vision of covenant with creation has been read through a dominion lens. The earth has been a place to subdue, not protect; this has had devastating economic and environmental consequences. Sometimes, the biblical vision of a promised, renewed creation has been replaced with a simplified vision of souls going to an ethereal, immaterial, other-worldly 'heaven'. One disastrous implication of this has been a tendency for Christians to focus only on the immaterial, 'spiritual' aspects of life and under-emphasise and undervalue the material world which God loves and is seeking to renew and remake with our participation. This means many Christians have paid too little attention to social injustices and how our lifestyles impact other people and wider creation.

Through the actions and lifestyles that arise from such faulty theologies, many churches perpetuate – rather than challenge, in line with Jesus' teaching – the dynamics of wealth, power and greed.

A story: Local churches creating far-reaching change

The local church can be a powerful force for good in the wider community – as shown by an independent study of the impacts of Tearfund’s church and community transformation (CCT) work.⁹³ CCT processes engage local churches in expanding their understanding of their mission beyond their congregations, to address the needs of their communities and empower individuals to use the resources they have. This often involves engaging in advocacy with decision-makers and it recognises the autonomy and agency of communities to act. The study found that communities engaged in CCT processes demonstrated more positive outcomes across all 23 measured aspects of wellbeing, including 27 per cent higher life satisfaction. For every \$1 invested in CCT, there was a substantial social return of \$28 worth of enhanced wellbeing.

This is no surprise to Emmanuel Murangira, Tearfund Country Director in Rwanda and CCT advocate: 'I had grown up as a refugee, the nearest health services and any semblance of a formal education within a ten-mile radius was a church shed. Many of those like me who had a hard start in life are a living testimony of what the church can do in people’s lives... These results do not surprise me: when the church mobilises and organises people for their own transformation, the results are phenomenal.'⁹⁴



📷 Members of the Zizu community in Rwanda harvest bananas from the plantation set up through their church-based training group. Photo: Marcus Perkins/Tearfund

⁹³ This peer-reviewed impact study was undertaken by independent consultancy State of Life (Fawcett et al, 2023).

⁹⁴ Murangira (2023).

The root of the problem: broken relationships and the human heart

The extent of the pursuit of wealth and power at the expense of the marginalised might seem exceptional, but the root of the issue is not. It is humanity's ancient problem. God spoke into life a world of perfect harmony – between himself, humankind and the rest of creation. But that – peace, wholeness and the ability for all to thrive – was interrupted and broken when sin entered the world and fractured the relationships we have with God, with ourselves, with one another and with the whole of creation.⁹⁵ And the consequences have been playing out throughout history.

Each of us experiences the harm of and bears responsibility for this. We need to be willing to examine and engage with the condition of our own hearts (Matthew 12:33–35). Our broken relationships often manifest in the form of greed and exploitation. We see this right from the beginning of the Bible in Genesis as Laban takes advantage of Jacob (Genesis 29), Lot makes a greedy, poor choice of land and home (Genesis 13), and Joseph's brothers exploit his vulnerability (Genesis 37). Furthermore, our current economic systems incentivise these same behaviours of greed and exploitation. The excessive pursuit of monetary wealth – and the power needed to sustain and enhance it – drive a dynamic of exploitation and harmful competition. And the fruit of such individual and structural sin includes broken systems, fear, insecurity, self-interest, greed, corrupt governance, commodification, oppression, racism, dehumanisation and a failure to value the whole of creation.

This dynamic of wealth, power and exploitation has become the overriding one ordering 21st-century relationships, society and politics. It blinds us to our God-given identity, connections and potential, defining us not as created people but as resources to be used and pitted against each other and with the rest of God's creation for scarce resources. Under this system, there is a perception of a zero-sum game. The only way to survive is to outdo others: accumulating and consuming more than our neighbours, and certainly more than we need or creation can sustain.⁹⁶ This is the disorder we find ourselves in – and contributing to, with varying degrees of awareness, complicity and choice.

But the scriptures show us a better way.

⁹⁵ Tearfund (2019).

⁹⁶ Thacker (2022).

3 Where should we go?

How will God's people find the courage and direction to move forward together in the face of global powers and vested interests? We cannot rely on current economic models without further endangering each other, the natural world and the wellbeing of future generations. We see another way: a restorative economy in which each of us has the economic agency and power to meet our basic needs while protecting the earth's life-support systems.

God's restoration story

To move forward together, we need to find our place in the story we are in. Not the narratives pushed by elite powers who keep all the benefits tightly held (see the fossil fuel companies example described below), but God's ongoing redemption story for the whole of creation. The story that began in a garden and will play out for eternity in a garden city (told from Genesis 2 to Revelation 22). The promise – embodied by Jesus and secured by his crucifixion and resurrection – that peace and wholeness are possible and they are coming.

Through Jesus, God opened up a way for any of us to be in renewed partnership with him, and to co-labour in this redemption and renewal of all things. There is no sacred–secular divide.

This is the bigger story into which the life, death and resurrection of Jesus invite us and provide a way. The Word became flesh. And through and in him, each of us can find our core questions, fears and hopes met. This is not a call for all of us to become the same, but rather to recognise that in God's ongoing story, each of us can find our place and purpose. Let's locate ourselves in this story again.

A story: The fossil fuel companies sowing stories of doubt

For decades, some of the companies profiting most from polluting fossil fuels have been aware of their catastrophic impacts on our climate – yet choose to undermine the science to protect their profits. For example, since the 1970s ExxonMobil, one of the world's largest oil and gas companies, has been accurately projecting global carbon emissions and the associated global temperature rise.⁹⁷ At the same time, they embarked on a campaign to discredit their own scientists' findings, and to misdirect the public by casting doubt over the accuracy of the science. Fossil fuel companies' tactics ranged from giving millions of dollars to advocacy groups disputing the impact of global heating to placing adverts with headlines such as 'Lies they tell our children'.⁹⁸ Before many of us were born, these companies began sowing stories of doubt, delaying climate action that could have saved many lives.

⁹⁷ Supran et al (2023).

⁹⁸ Supran and Oreskes (2021).

Recasting our stories as part of God's ongoing story

God made us a storied people. We all – whether we easily recognise it or not – interpret ourselves, the words and actions of others, and the world we live in against the backdrop of a particular narrative.

The literary giant Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie – in an online talk watched more than 34 million times⁹⁹ – unpacked 'the danger of a single story'. That a single story is essentially about dominance and power – repeating a sole narrative over people, over and over again, 'until that is what they become'. Because a story is like a seed. It may seem small, unremarkable. But see what grows when a banyan, oak or cypress seed is sown and nurtured. Stories have the capacity to shape people and economic realities; they can marginalise and dehumanise, or they can create, include and foster connection. Economic fluctuations have been substantially driven by popular narratives.¹⁰⁰ Many powerful leaders and institutions have vested interests in seeing the world in one particular way and telling one story.

We are made of and for stories. Some of us are better at living this out than others, continuing to draw on our rich oral traditions together. But some of us have been distracted from this – absorbed into the narratives that would sell and market us, our time, our energy, our occupation for the sake of profit, carve us up and piece us out. Productivity stories that measure a nation's health by how much is sold (so more is always better, even if it hurts our neighbours, future generations and the natural world).¹⁰¹ Consumerist stories have told us that we are what we buy. Divisive stories have told us that we are better or worse than others.

Some of us have had our stories stolen or mutilated or destroyed. Rev Frank Chikane, an anti-apartheid leader from South Africa, says the greatest crime of colonialism was the killing of the African soul;¹⁰² the freeing of the colonised mindset and voice around the world may be more difficult than political freedom. Yet it is vital for all of us because the crimes of colonialism aren't limited to formerly colonised countries. We have all been fed inaccurate narratives about who we are and the position that we hold in the world.

For each of us, freedom lies in recapturing and telling our stories, not the prevalent narratives that the world would distract us with or impose on us. Setting our hearts to a loving God, not rival idols who would capture our hearts through the vices they shape. Recovering and voicing our stories in light of God's great redemption story is how we reclaim our power and agency.

The stories of millions of prophets

If we are to carve a new way through the current wealth and power dynamic, we must do this together. Not one of us can claim exclusive understanding or ownership of God's redemption story. As God gives pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to different people, communities and organisations, we each bring our piece and we link them together until the larger picture emerges. This means each of us finding our voices and in doing so, together reshaping our society and our souls. This is how we learn, humble ourselves, come back together rather than remaining forced apart. This is how we rise up as discerning listeners and courageous, prophetic storytellers, bringing our stories together against the powerful narratives that self-serve, that deflect and distract. Millions of prophets and storytellers across hundreds of thousands of churches aligned in God's redemption story will show us a vision and way to walk together. Our stories will repair broken dignity, enlarge our common identity and regain a richer understanding of our flourishing. Our stories will drive a restorative revolution.

⁹⁹ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'The danger of a single story' is one of the most shared and watched TED talks in history, having been seen more than 34 million times as of August 2023.

www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/

¹⁰⁰ Shiller (2019).

¹⁰¹ To read more, see Abundant Africa (2021) Chapter 5, Shift 1: 'From valuing growth to valuing wellbeing'.

¹⁰² Speaking at a workshop of the All Africa Conference of Churches on 2 July 2018.

Communities and societies transformed for a restorative economy

In this report, we envision a world in which communities and societies thrive. Where our governance structures and markets ensure that each of us has economic agency and access, so all of us can meet our basic needs and live within environmental limits. This restorative economy will be lived out locally, regionally and globally.

We believe this will be marked by growing and connecting:



Abundant churches and communities

Embodying Jesus locally



Abundant business models

Disrupting the current broken system and modelling restorative economies



A globally connected movement¹⁰³

Building collective power and a critical mass to achieve deep systemic and structural change

Abundant churches

Abundant churches and Christian groups are local groups of believers who are responding to the call of Jesus to live life to the full and embody him. We do this by creating inclusive and trusted spaces to reshape our sinful desires through new habits and practices; forming new virtues together; resisting greed and overconsumption, division and injustice; and living lives of generosity, reconciliation and hope.¹⁰⁴ This means: practising hospitality, including to the stranger; radical generosity in responding to the needs of our church and community; living life within environmental limits and repenting where we have been complicit in this unfair system; prophetically speaking truth into deception and apathy; living out hope in the face of despair. Learning how to love in community, through Spirit-led formation of our habits, will help us unlearn the habits formed among the brokenness of the world. The potential for transformation when God's people come together is at the heart of our message to Christians; in section 4 we explore abundant churches as core building blocks for change.

¹⁰³ A group of ordinary people acting with a common purpose for social, political or cultural change. Tearfund (2022b).

¹⁰⁴ Examples could include churches that have been through church and community transformation (CCT), groups of households that decide to share goods and resources and actively care for each other and others outside the group, groups of families who want to support each other to bring up their children according to these principles, religious orders who are living simply and sharing what they have in common. For more details on the impact of CCT, see Tearfund's CCT impact study series (2023): <https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/series/cct-impact-study-series>

A story: Whole-community transformation in Nepal

Janak Kami is an elder at Pelma Church in Nepal and a member of the Dalit community. In Pelma village, there are 120 families from the Dalit community who traditionally face social discrimination and marginalisation in the country.

A few years ago, Janak joined in CCT training alongside facilitators from eight other churches. At the time, the village's remote location meant it had no access to drivable roads or telecommunications. But, through CCT training, Janak's vision for his community changed completely. He says, 'The training has enabled me to think about how God's mission is to participate in the gospel and community work, care for the environment and other sectors of the community for a better world.'



📷 Janak facilitates Sangasangai (CCT) sessions in Bible study groups.

Photo: Mr Uttam B.K. – Project Coordinator/Nepal Magar Society Service and Information Centre

Janak is now an active and passionate leader for social justice in his local community. He helped organise the repair of four damaged drinking water supplies, benefiting 35 communities. He negotiated with the regional telecommunication office: now a telephone line has been installed in the village. Soon, a mobile network will be connected too. Janak has been motivated to bring people together. Local people have accepted him as a leader. This respect is a positive sign that attitudes and behaviours towards members of the Dalit community are changing. CCT training helps to integrate people from the margins and to transform whole communities.

Janak has a vision to see the whole community benefit. The church has prepared an environmental action plan, which includes planting trees, managing solid waste, conserving water sources, and improving sanitation awareness at both personal and community levels. They are praying that the community can establish an apple-processing machine, and create new market opportunities. Janak also sees the need to scale up irrigation facilities for farmland and biodiversity conservation. All this is just the beginning. Small seeds sowing community transformation.

Abundant business models

Business can be part of shaping a restorative economy – and there are already examples of businesses (see below) contributing to the flourishing of society and creation. But we know this is far from the norm. To see this happen at a global scale, we need a reorientation of the purpose of business beyond solely profit, with strong accountability and transparency. What we would call ‘abundant businesses’ can and are already pioneering this approach. We define abundant businesses as being based on the practices of trust, transparency, accountability, generosity, mutuality, decent work and the triple bottom line (valuing profit, people and planet). Depending on the size and scope of these businesses, this might be outworked differently, but the practices of justice, cooperation and collaboration will challenge the exploitative legacies of colonialism. Where competition exists, it is to be built on cooperation and inclusive relationships that enable healthy supply chains and markets. Abundant businesses will create powerful alternative models to the dominant practices that are designed for maximising profit at the expense of all else. As these businesses connect and build networks with other businesses and civil society allies, their power will grow to advocate for change and widespread adoption. Churches and Christian groups have a central role to play in birthing and supporting abundant businesses.¹⁰⁵ Initial examples include: fair trading systems where workers’ rights are respected; inclusive circular businesses which eliminate waste and keep resources in use for as long as possible, while ensuring the rights of informal waste sector workers in recycling value chains are respected; B-corps which are for-profit companies that meet particular high standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency; self-help groups which enable members to access low-interest loans to set up or grow micro-enterprises; cooperatives of small-scale farmers.

A story: How climate-smart businesses transformed more than 200 communities

The Sustainable Environment for Agricultural Development (SEAD) Project in southern Rwanda supported farmers in 207 villages to use climate-smart techniques to improve their crop yields and create new income streams, including selling potatoes, tomatoes and beans at local markets. SEAD used the self-help group model, which brings together people in a community to save money together, so each can take out a low-interest loan to start or expand their own business.¹⁰⁶ They also often receive business training, pray and study the Bible together, and become a source of support and encouragement for each other. The aim of the SEAD project was to support and equip 30,000 people.

An evaluation in 2022 found that the SEAD project contributed to decreasing levels of extreme poverty, reduced hunger and improved nutrition across the communities involved. Precisely 29,998 people had benefited directly from the self-help groups; the number of people indirectly benefiting across the communities reached nearly 150,000.¹⁰⁷ Young people, particularly women, were pleased with the business and agricultural skills they had developed through it.

Jeane was one such woman. In a community where poverty can be a factor in girls sometimes being made to marry at a young age, Jeane was determined that she wouldn’t marry until she was independently financially stable. She used her loan to set up her own textile business, which has since thrived. In November 2022, Jeane made the choice to get married.

¹⁰⁵ For example, see www.africa.faithdrivenentrepreneur.org/

¹⁰⁶ Tearfund (2017).

¹⁰⁷ Tearfund (2023a).

A globally connected movement

Movements are the most effective approach to rebalancing power. They build collective influence at the grassroots – often among marginalised groups. They can develop constructive relationships between communities and policy-makers. They can mobilise when power looks to act with no care for the consequences, when it needs to be held to account. We need a movement to bring about systemic and structural change and release the dignity, agency and flourishing of each of us. A movement that follows in the footsteps of the indigenous land rights movement in Latin America, the anti-slavery, anti-colonial and anti-apartheid campaigners, and the US civil rights movement – Christians, people of all faiths, people of none, who came together to achieve what no one can alone.

A story: Starting the new millennium with a year of jubilee¹⁰⁸

'How shall we celebrate the millennium?' was a big question for many in the 1990s. Activist Isabel Carter sensed God's anger at the injustice of crippling debt for low-income countries, and sought answers. The seed of one came in a vision for 2000 to be a year of jubilee: starting the new century by cancelling the unpayable debts of the lowest-income countries. Over several years, the Jubilee 2000 campaign grew from a few disparate economists, debt campaigners and Christians into a movement across 40 nations. Members of the movement trained activists to start local campaigns and drew media attention through the backing of celebrities. The campaign combined the biblical idea of jubilee with an understanding of how global financial flows were channelling money from those in poverty to the wealthy.



Jubilee 2000 broke the record for the world's biggest petition, with more than 24 million signatures in total, from most of the world's countries. While the campaign didn't have the resources to become a globally organised movement or to win a bankruptcy process for countries (if it had, we might not be seeing the scale of debt crisis we are today), it did influence large-scale change. The combined pressure on political leaders led to the cancelling of more than \$100 billion of debt for 35 of the lowest-income countries. The cancelled debt reduced the power of international financial institutions to compel low-income governments to limit funding to vital services. Instead, the money freed from debt payments could be invested positively; for example, to immunise children against disease and abolish prohibitive school fees.

📷 Activists call for debt cancellation as part of the Jubilee 2000 campaign. Photo: Richard Hanson/Tearfund

We know a better story for the coming decades is possible – but it is by no means guaranteed. The scale of suffering experienced by so many of us – across divides of income, race, sex, age, countries, cultures and backgrounds – is so great that many who appeared shielded from it are now recognising the reality: our economics and politics are fundamentally flawed and only drastic action will allow us to conserve enough of nature to sustain life – including our own.

This moment which looks full of difficulty and hopelessness is a critical window for hundreds of thousands of churches, Christians and communities around the world to act.

¹⁰⁸ See Carter (2018) for the full story.

4 How do we get there?

The role of the church

As the body of Christ, the church embodies Jesus in the world. We are heirs to the new covenant brought into being through his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus as the Word of God was there at the beginning – when God made his first covenant with creation. As Jesus became flesh, the church is called to be fully incarnational in this world. Jesus died and his body was resurrected, and so we are called to die to ourselves and join with him in reconciling all things to himself, ‘whether things on earth or things in heaven’ (Colossians 1:20).

We believe that God has placed us in a world with sufficient resources for each of us to live out our God-given potential. And as we see those resources captured and used unjustly and unequally, God invites, calls and mandates the church to embody Jesus locally and to connect globally to see his kingdom come.

We sow. And God multiplies (2 Corinthians 9:10).

And no soil is exempt. If we are to grapple with the issues of power we face, we need to dismantle the notion of the sacred and secular divide. The church is to pursue Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation with God, with ourselves, with each other and with the rest of creation. We do this – with the Holy Spirit’s leading – through being salt and light.

As salt in society, we act locally, creating abundant communities and churches that infuse society with virtues of selflessness, grace, generosity and simplicity – obeying Jesus’ commandment to love others as we love ourselves.

As a light, a city on a hill, the church can embody with integrity the change we want to see. This means the church living out good news to a broken world, being responsible consumers, reducing plastic use and carbon emissions, caring well for biodiversity on church land. This means the church being a united and powerful movement across places, nations and cultures, prophetically speaking God’s truth to power and modelling Jesus’ inclusion of those in the margins of society.

All this has both local and worldwide implications. The body of Christ isn’t housed in one country or region. It crosses national borders and boundary lines. It is truly global. At the same time, it is deeply rooted in localness. Local people with local needs. Local communities, welcoming the stranger. Welcoming Christ.

What a powerful witness this could be in a world wracked with division, nationalism and self-interest. The church unifying and connecting across borders. Acknowledging injustices – and our own complicity in them. Calling on those in power to bring about deep, wide and systemic change. The church is powerful when it speaks with a shared voice.



📷 Young Christians in Bolivia campaign for action on plastic pollution and creation care. Photo: Miriam Moreno/Tearfund

Confronting suffering, poverty, injustice and environmental breakdown requires us to engage in the messy business of democratic politics. This is the way we peacefully negotiate solutions to the common problems we face, problems that God is passionately concerned about. But often states do not create democratic spaces, instead acting oppressively and violently. In these contexts, the church is responding creatively and courageously to undermine oppression through feeding those who are hungry and restoring creation.

A story: The church modelling creativity and courage in the face of persecution

Some of us live in contexts where the church in particular is limited in the kinds of social or political engagement it can have without serious repercussions. The work of movements in these countries is often hidden for security reasons – but they have much to teach the rest of us about acting with courage and creativity. In one country, movement allies decided to start local businesses and charities. The local government and community see the value of this work. This builds rapport and trust. One leader of a large church network mobilised 20 rural-based Christians to grow organic produce, and affluent city-based churches to buy the produce at a premium price. The farmers prospered economically and in the respect of their community, and many started to farm organically and became Christians. These allies have trained more than 100 other organisers to take a similar approach, reaching one in three of the country’s provinces. Hundreds of thousands of activists in communities, para-church organisations, universities and seminaries are now acting for a restored economy.

In traditionally democratic societies, the church and civil society are also facing worrying new restrictions on democratic and peaceful protest, while problems such as the climate crisis go unaddressed. Jesus was an agent of change who used civil disobedience as a means of challenging the existing structures of power and revealing the injustice inherent in them.¹⁰⁹ By participating in meals with sinners, he challenged the norms of his time. Jesus' confrontations with religious authorities, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees, highlight his opposition to their legalistic approach to religion and their abuse of power. Through his ministry, Jesus showed that it was possible to resist authority in a way that was both non-violent and effective, and that this resistance could be a powerful tool for change. Jesus' example as an agent for change, revealing injustice and challenging excessive power, is our model for a restorative revolution.

Abundant churches

A restorative economy can only happen when the people of God come together. This is how we actively resist the narratives and practices of greed and competition between individuals. This is how we see more of God's ongoing redemption story and unlock a fuller understanding of flourishing for ourselves, each other and the rest of God's creation. How hard or easy this is for us may depend on our worldview. We may be able to draw from the richness of our culture's relational values (such as *ubuntu* across Africa,¹¹⁰ *buen vivir* in Latin America,¹¹¹ or the ancient Scottish Gaelic principle of *dùthchas*¹¹²). We may need to wrestle with excessive individualism. Either way, each of us needs to align with God's story of restored relationships and embrace the model of community we read about in Acts 2:42–47.

Our call and aim is to nurture abundant churches that centre on the intrinsic human dignity and interconnectedness of each of us, rather than seeing each other as competitors, consumers or simply market actors. These churches and Christian groups reflect the reality that our own thriving depends on the flourishing of each other and the rest of creation.

These communities of the people of God are marked by: relationship, not isolation; co-creation, not extraction; simplicity, not overconsumption; flourishing, not destruction; peace, not division; and freedom, not captivity.

These are not new ideas; they are ancient ways of being, locally expressed for the times we are in now.

They may feel uncomfortable. We may have to reckon with how we have been influenced, how we have absorbed distorted ideas as theology and settled for the distraction of materialism, the limits of disconnection and, in some cases, the habits of exploitation. For many of us, our human sinful desires have both influenced and been influenced by the powers and principalities of excessive consumerism. This drives our society to more extractive, distrustful and self-interested behaviour. This in turn drives markets to the greater accumulation of power, hoarding of wealth and the accompanying environmental destruction. This – partly through colonialist power and practices – has seeped into much of church theology and practice around the world.

In the past, there has been a focus on changing social norms to drive the shifts we seek. But we recognise that transformation needs to start somewhere deeper. As Christians, we know that the fundamental problem, which ultimately leads to the brokenness and suffering in the world, is the condition of the human

¹⁰⁹ Myers (1987).

¹¹⁰ *Ubuntu* can be summarised as 'I am because we are'. We are human because we belong to, participate in and share our society. This extends to caring for the natural ecosystems of which we are a fully dependent part. Read more in: Abundant Africa (2021).

¹¹¹ This is translated as 'good life' and speaks to a concept of community, interdependence and relational harmony with creation and one another. Thacker (2022).

¹¹² An ancient Scottish Gaelic term describing the deep interconnectedness between people, land and other living creatures.

heart (Matthew 12:33–35). We need to be willing to examine honestly where we have been shaped by worldly narratives, where we have been complicit in injustice, where we see brokenness within ourselves.

The invitation of scripture and the wisdom of the Christian tradition is that we are not to wait passively for a ‘change of heart’, but rather we are to ‘train’ ourselves to be godly (1 Timothy 4:7). In the practice of spiritual disciplines, we do not seek to earn or merit God’s grace but rather actively and intentionally position ourselves to continuously receive and be transformed by it. These disciplines create space in our lives where God’s grace can flow freely and shape us into the image of Christ.¹¹³ In this grace-driven process, the practice of spiritual disciplines reshapes our worldview (into a more biblical vision) and reorders the desires of our hearts (towards Jesus and his kingdom) and cultivates ‘virtue’ (ie when ‘wise and courageous choices have become “second nature”¹¹⁴). This active process of character transformation helps us align with God’s desires and intentions for us: justice, connection with the whole of creation, the love and fellowship of others. This is what it means to see our broken relationships restored. This is what it means to re-covenant with God, ourselves, each other and creation.

Through the people of God together embodying this variety of godly habits, practices and virtues, we unleash and exchange ‘goods’ that will never be available through existing market practices. One of us demonstrates radical generosity in love. Another person reciprocates. These goods aren’t scarce; they have enormous potential for multiplication. The more one of us has and gives, the more others are likely to have. Only in community do we – and the natural world – flourish.¹¹⁵ This is how we sow. More creates more. And by being salt, we infuse our community around us and wider society with these virtues as well as connecting nationally, regionally and globally in a movement for change that challenges ‘principalities and powers’.

Sowing may require sacrifice; to release life, a seed must first be buried (John 12:24). It might require the relinquishing of lifestyle, of power for some of us. It might feel like a form of death, but it is the good and better way.

Sowing will require courage. Seeds are precious – and so sowing them is a gamble. We don’t always know how or where they will land. But to sow is an act of belief in tomorrow, in the years to come. It is in these acts of sowing that we bear witness to the coming kingdom.

Sowing will be imperfect. We recognise that we still live with the consequences of the Fall. We will need to repent, forgive, keep going with the Holy Spirit’s help. We must sow humbly – a word that reminds us that we are of the earth.

Sowing will feel slow. Our reciprocation is not based on a contract, but on trust. This isn’t immediate, but occurs over time in relationship, in community, in church. We need to have resilience, stickability. We’ll be in it for the long haul. Sowing faithfully, knowing we may not be the ones who reap the harvest in our lifetime.

¹¹³ Cf Willard (1988); Foster (1980); Smith (2009).

¹¹⁴ Wright (2010) p 21. Cf Brown (2016).

¹¹⁵ Theos, CAFOD and Tearfund (2010).

A story: Bringing back the buffalo as part of reconciliation with Canada's First Nation¹¹⁶

Two hundred years ago, nearly 45 million buffalo roamed free in Canada. They were a symbol of life in First Nations culture. But as the lands were colonised, Canadian and American governments believed that by wiping out this key food source they could also wipe out the First Nations. Buffalo herds were hunted to near extinction.

Unfortunately, the church has also been a deep source of pain for many First Nations people, following decades of mistreatment and abuse including unmarked graves and residential schools used to isolate First Nations children. Recognising the need for a multi-generational reconciliation process, the Bring Back the Buffalo project was born.

Tearfund Canada and Loko Koa, an indigenous ministry, are partnering to plant at least ten sustainable buffalo herds with the Cote First Nation as an act of reconciliation, cultural identity restoration, friendship and love for God and his creation. On 13 December 2021, 24 buffalo were introduced to Cote First Nation land – roaming it for the first time in more than 150 years. Many of the elders burst into tears at the sight. In spring 2022, the first 14 calves were born. Loko Koa is providing training in caring for the herd as well as modelling cultural pride and understanding of indigenous identity. The growing buffalo herd is a source of learning and reconciliation between First Nation members and settlers, with school groups coming to see the buffalo and learn. When this herd reaches 100 buffalo, a new herd can be gifted to another group of First Nation peoples.



📷 Bringing back the buffalo as part of reconciliation with Canada's First Nation.
Photo: Wayne Johnson/Tearfund

Chief George Cote says: 'It's really a blessing to bring back what was taken from us. As a believer in Jesus Christ, I'm so grateful for our coming together to understand one another and understand how our cultures can work together to make this all possible.'

¹¹⁶ To find out more, see <https://tearfund.ca/coteproject/>

A growing and connected movement

We need to usher in a restorative future that dismantles the ‘new corruption’ of power and wealth – and this level of change has never been achieved by one person or group on their own. Revolution means to turn, to create wide-ranging change in favour of a new system. The world has seen an agricultural revolution and an industrial revolution, both of which drove wide-reaching changes to economies and creation. This decade, we urgently need wide-reaching change to create a fairer economic system in which each of us can meet our basic needs and creation is to be protected, not plundered. We need a restorative revolution. So abundant churches and Christian groups are at the heart of change but are not the limit of it. And abundant businesses are key to reshaping the global economy – but not on their own. For the local transformative impact of communities and businesses to become global, it needs to be joined up with others. We need a movement to influence the centre of social, economic and political life. Logical reasoning alone will not cut it. Powerful and persuasive sermons, hard-hitting research and enticing advertising campaigns all have key parts to play in shaping a restorative economy but they are not enough to achieve systemic change, without a movement of people alongside them.

The church can be the beating heart of such a movement.

This is how the world changes – through diverse groups voluntarily coming together with their varied resources, behind a common goal.¹¹⁷ As a movement connects and grows, we understand that we don’t need to be thwarted by governments that fail to act or powerful and wealthier authorities that fail to stand aside. A strong movement is one that creates bonds of cooperation and collaboration with others in civil society, especially those on the margins in lower-income countries and those from marginalised communities such as women, youth, people living with disabilities, indigenous peoples and communities of colour. Just like the Good Samaritan, connecting globally means crossing – rather than becoming defined or rejected by – ethnic, national or divisional boundaries. It is when all of us, in our world’s diverse communities, grasp and use our collective influence to drive the powerful to relinquish excessive power that change happens.

Abundant churches and businesses can change our societies and markets when connected in an abundant mass movement around a shared story and a shared vision for change. By disrupting what’s broken, by coming against the principalities and powers, by modelling and advocating for restorative solutions, the church as a global movement – and the most powerful agent for change in the world – can shape the transformation of global and regional markets, large businesses, governments and their institutions.

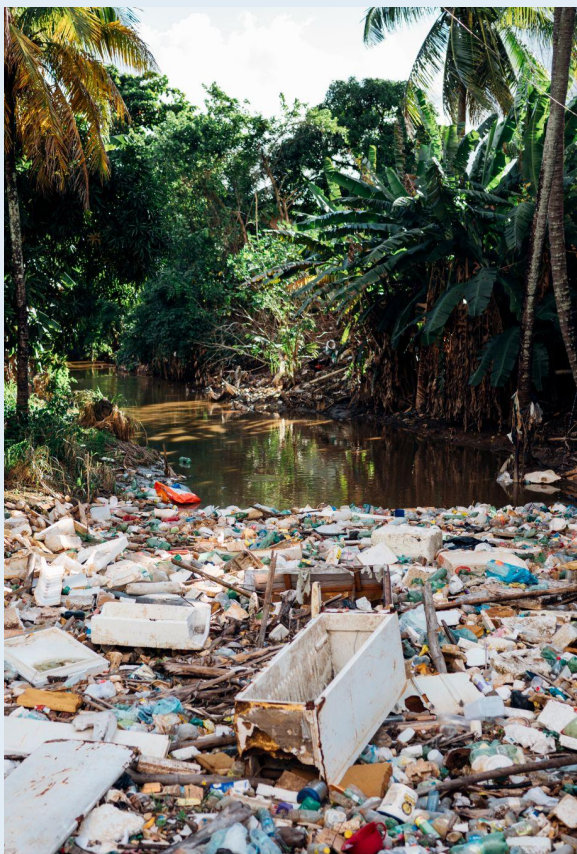
And so we shift from extreme inequality and poverty to the freedom for each of us and the rest of creation to thrive. Markets and businesses that are managed, regulated and directed towards the good of all. A system that constrains market and government power, protects our natural world and provides all of us with good-quality, affordable and accessible essential services (such as healthcare and education), and livelihoods that are creative, purposeful, beneficial and justly compensated.

This is how we can be part of God’s heart for justice and call to see a restorative economy made real on earth.

¹¹⁷ Ephesians 4:16 speaks about the body of Christ and the concept of diverse groups coming together for a common purpose. It states, ‘From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.’ This passage reflects the idea of diverse groups voluntarily coming together and using their varied resources behind a common goal, as mentioned in the argument. It emphasises the importance of unity and collaboration to bring about change. Additionally, Acts 2:42–47 describes the early Christian community and their commitment to communal living, sharing resources and caring for one another. This passage highlights the power of a connected movement and the impact it can have on society. It states, ‘All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need...’ This example of mutual support and collaboration can support the argument’s vision for a restorative economy driven by cooperation and solidarity.


A story: Clean river, healthy city in Brazil

The Tejipió River in Recife, Brazil, runs through a neighbourhood called Coqueiral, which serves a nearby informal settlement, Sapó Nú; a tightly packed warren of alleys with limited sanitation and waste-collection systems. The Tejipió was filled with waste, causing the river to regularly burst its banks after heavy rains, spreading disease and causing extensive damage to homes and businesses. With the support of Tearfund partner Instituto Solidare, several local pastors worked together to develop an effective emergency response plan to support those most badly affected when it flooded. But the pastors, community members and Instituto Solidare had ambition to stop the river from flooding altogether.



They began gathering local churches, schools, community leaders, families and individuals, and met with academic institutions and local government officials. Together, they researched the issue and made a campaign plan. The growing movement wanted better waste management and recycling, and the regular cleaning and protection of the river. They established the Rio Limpo Cidade Saudável (Clean River, Healthy City) campaign.

In 2017, 500 community members walked along the river to nearby government buildings to present their officials with a petition containing 13,000 signatures. Church and community members also cleaned up parts of the river to draw public attention to the issue. In response to the growing pressure, local authorities put in place a cleaning and dredging programme for the river. A year later, the community was able to celebrate when the Tejipió river did not flood as usual after heavy rains.

 Instituto Solidare's 'clean river, healthy city' project is working to clean up the river Tejipió, which is clogged with plastic waste. Photo: Ruth Towell/Tearfund

Flooding, made worse by waste, still threatens the residents of Coqueiral and Sapó Nú. To continue to hold decision-makers to account, the community has created the Popular Forum of the Tejipió River as a strong space to build power and demand that communities and the river have their rights respected by the government. In 2022, the government included the Rio Limpo campaign in the city's government plan for the first time, allocating resources to create a flood park in the area where flooding currently occurs and families living on the river bank received new homes. This is part of a long-term struggle to address structural inequalities and injustices: the right to housing; waste management; environmental racism; building sustainable cities; and public commitment to the environment. Instituto Solidare, the local churches and the Forum remain committed to fighting for their rights and for the river.

5 What does a restorative economy look like?

‘It may be true that morality cannot be legislated but behaviour can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me but it can restrain him from lynching me; and I think that is pretty important also. And so, while the law may not change the hearts of men, it does change the habits of men if it is vigorously enforced, and through changes in habits, pretty soon attitudinal changes will take place and even the heart may be changed in the process.’

Martin Luther King Junior

Church leader and civil rights activist

A restorative economy is one where each of us has the economic agency and power to meet our basic needs while protecting the earth’s life-support systems. To achieve this, we need transformation in decision-making and economic systems alongside change in communities and human hearts. Churches and communities – as part of a growing and connected movement – can act for and call on governments, businesses and multilateral organisations to deliver this kind of large-scale change.

Three key strategic shifts across our societies, governance and economies are needed. These transformational shifts – and the policy recommendations within them – have been identified from wide, international consultation as well as drawing on research and learning from the past decade (see Appendix 1 for more details). They are:

1

From exclusion and elite power to inclusion and agency for all.

A rebalance of power between citizens, communities, governments and business. Accountability, transparency, equity, inclusion and trust at the heart of a system that serves.

2

From hoarded wealth and extreme poverty to dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives.

Work and livelihoods that are creative, fairly paid and beneficial. An economy that works for us all.

3

From extraction and degradation to flourishing for the whole of creation.

The worst of the climate catastrophe averted. The wholeness of people and the richness of the natural world restored.

The five recommendations within each shift (see below) are not an exhaustive list, but they are examples of the scale and type of transformation possible and needed to move us closer to a restorative economy. No single person, group or influencing approach can make all these shifts a reality; they will need each of us to play our part and to bring our Spirit-led creativity and wisdom. They will need collective action for change. In contexts where influencing a government is too risky to people and civil society, or there is no stable government to influence, then the people of God could unify across borders to support local communities in their priorities and actions. We explore these recommendations more below (and then give further detail in Appendix 1).

We live in a world of finite – and devastated – resources. Across all three shifts, we seek to curb and rebalance extreme power, resource use and wealth. This will require sacrifice and redistribution – because if one of us uses our economic power at the expense of some of us meeting our basic needs or at the expense of the natural world, then that is not the restorative economy. Those of us (individuals, communities, businesses, governments and their institutions) with disproportionate power, resources, material goods and wealth will need to have less of those things. This may be a hard reality to accept – but it is as necessary for our souls as it is for our world.

In all this, our message remains: the only way forward is together. The challenges we face are global challenges in need of global solutions. The wave of divisive nationalism across many countries serves none of us; we need to work together on the things that unite rather than divide. This doesn't just require multiple actors to play their part. This is about doing so with greater cooperation and connection for the good of everyone. Becoming more than the sum of our parts. This means a new era of multilateralism – where states and institutions not only work together for the good of the whole of creation, but also are influenced by those at the grassroots, particularly women, indigenous peoples and youth, who are already advocating, often across boundaries, for a restored economy. And it means a new era of accountability – for all of us, but particularly for national governments and businesses. It is not enough for them to make grand collective commitments: they need to implement them, transparently and to the highest standard. Otherwise not only does injustice go unaddressed, trust in politics breaks down. This is key for shared commitments to become our lived reality. To shift us towards a restorative economy.

From exclusion and elite power to inclusion and agency for all

Our governance systems need reform to effectively address the interconnected and urgent problems we face. Where wealth and power have been the driving dynamic of the current broken system, accountability, equity, inclusion and trust should be at the heart of a restored one. This means enabling each of us – and particularly those who have been marginalised such as young people, women, indigenous peoples, Black people and other people of colour, and people living with disabilities – to take part in the processes, decision-making and activities that affect our daily lives, together.

It means governance systems, institutions and corporations that are accountable and transparent. It means dismantling oligopolistic power – where small numbers of corporations share disproportionate influence. It means civil society space that is nurtured and valued, and environmental and human rights defenders and indigenous communities that are safe and free to live and act. And it means a movement that continues to hold those who govern to account.



📷 Negotiators discuss a treaty on plastic pollution at a UN summit in Paris. Photo: Adam Aucock/Tearfund

Churches and Christian groups can influence for governments to:

1. **Ensure that ordinary citizens and civil society have protected rights and spaces to participate in decision-making** as a step towards transparent and accountable government decision-making
2. **Protect the rights** of individuals and groups of environmental and human rights defenders
3. **Work together to prevent excessive corporate power** by strengthening and implementing UN rules on business practices
4. **Reduce the power of large-scale agribusinesses** by preventing them from stockpiling and artificially raising food prices, and by changing laws that prevent farmers from saving their own seeds
5. **Work together to create and implement an equitable and inclusive framework of laws and trade and investment regulations** that protect the rights and prioritise the needs of all communities and the environment

From hoarded wealth and extreme poverty to dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives

We need to rewire our economies so those of us – particularly women and youth – who are trapped in unemployment, underpaid or unfairly treated can instead pursue decent, creative and fairly paid livelihoods. We also need to move from wasteful and carbon-intensive practices to a circular, low-carbon economy. The good news is this: a more sustainable economy has huge potential to create dignified livelihoods. Sustainable sectors¹¹⁸ have particular potential for youth employment; an additional 8.4 million jobs could be created globally by 2030.¹¹⁹

In a restored economy, trade will deliver not just for a small wealthy elite, but for all of us – including those of us around the world who are female, who are young, who work the land, who craft with our hands. It will be marked by fairer access to markets and greater transparency.



📷 A Tearfund project turns plastic waste into bricks in DRC. Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

It is time for governments to shake off decades of failed ideology and wealthy elite influence and do the right thing: use the tax tools at their disposal to turn back the tide of rising inequality and environmental destruction. Too often, tax systems leave excessive wealth in the hands of the few, disincentivise jobs and incentivise waste and pollution. Addressing this isn't the whole answer to creating a restorative economy, but it plays a key role in striking to the heart of the injustices that drive so many of the crises we face.

¹¹⁸ Sustainable sectors are defined as green (those that look after the land and its resources) and blue (those that look after oceans and their resources).

¹¹⁹ ILO (2022a).

We need to end unjust tax behaviour and recover the billions of dollars of public money that we lose every year. That money could mean clean water for 17 million more of us and basic sanitation for 34 million of us each year.¹²⁰ Over a decade, it could prevent the deaths of 600,000 children and 73,000 mothers.¹²¹ Investing in health, education, and water and sanitation sectors would also create tens of millions more jobs.¹²²

We know that it is not enough to look at government revenue (when so many countries are in debt crisis) or rely on government promises (which are too often broken). Reforming international financial systems, such as those of the World Bank, is key to creating a fairer economy (and help these institutions to address the problems of their post-colonialist policies). It would begin to free up the scale of funding needed for the global challenges we face.¹²³

Churches and Christian groups can influence for governments to:

- 1. Invest in sustainable jobs and livelihoods by:**
 - investing in decent work in sustainable sectors, with a particular focus on young people and women
 - investing in life-transforming sectors such as health, education, clean energy, food security, water and sanitation
 - investing in an inclusive circular economy
- 2. Work together to make trade work for everyone, within environmental limits, by:**
 - implementing just trade policies that will boost regional trade and protect against exclusive control of markets
 - reforming international trade law to enhance environmental protection and boost sustainable markets
- 3. Work together to clamp down on unjust and secretive tax behaviour through:**
 - increasing tax transparency by country-by-country reporting on data
 - closing tax havens in wealthy countries
- 4. Tax, subsidise and spend for a restorative economy by:**
 - taxing extreme wealth and one-off profits to stop crisis profiteering
 - investing those taxes in government spending on life-transforming sectors, such as health, education, clean energy, food security, water and sanitation
 - reducing taxes on labour and increasing taxes on resource use and pollution
 - ending tax breaks and subsidies for fossil fuels
- 5. Work together to reform the international financial system by:**
 - reforming the governance of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to make it more democratic and representative
 - tackling unsustainable debt, including through debt cancellation for nations that need it and restructuring for fairer lending and borrowing

¹²⁰ Tax Justice Network (2022).

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² ILO (2022a).

¹²³ Estimates reach the trillions by 2030 for climate finance needed to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. This finance is vital to resource people – particularly those of us who did the least to cause this crisis. Failure to do so could see greater division and geopolitical tension, as well as jeopardising the lives of millions.

From extraction and degradation to flourishing for the whole of creation


A restorative economy will be one where everyone, our communities and God's creation flourish. It will be powered by a fair and clean energy transition and will avoid the worst of the climate catastrophe. To do this, we need to end the era of the fossil fuels that drive this crisis. Global emissions must be halved in this decade and reach net zero by 2050 – at the very latest. Wealthier and high-emitting nations are more responsible for this crisis and have the most capacity to act; they must make the most urgent and deepest emissions cuts.

Those of us on the frontline of the climate crisis need the finance (grants, not debt-increasing loans) and support to adapt and protect ourselves from increasing disasters.

The transition to clean energy can and must avoid the pitfalls of extractive industries; instead it should create decent jobs, and protect land rights and the environment. This should be part of a wider shift to a circular economy which drives a dramatic reduction in resource use and plastic pollution. We need a step change in political priorities and frameworks, so governments put economies at the service of wider goals. But this also requires a cultural and social transformation where our aspirations and desires are for greater connection not greater consumption. To learn how to live life to the full, abundant in love, generosity, relationships, truth and grace, like Jesus.

In all of this, we need to address who owns and benefits from the land – which for so many of us carries our stories, our cultures and our communities – and its resources. A restorative economy will be one where the breadth and beauty of God's biodiversity is restored. And where our global food system protects the natural world and enables those of us producing the world's food to have enough to eat ourselves.



 A woman inspects her flourishing crops in the village of Simonkro, central Côte D'Ivoire.
Photo: Thiombiano Diodyadibi Emmanuel Benjamin/Tearfund

With all of this change, how will we know a restorative economy when we see it? We need to move away from relying on measuring Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – which rewards the very things that don't serve us¹²⁴ – to better assessments of progress that look at the health of the whole person, community and environment, not just the acquisition of wealth. In a restorative economy we will measure what matters: seeing God's kingdom come in our communities, institutions, cities and nations.

Churches and Christian groups can influence for governments to:

- 1. Deliver climate justice** through:
 - implementing national climate plans to limit heating to as close to 1.5°C as possible
 - working together to support a global treaty to end fossil fuels and accelerate a clean energy transition
 - working together to ensure wealthier nations deliver their fair share of finance for minimising and adapting to the climate crisis – and that those funds reach the communities that need it most
 - implementing agreed collective targets to reduce the risk of disasters
- 2. Agree a UN global treaty on plastic pollution** to:
 - deliver ambitious plastic reduction, reuse, recycling and waste management plans
 - ensure a just transition for informal waste sector workers
- 3. Reform land use and food production** through:
 - putting farmers, local communities, indigenous peoples, pastoralists and fisherfolk at the centre of decision-making about food systems
 - shifting finance away from chemical fertilisers and towards sustainable local food systems
 - ensuring secure, inclusive and fair access to land and land-tenure systems
- 4. Restore biodiversity and resist nature loss** by implementing and funding collective commitments under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity
- 5. Measure what matters** through using tools other than GDP to measure the flourishing and protection of people and the natural world

¹²⁴ For example: measuring GDP favours things we don't want: crime (the costs of policing it and repairing its damage); pollution (and then spending on cleaning it up); war (making tools for it and then profiting from the reconstruction that may follow).

Your invitation

What stories will be told of the 21st century? The choices we make in this critical and opportune moment have the potential to usher in a restorative economy in which everyone can flourish and God's natural world thrives. This report includes many ideas for this. It is not perfect or complete; it needs each of us to grapple with what it means for us and to sow our story, our lament, our worship, our hope and our power together and to see where new life emerges.

It may be personally costly. It can require humility and sacrifice to live and learn in community. It might require the letting go of personal preferences or power. It may feel slow, particularly in the face of the threats we face. It may require courage, to press on believing that we will see the goodness of God in the land of the living.

People of God around the world, this is your invitation to be part of a restorative revolution.

To re-covenant with God, ourselves, each other and creation. This means examining your heart with the Holy Spirit's leading. Engaging your local church and community to be salt in society; acting locally to obey Jesus' commandment to love others as we love ourselves. And being light, a city on the hill and a powerful witness into a world wracked with division and self-interest.

It's an invitation into the story of what is possible when millions of Christians across hundreds of thousands of churches follow Jesus with our whole lives. The church as a global movement, building collective power and shaping the transformation of societies, economies and politics. And holding each other and the powerful to account.

And as Tearfund, we offer our pledge to you – that we remain steadfast in our commitment to this movement. We repent of our mistakes, where we have upheld power in the wrong places. We commit to keep changing ourselves, and to be ready to challenge our own power, to keep listening, to keep learning.

Together, we can sow in love, faith and hope to bring us closer to a restorative economy. To see God's kingdom come.

On earth, as in heaven.

Appendix 1:

Policy recommendations for a restorative economy

These recommendations are not an exhaustive list, but are drawn from international consultation and if implemented would move us closer to a restorative economy. In all this, our message remains: the only way forward is together. The challenges we face are global challenges in need of global solutions.

From exclusion and elite power to inclusion and agency for all

Our governance systems need reform to enable them to effectively address the interconnected and urgent problems we face. Global challenges require globally negotiated solutions and agreements, which means we need to call for effective intergovernmental collaboration along with government and corporate accountability. We also need the participation of ordinary citizens and civil society at all levels of decision-making so that power is dispersed and implementation localised.

We need national governments to:

- 1. Ensure that ordinary citizens and civil society have protected rights and spaces to participate in decision-making as a step towards transparent and accountable government decision-making.** Participation spaces (such as citizens' assemblies) can create meaningful citizen participation in decision-making processes and generate real and relevant solutions. Government should protect, by law and practice, the rights necessary for citizens and civil society actors to operate, including the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and peaceful assembly and association and the right to participate in public affairs, including online.¹²⁵ Governments should also create national and local multi-stakeholder dialogues, which rebalance power between citizens, the state and business, and make them mutually accountable to each other.
- 2. Protect the rights of individuals and groups of environmental and human rights defenders.** Environmental and human rights defenders are often the target of unaccountable extractive companies keen to maximise their gains from increasingly limited natural resources. We all – whether we realise it or not – benefit from and need their frontline defence; and their rights – and lives – should be protected.
- 3. Work together to prevent excessive corporate power by strengthening and operationalising the UN's Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices adopted by the General Assembly in 1980.** This is key to preventing corporations from concentrating market power in the hands of the few to the detriment of the many. This should include appropriate institutional support such as a global competition authority.
- 4. Reduce the concentration and abuse of power of large-scale agribusiness.** This includes: changing laws that prevent farmers from saving and exchanging their own seeds; limiting excessive speculation on food commodities in times of crisis; and preventing companies from stockpiling and artificially inflating food prices.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ See here for a list of nine core international human rights instruments:

www.ohchr.org/en/core-international-human-rights-instruments-and-their-monitoring-bodies

¹²⁶ For more details, see CAFOD (2022) discussion paper at:

<https://cafod.org.uk/about-us/policy-and-research/food-systems-and-agriculture/food-system-reform>

- 5. Work together with other governments to create and implement an equitable and inclusive framework of laws and trade and investment regulations that protect the rights and prioritise the needs of all communities and the environment.** This includes ensuring that there is an effective, legally enforceable human rights framework of laws that applies to multinational businesses in their cross-border operations and supply chains.¹²⁷ Such a framework should ensure that the business imperative for profit is balanced with the imperatives of a safe climate and healthy environment, and that businesses ensure fundamental human and labour rights and protections (including freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, equal pay for work of equal value, and freedom from violence and harassment at work). Trade and investment agreements should prioritise the needs of all communities, not just business owners or investors. Corporate law should hold directors accountable to all stakeholders, not just shareholders. This framework should support alternative business ownership models that will prioritise the redistribution of wealth.

From hoarded wealth and extreme poverty to dignified, purposeful livelihoods and lives

A restorative economy is one where we all have enough while protecting the earth's life-support systems. This requires reorienting and rewiring our economies to create decent livelihoods and move from wasteful and high-emitting practices to a circular, low-carbon economy. It means making trade and markets work for all, not just a small, wealthy elite. It means governments using the tax tools at their disposal to address rising inequality and environmental destruction. This must be accompanied by meaningful collective efforts to clamp down on corporate tax avoidance and evasion, and other forms of illicit financial flows.

The growing intensity of the debt crisis is a clear sign that despite the successes of the debt cancellation movement in the early 2000s, a fundamental restructuring of the global lending and financial system is desperately needed. Multilateral development banks (MDBs) – which are set up by multiple countries, with national governments as their stakeholders, with a mandate to reduce global poverty – have the potential to step up to address global or regional challenges¹²⁸ (and doing so would help to reckon with their role in driving unequal post-colonialist policies). But right now their systems are too slow, too inflexible, too limited and too cautious. Reforming their practices and freeing up finance is key to reshaping a more fair financial infrastructure and leveraging the scale of finance needed in the face of global and cross-border challenges such as the climate crisis.¹²⁹

We need national governments to:

- 1. Invest in sustainable jobs and livelihoods and create an enabling environment where the private sector will invest in the jobs and livelihoods that people and the planet need.** This could be done by:

¹²⁷ In line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

¹²⁸ ODI (2023).

¹²⁹ Estimates reach the trillions by 2030 for the climate finance needed to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. This finance is vital to resource people – particularly those of us who did the least to cause this crisis. Failure to do so could see greater division and geopolitical tension, as well as jeopardising the lives of millions.

- **providing strategic investment in decent work in green and blue sectors, with a particular focus on young people.**¹³⁰ This will help foster labour-intensive growth and address the insecurity of the informal sector. An additional 8.4 million jobs for young people could be created by 2030 through the implementation of green and blue policy measures.¹³¹ Governments should complement this with a social protection floor that is designed to address women's needs particularly (given their disproportionate role in unpaid care) and support livelihoods (so it is cash-based, non-conditional, predictable and adequate), as well as being extended to the informal sector.
- **investing in health, education, water and sanitation.** These sectors can particularly benefit those of us who are young, through improving our employment prospects, our health and our education and training opportunities. They make it easier for those of us with family responsibilities to remain in the labour force. Investments in these sectors would create tens of millions of jobs. For example, health and education investment would create 17.9 million more jobs for young people by 2030, in care sectors (14.4 million jobs) and in other sectors (3.4 million jobs).¹³²
- **investing in an inclusive circular economy which is estimated to create around 8 million jobs for young people.**¹³³ A circular economy will make a big contribution to reducing our material footprint and the resultant climate emissions, but it must include and integrate those currently working in industries that need to be transformed, including the informal waste sector. The human rights of these workers need to be protected and respected in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). Growing repair and reuse sectors will be at the forefront of an inclusive circular economy. Lower-income countries in particular have the potential to leapfrog straight to an inclusive circular economy, avoiding the waste mountain that typically accompanies growth in the linear economy.¹³⁴

2. Work together to implement just trade policies that work for everyone, within environmental limits. This could be done by:

- **ensuring trade negotiations deliver for low- and middle-income countries** whose priorities include:¹³⁵ boosting regional trade such as the African Continental Free Trade Area; ending trade-distorting agricultural subsidies; a safeguard mechanism against dumping imports which disrupt local economies; WTO waivers on intellectual property provisions; and public stockholding for food security to allow developing countries to protect against volatile food prices.
- **reforming international trade law to ensure that it protects the climate and the natural world.** International trade law should:¹³⁶
 - provide enforceable guarantees that parties will have the freedom to develop and implement domestic law and policy that enhance environmental protection
 - include a core list of environmental principles to stop any weakening of environmental laws, including meaningful and enforceable commitments that prevent weakening or reducing environmental protection in trade agreements
 - include a requirement to support and strengthen environmental governance

¹³⁰ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines decent work as 'productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity'. In general, work is considered decent when it pays a fair income and guarantees a secure form of employment and safe working conditions. Green sectors are defined as land resources and their uses. Blue sectors are defined as ocean resources and their uses.

¹³¹ ILO (2022a).

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Schröder et al (2021).

¹³⁴ Gower and Schröder (2016).

¹³⁵ Trade Justice Movement (2023).

¹³⁶ Bergen and Box (2020).

- allow production subsidies for specific green products and technologies to boost sustainable markets

3. Clamp down on unjust and secretive tax behaviour by:

- **working together to increase tax transparency through country-by-country reporting data.** Tax transparency is urgently needed to fight the scourge of profit-shifting and recover the hundreds of billions of dollars of public money we all lose every year. A first step towards this would be to support the creation of a Centre for Monitoring Taxing Rights at a UN tax convention. The Africa Group has been leading on the draft resolution to the UN General Assembly to begin negotiations on such a tax convention. National governments, particularly those in the G20, who together represent 85 per cent of GDP and two thirds of the world's population,¹³⁷ should use their power to support this.
- **working together in multilateral spaces to reform international corporate taxation, beginning with a much more concerted effort to clamp down on tax havens in high-income countries.** This would include establishing a global asset registry to enable wealth taxes on the super-rich, and moving to a unitary taxation system that recognises that the profits of international corporations are generated collectively at the group level.

4. Tax, subsidise and spend for dignified livelihoods, a fair economy and a sustainable environment, by:

- **taxing extreme wealth – and investing these taxes to increase government spending on life-transforming sectors, such as healthcare, education, food security, renewable energy, water and sanitation.**¹³⁸ Governments should tax the wealth of the super-rich at rates high enough to systematically reduce extreme wealth and lower power concentration and inequality. This includes: permanently increasing taxes on the richest one per cent, for example to a minimum of 60 per cent of their income from both labour and capital, with higher rates for multi-millionaires and billionaires; taxing the wealth of the richest one per cent at rates high enough to bring down inequality; and introducing one-off taxes on excessive wealth and profits as well as much higher taxes on dividend payouts to stop crisis profiteering,¹³⁹ as we saw when fossil fuel companies profited from the global energy crisis.
- **reducing taxes on labour and increasing taxes on resource use and pollution.** This will foster an economy that creates many more decent jobs, particularly in eco-design, in repair and reuse; the kinds of jobs that are at the heart of a circular economy, where natural resources are protected and kept in use for as long as possible.
- **ending tax breaks and subsidies for fossil fuels and shifting to fostering investment in low-carbon, sustainable activities.** This should include tax breaks and subsidies for renewable energy, with a particular focus on decentralised energy and energy access initiatives that create good, local jobs, protect biodiversity through robust due diligence, strengthen the land rights of communities and indigenous peoples, and ensure stringent human and labour rights protections throughout the production chain.

5. Work together to reform the international financial system. The current system is out of date and dysfunctional and needs to be transformed to deliver representative, coordinated and sustainable finance and a set of rules for a restorative economy. This must include:

- **reforming the governance of the IMF and World Bank** to make it more democratic and representative
- **reducing risks of unsustainable debt by updating rules on responsible borrowing,** including private lenders

¹³⁷ OECD (2023).

¹³⁸ Christensen (2023).

¹³⁹ Ibid.

- **ensuring debt standstills, cancellations and restructurings are comprehensive and include private as well as public creditors.**¹⁴⁰ Large-scale debt cancellation across all creditors can provide immediate relief to nations that need it; this must be accompanied by wider debt restructuring for more responsible lending and borrowing.
- **enhancing debt crisis resolution**¹⁴¹
- **massively scaling up and reforming multilateral lending capacity** to focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which can also create an enabling environment for private investment focused on delivering the SDGs.

From extraction and degradation to flourishing for the whole of creation

A restorative economy will be one where everyone, our communities and God’s creation flourish. It will be powered by a fair and renewable energy transition and will avoid the worst of the climate catastrophe. Wealthier and high-emitting nations, with their greater responsibility and capacity, must make the most urgent and deepest emissions cuts. And they must step up to their responsibilities by delivering finance to the countries and communities made vulnerable by this climate crisis. As the frequency and severity of disasters increase, disaster risk reduction strategies and finance are desperately needed to protect lives, livelihoods and health. This should be complemented by a wider shift to a circular economy which drives a dramatic reduction in resource use and plastic pollution.

In all of this, we need to address who owns and benefits from our land and natural resources. We need a global food system that protects environmental breakdown and ensures that those who produce food also have enough to eat. That means protecting land rights and access. Legally recognised indigenous and community lands have been shown to be better at not only decreasing deforestation and carbon emission but actively restoring forests and storing carbon.¹⁴² And it means holding multinational corporations to account for their role in biodiversity loss, through extractive industries such as mining and infrastructure projects.

And finally, with all of this change, we need to learn how to measure the whole of creation’s flourishing. This means moving away from relying on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures the value of goods and services produced and sold in a country, to assess a nation’s progress. Economic activity needs to serve human flourishing: human flourishing should not be subservient to GDP. There have been moves to innovate and develop new methodologies,¹⁴³ but GDP persists as the dominant benchmark for success. We need fresh and fast momentum to accelerate the uptake of better measures – that explain and reflect how we see God’s kingdom come in our communities, institutions, cities and nations.

National governments need to:

1. Deliver climate justice through:

- **strengthening and implementing national climate plans to meet their collective commitment to limit heating to as close to 1.5°C as possible.** All national governments need to do this, but particularly those of high-emitting and wealthy nations. This will mean governments going well beyond the ambition of current policies and setting legally binding targets with clear implementation plans¹⁴⁴ and delivering on key sectors, including renewable energy, agriculture, forest and land use, energy efficiency and transport.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations (2023b).

¹⁴¹ Bonizzi et al (2020).

¹⁴² Walker et al (2020).

¹⁴³ For example, in 2021 a UN High-Level Committee on Programmes was tasked with developing a UN system-wide contribution looking beyond GDP. United Nations (2022b).

¹⁴⁴ Rogeli (2023).

- **working together to ensure wealthier nations deliver their fair share of finance for climate mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage, and to ensure these funds reach the countries and communities that need them most.** Climate justice means that the countries and communities least responsible for causing the climate crisis do not bear the costs of it. This finance should be new and additional to existing aid budgets, and should be primarily grants rather than loans (to avoid increasing the debt burden on nations). Frontline communities should be included in decision-making and implementation, and should be able to access funds in a predictable, transparent and accountable way. Delivering public finance, particularly collective commitments to deliver it, is one key step towards leveraging the scale of finance needed; governments should also support the unlocking of innovative sources of finance, such as windfall taxes and international financial reform (see the previous section).
- **national governments, subnational governments and cities coming together to support a global Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.**¹⁴⁵ This treaty would complement the Paris Agreement and calls for accelerating an equitable shift away from fossil fuels to affordable, abundant renewable energy for all. This is key to curbing the power of the fossil fuel industry and creating a low-carbon development pathway. International cooperation is needed to end the expansion of new fossil fuels, phase out existing fossil fuel production and accelerate a fair, equitable and just transition to clean energy. The transition to renewable energy can and must avoid the pitfalls of extractive industries; such investment should enhance meaningful opportunities for local people by creating good-quality and dignified jobs and livelihoods, and also protect biodiversity through robust due diligence, strengthen the land rights of communities and indigenous peoples, and ensure stringent human and labour rights protections throughout the production chain.
- **national governments implementing the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction** which works alongside the other 2030 Agenda agreements, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, and ultimately the Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁴⁶

2. Implement ambitious plastic reduction, reuse, recycling and waste management plans that ensure a just transition for informal waste sector workers through agreeing a UN global treaty on plastic pollution.¹⁴⁷

3. Reform land use and food production through:

- **national and local governments as well as intergovernmental forums putting farmers – including women farmers – local communities, indigenous peoples, pastoralists and fisherfolk at the centre of decision-making** about their livelihoods and food system governance. In this way, their knowledge and experience of their own environments and social contexts and cultural heritage can take the place of profit-driven interests.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

¹⁴⁶ www.unrrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework

¹⁴⁷ Tearfund (2023b).

¹⁴⁸ See CAFOD (2022) discussion paper at:

<https://cafod.org.uk/about-us/policy-and-research/food-systems-and-agriculture/food-system-reform>

- **national governments and bilateral and multilateral donors urgently reorienting finance away from chemical fertilisers and instead scaling up sustainable local food systems** that produce diverse nutritious crops (grown in harmony with the environment and resilient to climate change), support local markets and supply chains, and secure land rights.¹⁴⁹ There is growing evidence that agroecological approaches can be competitive in terms of total outputs. In particular, they are: resilient to environmental stress; can be used to increase production in regions where additional food is particularly needed; and can diversify diets and improve health.¹⁵⁰
 - **national governments ensuring secure, inclusive and equitable access to land and land-tenure systems for community lands and individual plots, particularly for women and indigenous communities.** This will help address inequalities in largely agriculture-based economies. Community ownership of land preserves it from being monopolised by elite powers.
- 4. Work together, along with subnational and local governments, to implement and fund their collective commitments to restore biodiversity and resist nature loss.** This is key to unlocking a ‘nature-positive economy’ which will bring environmental, economic and social flourishing. The globally agreed UN Convention on Biological Diversity (called CBD) agreed four targets by 2050,¹⁵¹ and funding to accelerate their delivery. But funding mechanisms need to be improved; of the \$200 billion committed at CBD negotiations in 2022, only \$30 billion per year by 2030 is set to flow from developed to developing countries.¹⁵² This is much too low. Additionally, there must be a move towards longer-term, more flexible funding, with a particular focus on growing local-level, community-oriented conservation groups.
- 5. Create and implement holistic tools for measuring flourishing, beyond GDP.** International, national and local governments should work together to use tools that measure the flourishing and protection of natural resources and people, rather than focusing just on GDP. They should involve inclusive processes that increase citizens’ participation and ensure equity for all participants. This will strengthen decision-making and implementation, and ensure they align with the needs and priorities of local communities.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ iPES-Food (2016).

¹⁵¹ The four targets to achieve by 2050 as agreed by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity at COP15 are: (a) preserve and restore ecosystems and halt human-induced extinction of known threatened species, (b) sustainably use biodiversity, (c) fairly and equitably share the benefits of genetic resources, and (d) ensure adequate means of implementing these goals for all parties.

¹⁵² A Rocha (2022).

Appendix 2:

Bibliography

Abundant Africa (2021) *Abundant Africa: Our decade to shape the African century*. <https://abundant.Africa/>

Ali Rajaeifar, Mohammad et al (2022) 'Decarbonize the military – mandate emissions reporting', *Nature*, vol 611. www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-03444-7.epdf

Almond, R E A, M Grooten, D Juffe Bignoli and T Peterson (2022) *Living Planet Report 2022 – Building a nature-positive society*, Switzerland: WWF. <https://livingplanet.panda.org/en-GB/>

A Rocha (2022) *UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15) Response*, London: A Rocha. <https://arocha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CBD-COP15-A-Rocha-Response.pdf>

Arteta, Carlos and Sergiy Kasyanenko (2022) 'Food insecurity and economic misery in low-income countries'. www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2022/07/01/food-insecurity-and-economic-misery-in-low-income-countries/

Bayer, Markus and Paul Rohleder (2022) *Global Militarisation Index 2022*, Bonn: BICC. www.bicc.de/publications/publicationpage/publication/global-militarisation-index-2022-1223/

Bergen, Ruth and Kierra Box (2020) *Alternative trade for the planet: aligning trade policy with climate and environmental goals*, London: Trade Justice Movement. www.tjm.org.uk/resources/reports/alternative-trade-for-the-planet

Bonizzi, Bruno, Christina Laskaridis and Jesse Griffiths (2020) *Private lending and debt risks of low-income developing countries*, London: ODI. https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/200615_private_lending_debt_risks.pdf

Brown, Kevin (2016) *Designed for Good: recovering the idea, language and practice of virtue*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers.

CAFOD (2022) *The global food system is broken. It needs to be reformed to tackle hunger, build resilience and protect our common home*, London: CAFOD. <https://cafod.org.uk/about-us/policy-and-research/food-systems-and-agriculture/food-system-reform>

CAFOD (2023) 'Five reasons why seed sovereignty matters'. <https://cafod.org.uk/news/campaigning-news/five-reasons-why-seed-sovereignty-matters>

Carter, Isabel (2018) *A Taste of Heaven: First steps for Jubilee 2000*, Exeter: Onwards and Upwards Publishers.

Castells-Quintana, David and Thomas McDermott (2023) *Inequality and Climate Change: The Within-Countries Distributional Effects of Global Warming*, New York: SSRN. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4357764>

Cavanaugh, William (2003) *Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time*, London: T&T Clark.

Centre for International Environment Law (2019) *Plastic and Climate: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet*. www.ciel.org/plasticandclimate/

Chancel, Lucas et al (2021) *World Inequality Report 2022*, Paris: World Inequality Lab. <https://wir2022.wid.world/>

Christensen (2023) *Survival of the Richest: How we must tax the super-rich now to fight inequality*, Oxford: Oxfam. www.oxfam.org/en/research/survival-richest

Coffey, Clare et al (2020) *Time to Care: Unpaid and underpaid care work and the global inequality crisis*, Oxford: Oxfam. <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620928/bp-time-to-care-inequality-200120-en.pdf>

Davies, Shawn, Therese Pettersson and Magnus Oberg (2023) 'Organised violence 1989–2022, and the return of conflict between states', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol 60 (4) pp 691–708. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00223433231185169>

De Pous, Pieter, Artur Patuleia, Sarah Brown and Chris Rosslowe (2022) *More renewables, less inflation: restoring EU economic stability through investment in renewables*, Ember. <https://ember-climate.org/app/uploads/2022/10/E3G-EMBER-Briefing-More-renewables-less-inflation.pdf>

Edelman Trust Institute (2023) *2023 Edelman Trust Barometer Global Report*. <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2023/trust-barometer>

Environmental Defence Fund (2023) 'What does California's flooding (and drought) have to do with climate change?' www.edf.org/article/what-has-californias-flooding-and-drought-got-do-climate-change

Evans, Alex and Richard Gower (2015) *The Restorative Economy: Completing our unfinished millennium jubilee*, Teddington: Tearfund. <https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/policy-reports/the-restorative-economy>

FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2022) *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0639en>

Fawcett, Rose, Lizzie Trotter, Iulian Gramatki and Will Watt (2023) *Church and community transformation (CCT) impact study series: Local church, lasting transformation*, London: State of Life and Tearfund. <https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/series/cct-impact-study-series/2022---local-church-lasting-transformation>

Fuller, Richard et al (2022) 'Pollution and health: a progress update', *The Lancet*, vol 6 (6). [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(22\)00090-0/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(22)00090-0/fulltext)

Furlong, Ashleigh, Sarah Anne Aarup and Samuel Horti (2022) 'Who killed the COVID vaccine waiver?', Politico, 10 November. www.politico.eu/article/covid-vaccine-poor-countries-waiver-killed/

Foster, Richard (1980) *Celebration of Discipline: The path to Spiritual Growth*, London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Global Witness (2022) *Decade of defiance: ten years of reporting land and environmental activism worldwide*. www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/decade-defiance/

Gower, Richard and Patrick Schröder (2016) *Virtuous Circle: How the circular economy can create jobs and save lives in low and middle-income countries*, Teddington: Tearfund.
<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/policy-reports/virtuous-circle>

Hickman, Caroline et al (2021) 'Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey', *The Lancet Planetary Health*, vol 5 (12) pp e863–e873. www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2542519621002783

ILO (2022a) *Global Employment Trends for Youth*, Geneva: International Labour Organisation.
www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_853321.pdf

ILO (2022b) *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2022*, Geneva: International Labour Organisation.
www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_834081.pdf

Institute for Economics & Peace (2023) *Global Peace Index 2023*.
www.visionofhumanity.org/resources/?type=research

International Energy Agency (2022) *World Energy Outlook 2022*.
www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2022

International Energy Agency (2023) 'The world's top 1% of emitters produce over 1000 times more CO2 than the bottom 1%'.
www.iea.org/commentaries/the-world-s-top-1-of-emitters-produce-over-1000-times-more-co2-than-the-bottom-1

International Fund for Agricultural Development (2023) 'Why rural people?'
www.ifad.org/en/investing-in-rural-people

IPCC (2022a) *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change, IPCC Sixth Assessment Report*, Geneva: IPCC. www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/

IPCC (2022b) *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, Geneva: IPCC.
www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/

IPCC (2023) *AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023*, Geneva: IPCC.
www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/

iPES-Food (2016) *From Uniformity to Diversity: a paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to diversified agroecological systems*. https://ipes-food.org/_img/upload/files/UniformityToDiversity_ExecSummary.pdf

Lenton, Timothy et al (2023) 'Quantifying the human cost of global warming', *Nature Sustainability*.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-023-01132-6>

LSE (2020) 'Does rising economic inequality create a representation gap between rich and poor? Evidence from Europe and the United States'.
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2020/06/11/does-rising-economic-inequality-create-a-representation-gap-between-rich-and-poor-evidence-from-europe-and-the-united-states/>

Miller, Kathryn et al (2022) *Living on the edge: the implications of climate change for six countries in the Middle East North Africa region*, UK: Greenpeace.

www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-mena-stateless/2022/11/b57fcf2f-greenpeace-living-on-the-edge-full-english.pdf

Murangira, Emmanuel (2023) 'From Penury to Prosperity. The Churches at the Epicentre of social-economic Transformation', 'From Poverty to Power' blog, Oxfam.

<https://frompoverty.oxfam.org.uk/from-penury-to-prosperity-the-churches-at-the-epicentre-of-social-economic-transformation/>

Myers, Ched (1987) 'By What Authority? The Bible and Civil Disobedience', *Sojourners*, May.

<https://chedmyers.org/1986/05/01/articles-biblical-interpretation-what-authority-bible-and-civil-disobedience/>

Navidi, Sandra (2017) *SuperHubs: How the Financial Elite and Their Networks Rule our World*, Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

OCHA (2022a) 'Asia and the Pacific: Weekly Regional Humanitarian Snapshot'.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/asia-and-pacific-weekly-regional-humanitarian-snapshot-13-19-september-2022>

OCHA (2022b) *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023*.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2023-enaresfr>

ODI (2023) 'More than meets the eye? Assessing MDBs' contribution to tackling global challenges'.

<https://odi.org/en/insights/more-than-meets-the-eye-assessing-mdbs-contribution-to-tackling-global-challenges/>

OECD (2023) 'About [OECD]'. www.oecd.org/g20/about/

Oxfam (2022) *Pandemic of greed: A wake-up call for vaccine equity at a grim milestone*.

www.oxfam.org/en/research/pandemic-greed

Oxfam (2023a) '5 ways women and girls have been the hardest hit by Covid-19'.

www.oxfam.org/en/5-ways-women-and-girls-have-been-hardest-hit-covid-19

Oxfam (2023b) 'Big business' windfall profits rocket to "obscene" \$1 trillion a year amid cost-of-living crisis; Oxfam and ActionAid renew call for windfall taxes'.

www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/big-business-windfall-profits-rocket-obscene-1-trillion-year-amid-cost-living-crisis

Roberts, Tony and Abrar Mohamed Ali (2021) *Opening and Closing Online Civic Space in Africa: An Introduction to the Ten Digital Rights Landscape Reports*, Sussex: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.005

Rogeli, Joeri (2023) 'What "credible" climate pledges mean for future global warming'. Guest post.

www.carbonbrief.org/guest-post-what-credible-climate-pledges-mean-for-future-global-warming/?utm_source=cbnewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_term=2023-06-09&utm_campaign=Daily+Briefing+09+06+2023

RSPB (2021) *Biodiversity loss: the UK's global rank for levels of biodiversity loss*, Bedford: RSPB.
www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/projects/48398rspb-biodiversity-intactness-index-summary-report-v5-1-1.pdf

Sánchez-Páramo, Carolina et al (2021) 'COVID-19 leaves a legacy of rising poverty and widening inequality', World Bank blogs.
<https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/covid-19-leaves-legacy-rising-poverty-and-widening-inequality>

Schröder, Patrick et al (2021) 'What is the circular economy?'
<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/06/what-circular-economy>

Shiller, Robert (2019) *Narrative Economics: How Stories Go Viral and Drive Major Economic Events*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Smith, James K A (2009) *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation: 1 (Cultural Liturgies)*, Michigan: Baker Academic.

Supran, Geoffrey and Naomi Oreskes (2021) 'The forgotten oil ads that told us climate change was nothing', *The Guardian*, 18 November.
www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/18/the-forgotten-oil-ads-that-told-us-climate-change-was-nothing

Supran, Geoffrey, Stefan Rahmstorf and Naomi Oreskes (2023) 'Assessing ExxonMobil's global warming projections', *Science*, vol 379 (6628). www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abk0063

Tax Justice Network (2022) 'Open letter to G20: OECD failure to deliver on G20 mandates'.
<https://taxjustice.net/2022/11/15/open-letter-to-g20-oecd-failure-to-deliver-on-g20-mandates/>

Tearfund (2017) 'Self-help groups: creating capital together' in *Footsteps 103: Entrepreneurship*, Teddington: Tearfund. <https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/footsteps/footsteps-101-110/footsteps-103>

Tearfund (2019) *Understanding poverty: Restoring broken relationships*, Teddington: Tearfund.
<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/tools-and-guides/understanding-poverty>

Tearfund (2022a) *Dying to adapt: A comparison of African healthcare spending and climate adaptation costs*, Teddington: Tearfund.
<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/policy-reports/dying-to-adapt-a-comparison-of-african-healthcare-spending-and-climate-adaptation-costs>

Tearfund (2022b) 'How to build a movement' in *Footsteps 118: Community-led advocacy*, Teddington: Tearfund.
<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/footsteps/footsteps-111-120/footsteps-118/how-to-build-a-movement>

Tearfund (2023a) *Greening the African economy: How good green jobs can tackle youth unemployment and the climate crisis*, Teddington: Tearfund.

Tearfund (2023b) 'The global plastics treaty: what's happening in Paris?'
www.tearfund.org/stories/2023/05/the-global-plastics-treaty

Thacker, Justin (2022) *Abundant community theology: Working towards environmental and economic sustainability (EES)*, Teddington: Tearfund.
<https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/research-report/abundant-community-theology-working-towards-environmental-and-economic-sustainability>

The Economist (2018) 'As inequality grows, so does the political influence of the rich', 21 July.
www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2018/07/21/as-inequality-grows-so-does-the-political-influence-of-the-rich

Theos, CAFOD and Tearfund (2010) *Wholly Living: A new perspective on international development*, London: Theos.

Trade Justice Movement (2023) 'Trade and International Development'.
www.tjm.org.uk/trade-issues/international-development

Transparency International (2023) *Corruption Perceptions Index 2022*, Berlin: Transparency International.
https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/Report_CPI2022_English.pdf

Turnbull, Neil (2022) 'Permacrisis: what it means and why it's word of the year for 2022', *The Conversation*, 11 November.
<https://theconversation.com/permacrisis-what-it-means-and-why-its-word-of-the-year-for-2022-194306>

UK Government (2020) 'Ethnicity and COVID-19: 2 June preliminary meeting for SAGE, 2 June 2020'.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/ethnicity-and-covid-19-preliminary-meeting-for-sage-2-june-2020/ethnicity-and-covid-19-2-june-preliminary-meeting-for-sage-2-june-2020

UNCTAD (2020) *Trade and Development Report 2020: From global pandemic to prosperity for all: avoiding another lost decade*, New York: United Nations.
https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdr2020_en.pdf

UNFCCC (2022) *2022 NDC Synthesis Report*, Bonn: UNFCCC. <https://unfccc.int/ndc-synthesis-report-2022>

UNHCR (2023) *Global Trends, Forced Displacement in 2022*, Copenhagen: UNHCR.
www.unhcr.org/uk/global-trends

United Nations (2022a) *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022*, New York: UN.
<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022/>

United Nations (2022b) *Valuing What Counts – United Nations System-wide Contribution on Progress Beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP)*, New York: UN.
<https://unsceb.org/valuing-what-counts-united-nations-system-wide-contribution-beyond-gross-domestic-product-gdp>

United Nations (2023a) *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special edition*, New York: UN.
<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023.pdf>

United Nations (2023b) *Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 6: Reforms to the International Financial Architecture*, New York: UN. www.un.org/en/common-agenda/policy-briefs

United Nations Environment Programme (2023) 'Beat plastic pollution'. www.unep.org/interactives/beat-plastic-pollution/

Vallet, Elisabeth (2022) 'The World is Witnessing a Rapid Proliferation of Border Walls', Migration Policy Institute, 2 March. www.migrationpolicy.org/article/rapid-proliferation-number-border-walls

Walker, Wayne et al (2020) 'The role of forest conversion, degradation, and disturbance in the carbon dynamics of Amazon indigenous territories and protected areas', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* vol 117 (6): pp 3015–3025. <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1913321117>

Wedel, Janine (2014) *Unaccountable – How Elite Power Brokers Corrupt our Finances, Freedom, and Security*, Cambridge: Pegasus.

WFP (2023) 'A global food crisis'. www.wfp.org/global-hunger-crisis

WHO (2023) 'Greater Horn of Africa'. www.who.int/emergencies/funding/outbreak-and-crisis-response-appeal/2023/2023-appeals/appeal-horn-of-africa

Willard, Dallas (1988) *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, New York: Harper & Row.

Williams, Mari, Rich Gower and Joanne Green (2019) *No Time to Waste*, Teddington: Tearfund. <https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/policy-reports/no-time-to-waste>

World Bank (2022a) *Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022: Correcting Course*, Washington DC: World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity>

World Bank (2022b) 'People, Peace, Prosperity'. www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/people-peace-prosperity

Wright, N T (2005) 'Creation and Covenant' in *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, London: SPCK; Minneapolis: Fortress, pp 21–39. <https://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/05/creation-and-covenant/>

Wright, N T (2010) *After you believe: Why Christian Character Matters*, San Francisco: HarperOne.

‘This is a pivotal moment for the people of God to come together within his restoration story and realise our collective power to shape a fairer future. The church is the most powerful agent for change in the world.’

learn.tearfund.org/restorative-revolution

100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, UK

☎ 020 3906 3906 ✉ campaigns@tearfund.org

Registered office: Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, United Kingdom. Registered in England: 994339. A company limited by guarantee Registered Charity No. 265464 (England & Wales) Registered Charity No. SC037624 (Scotland).

tearfund