

We are eating too much while others starve.

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The UN have set a target **to completely eliminate hunger worldwide by 2030**, and it is imperative that it is achieved. During the past two decades, population growth, improvement of incomes and variation of diets have steadily increased the demand for food, therefore increasing its price. This sudden dramatic rise in global food prices, coupled with natural food disasters, escalating fuel costs and the current global pandemic, has gravely impacted the amount and security of food produced, and has re-emphasised the crucial actions needed to feed everybody in this world, not just people who can afford the inflating food prices. Worryingly, hunger and under-nutrition are the greatest threats to public health, killing more people than HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. Each day, 25,000 people, including more than 10,000 children, die from hunger and related causes, such as mineral deficiencies. In this essay, I am going to discuss how **YOU** can provoke change, so this figure can become zero and lives can be saved.

To begin with, out of the world population of 7.64 billion, around a colossal 854 million people worldwide are estimated to be undernourished. On top of that, one-third of all food produced (over 1.3 billion tons) is wasted. Producing this wasted food also consumes other natural resources - requiring a huge amount of water and creating 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. One simple solution is to cut back on meat consumption due to the fact that we feed around a third of the world's grains to the farm animals we eat. If we fed crops to people, instead of to livestock, we could feed an additional 4 billion people. If the population became more aware of the problem of food waste, we could put pressure on businesses and the government to make change.

The government could halve food waste by 2030 by:

- Getting every point of the supply chain to report on – and control – food waste
- Requiring all edible food surplus to be offered to hungry people, and then to animals as feed
- Requiring all inedible food waste to be composted or used to generate energy, not sent to landfill.

And in the meantime, businesses could:

- Stop demanding perfectly shaped produce to minimise wasted edible food
- Educate customers about food waste and how to avoid it
- Support measures to treat suppliers well, for example selling fair-trade products or avoiding unfair deals that lead to food waste.

I, myself, believe the government should introduce see-through food bins for people to use at home, so that when people put out their food bin, they feel embarrassed if they have wasted a large amount of food. This will hopefully cause people to take responsibility and ownership of the amount of eatable food they waste.

Another barrier in the way of reaching this target is equality. There is a direct correlation between hunger and gender equalities. You may expect, and hope, that as a world we have progressed with gender equality, however in some countries women do not have as much access to food and resources as men. Giving female farmers equal access to resources as their male counterparts could increase production on farms by 20-30%. This could in turn lessen the number of hungry people in the world by up to 150 million. Female nutrition is also crucial. According to the World Food Programme, women are more likely than men to go hungry in nearly two-thirds of the world's countries. By making women's health and nutrition a priority, we can prevent not only health problems for them if and when they have children, but also for the children they bear. The way forward is a committed, conscious change.

I believe this gender equality initiative should focus on these three pillars:

- Pillar One: Focusing on female education to ensure women have the skills and training necessary to secure jobs.
- Pillar Two: Promoting women's entrepreneurship and providing women with access to capital, markets, technical assistance, and networks.
- Pillar Three: Striving to remove the legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers that constrain women from being able to fully and freely participate in the economy.

On the other hand, some barriers in the way of reaching this target are unpreventable. For example, natural disasters. The continent where starvation is most prominent is Africa. The dry, hot climate creates environmental challenges—including erosion, desertification, deforestation, and drought and water shortages that greatly jeopardise food security. Simple techniques to protect and diversify crops can be very effective. Protecting farmhouses and livestock is important too — losing vital shelter and assets can lead to food shortages and poverty. In order to help these 854 million undernourished people, visit <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved> to donate or to help fundraise, or to even just educate yourself on the severity of this UN target.

To conclude, on the bright side over the few decades, the number of hungry people worldwide has fallen by 216 million. With enough public determination, this amount will continue to drop until no one in the world goes to bed hungry. However, with coronavirus spreading across our world, it is dramatically impacting the poorest communities of the globe: those who are living in hunger, where social distancing is a privilege, and who do not have the same access to information, sanitation and healthcare as we do.

What we must do:

- **INVEST** in the sustainable end of hunger.
- **SHARE** this vital message.
- **CHALLENGE** yourself: Join myself and take on the Live Below the Line Challenge – 5 days, £1 a day for all food and drink.

If this target is going to be achieved, EVERYONE must be involved to help alleviate the perils of hunger. More food for the world today, more hope for the world tomorrow