

10 commandments for a Future without Hunger

1. Contribute towards everyone on earth having enough to eat.

Is it enough, if you, your family, your friends and all in Austria are well fed? Or does every man, every woman and every child on this earth have the right to adequate food? This in any event is what, in 1966, was laid down in a multinational treaty, approved unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations. And although enough food exists for everyone, one in every seven people in the world is hungry – a scandal.

2. Do not speculate away your neighbour's bread.

Investment funds make profits running into millions by speculating on rising food prices. The German DekaBank recently exited this type of business. Will further banks and investment funds follow? Why not ask your own bank too whether they are assuming their own social responsibility and avoiding speculative deals on food commodities such as soya, maize or wheat.

3. Do not fill your tank with the food that hungry people need to eat.

The production of agrofuels uses, and uses up, fertile land; and yet generally, agricultural resources such as soil or water are limited. This also leads to an increase in conflicts over land use and sometimes even the forcible displacement of small-scale farmers.

4. Honour the earth and work to combat climate change, so that you will live a long life and so as to give yourself and all people on earth a better life.

No-one today any longer denies the reality of climate change. However, we know far too little about the devastating effects on the supply of food to people in the poorest countries of the world. Lack of rain leads to long-lasting droughts. Floods destroy soil over the long term and contribute towards land erosion. At the same time, for millions of people, drinking water is becoming more scarce. An internationally-binding climate-protection treaty with ambitious objectives is urgently needed.

5. Live so that your own lifestyle is not at the cost of others.

What does your lifestyle have to do with the hunger of people in other countries? For instance, it is responsible for environmental destruction, climate change and the exploitation of vital resources. Hunger is a consequence of this. Anyone who changes their lifestyle in a responsible direction is also making a long-term contribution towards improving the circumstances of many hungry people. For instance, you can buy more fair-trade products, re-use instead of throwing away, use energy-efficient appliances, go by bike and use public transport more, etc.

6. Do not covet your neighbour's land and property.

Foreign investors are buying up huge areas of land in Africa, Asia and eastern Europe at knock-down prices. This land-grabbing benefits the rich countries to which the agricultural products grown on such land are exported. It rarely benefits a nation's own population, and most certainly not the local small-scale farmers, who are robbed of their rights and no longer able to produce for the local market.

7. Use your agricultural policy to reduce hunger and not to increase it

Multilateral agricultural and trading agreements in many instances reflect the interests of the North, but prevent countries in the south from expanding and protecting their own agriculture. The establishment of local food markets is seriously hindered by cheap imports. Local farmers are frequently unable to compete with products from the North, which are often subsidized.

8. Take action against corrupt governments and their proxies.

Corruption prevents the income of a country being used to benefit the population. Investment in education, healthcare, agricultural development programmes and, through these, in the welfare of the population, is all too often neglected. International corporations and states use corrupt systems to further their interests.

9. Help prevent armed conflicts and wars.

Wars and armed conflicts are causes of acute famine and chronic hunger. The economy stagnates, millions of people leave their homes, fields remain fallow, harvests are left to rot away. Through land mines and radioactive munitions, vast swathes of land are left uninhabitable, and agriculture becomes extremely hazardous.

10. Fight hunger effectively through development aid.

Paradoxically, most people who do not have enough food live in rural areas. However, if your own piece of land does not produce enough, if rains fail, or prices are unstable, if no safety net is provided, then hunger is a direct consequence. Development cooperation achieves effective prevention and structural work; improved cultivation methods, irrigation, education and a strengthening of civil society all bring about long-term food security.