

ENGAGING WITH INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES

COMMUNITY & GLOBAL

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WHY?

'The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern.' Proverbs 29v7

Climate change is a poverty and justice issue as well as an environmental disaster. Many of the poorest countries in the world are being hit the hardest by the impact on rainfall, flooding and temperature increases.

Rising sea levels could force 750million people living in coastal areas to flee their homes by 2050. Whilst there is too much water in some areas of the world, 5 billion (or over half the predicted world population) will have too little water for at least a month every year.

In the early 2020's some countries are already being hit by unpredictable weather patterns causing crop failures, extreme flooding or lack of water. Richer and developed countries have more resilience to deal with such things. They are able to offer their citizens some protection against, and give help to recover from, natural disasters such as cyclones, droughts, floods and wildfires. Globally wealthier individuals pay insurance which compensates them for the costs incurred through damage caused by flooding or fire, this is not an option for the poor.

With decreasing environmental stability, the risks of both conflict and large-scale population displacement increases as people fight over scarce resources or run away from those areas.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) explains why those who are already vulnerable are the worst affected and why the numbers of refugees around the globe in the future will dramatically increase: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/climate-change-and-disasters.html>

HOW?

Ask your existing mission partners how climate change is affecting them. Discuss with them what actions you can take as a church, to equip them to become more resilient and support their congregation effectively.



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Agree with your church leadership how, and how often, to communicate news about the impact of climate change globally. Find people within your congregation who keep up to date to inform the rest of the church how you can pray, give and act to support our Christian brothers and sisters around the world.

Read the research and news from Christian organisations around the world for whom the link between climate change and poverty is a focus of their work. Major denominational Christian mission agencies will see links between environmental degradation and the challenges in the areas where they work, so ask the ones you already work with what the impact is on the ground.

A Rocha International, our sister organisation, provides global news with both successes to celebrate and disasters to pray for and act on: <https://www.arocha.org/en/news/>

Share stories from Tearfund, the global Christian relief charity to encourage your congregation to pray for people to be lifted out of poverty: <https://www.tearfund.org/stories>

Work with Christian Aid to help poor and marginalised communities build resilience against climate change: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/what-we-do/resilience-climate>

Read the news from CAFOD (the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development): <https://cafod.org.uk/>

Bring it closer to home by participating in Refugee Week: <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

Refugee Week's vision is for refugees and asylum seekers to be able to live safely within inclusive and resilient communities, where they can continue to make a valuable contribution. Most boroughs in the UK now have a 'Refugees Welcome' group. Seek yours out to see how you can help welcome refugees in your community. Tring Baptist Church explain what they have been doing in the case study below.



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LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

In 2015, the United Nations adopted 'The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development'. This includes 17 goals which call for countries to work together to end global poverty, improve education and tackle climate change. Many of our Eco Church questions and actions contribute towards these goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The Fragile States Index is a conflict risk assessment framework based on social, political, and economic factors. It is a helpful resource to inform our prayers and to see the changes over time as countries are impacted by the side effects of climate change: <https://fragilestatesindex.org/>

Understand the thinking of secular consultants McKinsey as they help businesses around the globe find sustainable solutions: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/sustainability/our-insights/sustainability-blog>

Sharing our Story: Refugees at Tring Baptist Church



In June 2019 we chose to mark refugee week. Although this may not be an obvious sustainability or environmental issue, refugees are frequently displaced as a direct or indirect consequence of climate change. Acceptance and welcoming of refugees is a clear biblical message. One of the core beliefs of refugee week states: 'We believe that the safety of each of us matters to all of us, and strive to come together around shared values of fairness, mutual support, kindness and respect for universal rights.'

We marked refugee week at the Activity Room, in our church on the High Street, with a book reading by local author Sue Hampton. Through exquisite textile illustrations, and simple words 'I am Me' explores the experience of a child refugee leaving home and arriving in the UK: <https://www.suehamptonauthor.co.uk/product/i-am-me/>