

# 10 STEPS TO END WORLD HUNGER

*How to create a food system where everyone gets to eat.*

- 1 Put food before trade**  
Trade rules are the architecture of an unequal and extractive food system. We need an overhaul of our laws, regulations and multilateral institutions to produce new blueprints, which subordinate trade to food security and phase out dysfunctional global commodity chains. Let's start by winding down the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture and bringing civil society to the negotiating table.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Curtail corporations - and end impunity**  
Industrial agri-food giants exert outsized control over production, distribution and trade policy. Break up huge conglomerates, whose net-worth is bigger than the GDPs of many countries in Africa, with anti-trust legislation.. Cut subsidies to input-intensive commodity agriculture and industrial fishing, bring in new tax agreements and remove pro-agribusiness investor dispute clauses from trade deals. Make famine, malnutrition and hunger - at heart, political choices - into crimes that are punishable at the International Criminal Court.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 Redistribute riches**  
There are now 2,700 billionaires in the world with a combined wealth of \$13 trillion. The International Monetary Fund puts the annual financing gap for the Sustainable Development Goals (including No 2, Zero Hunger) at \$300 to \$400 billion. So, just tax and distribute wealth fairly. The Global South urgently needs a new development finance settlement that repays historical debts and is equal to the current needs of its population. (See 'Money - the ultimate decolonizer', page 67.)
- 4 Rights to land, seas - and better pay**  
The recognition of indigenous and customary rights over pastures, forests and fisheries would create more inclusive societies for billions of rural poor - two-thirds of whom who go hungry.<sup>3</sup> And when the rights of women - who are pivotal to preventing hunger - improve, so do productivity and family nutrition.<sup>4</sup> The labour of food workers, among the world's mostly poorly paid, must be properly compensated; informal workers, such as Senegal's fish processors, should be given employment status and benefits.
- 5 Smaller, fairer, slower trade**  
Local markets with short supply chains have shown their worth during Covid-19 lockdowns.<sup>5</sup> Governments can foster them using sourcing policies like Brazil's National School Feeding Programme, which buys a proportion from family farmers and privileges suppliers from indigenous and traditional communities. Urban farming - already 15-20 per cent of food production - can boost self-sufficiency, fair-trade co-operatives can connect consumers to growers from cities to the countryside and across borders. (See 'Food is love', page 32.)
- 6 Free lunch - or funds to buy it**  
Social safety nets must be expanded with policies based on entitlement, not charity - and not only in times of crisis. Within months of the Covid-19 pandemic starting, around 160 countries were getting food to the hungry - via cash, food boxes or cooked meals. This swift, decisive action showed an acceptance of what states can achieve - and their responsibilities. As a stop-gap while we transition to our hunger-free world, disaster-response emergency appeals must be met.
- 7 Balance with nature's systems**  
Slash carbon emissions to tackle climate change, which is undoing the ecosystems that all producers rely on. An agroecological transition would strip out the bulk of agriculture's 30 per cent share of greenhouse-gas emissions and give us healthy soils, nutritious diverse crops and resilient livestock breeds. Alternatives to industrial agriculture must be funded, publicized and scaled, neglected wild foods and traditional knowledge acknowledged and complemented by science.<sup>6</sup> (See 'What is Agroecology', page 31.)
- 8 Incentivize good food**  
Obesity, overweight and ill-health are being exacerbated in the name of 'solving hunger'. Use government pricing policy to target unhealthy drinks and foods (eg taxation and tariffs) and redirect subsidies to bring down the price of healthy diets. Alongside, revive a range of traditional foods with the help of chefs, social movements and cut-price communal eateries.
- 9 Eat ethical**  
In the words of writer Michael Pollan: 'Eat food, not too much'. In wealthy populations, shifts to ethical, organic and vegetarian (or 'flexitarian') diets are positive signs. For genuine consumer power, conscious food citizens will need sophisticated public data tools that can fact-check sustainability claims, apply true-cost accounting (ie the cost to the environment and growers, not just the price in the shop) and guarantee transparency.<sup>7</sup>
- 10 Organize**  
Civil society will need to fight for shifts 1-9 and be ready for 'change and disruption'.<sup>7</sup> In the next 25 years, food movements will have to organize across multiple sectors - trade, climate - and build new alliances between consumers, workers and producers. From the ground up, with the help of constructive national governments, sympathetic UN secretariats and policymakers, we can forge a more democratic food politics, the world over.

<sup>1</sup> M Fakhri, *New Internationalist*, Feb 2021, [nin.tl/TradeReform](http://nin.tl/TradeReform) <sup>2</sup> A de Waal, *New Internationalist*, Apr 2018, [nin.tl/FamineCrimes](http://nin.tl/FamineCrimes) <sup>3</sup> UN FAO voluntary guidelines on tenure, 2012, [nin.tl/Tenure](http://nin.tl/Tenure)  
<sup>4</sup> J Njuki et al. eds, *Transforming Gender and Food Security in the Global South*, Routledge, 2016. <sup>5</sup> 'Emerging Covid-19 impacts, lessons in the seafood system', 2020, [nin.tl/SeafoodCovid](http://nin.tl/SeafoodCovid)  
<sup>6</sup> eg. 'Wheat breeding in Ethiopia', 2017, [bioversityinternational.org](http://bioversityinternational.org), [nin.tl/FarmerResearch](http://nin.tl/FarmerResearch) <sup>7</sup> Long Food Movement, IPES-FOOD & ETC Group, 2021, [nin.tl/LongFoodMovement](http://nin.tl/LongFoodMovement)