

# Chester World Development Forum



## Minutes of the Forum Meeting held on Tuesday 12 January 2021 via Zoom

The meeting was hosted by Gill Miller and chaired by John Tacon

Prior to the Forum's "Business-by-Zoom" Agenda we welcomed **Ciara Hogan**, Community Participation Coordinator for CAFOD, talking of their latest campaign, which encourages us to reclaim our common home in the wake of the coronavirus

### **Catholic Agency for Overseas Development**

Cafod is the Catholic Church's official agency for overseas development. Cafod works with some of the most hard-to-reach communities across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, helping the poorest and most marginalised people regardless of beliefs, race, ethnicity etc

### **Impact of the coronavirus pandemic**

In 2020, the world experienced the worst health crisis in a century. The coronavirus pandemic has devastated lives and shattered families in the UK and across the world, with disastrous consequences for people's jobs, livelihoods and health. 150 million people are set to fall into extreme poverty and an additional 130 million people will be left hungry. People who live in remote areas or suffer from climate extremes, lack of opportunity, or destroyed economies, will continue to be left at the margins by government and the private sector.

This demands a huge response from each of us, individually and collectively.



### **The impact of the pandemic on the Sustainable Development Goals**

The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the Sustainable Development Goals. An estimated 71 million people are expected to be pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020, the first rise in global poverty since 1998. Lost incomes, limited social protection and rising prices mean even those who were previously secure could find themselves at risk of poverty and hunger.

Underemployment and unemployment due to the crisis mean some 1.6 billion already vulnerable workers in the informal economy – half the global workforce – may be significantly affected, with their incomes estimated to have fallen by 60 per cent in the first month of the crisis.

More than one billion slum dwellers worldwide are acutely at risk from the effects of COVID-19, suffering from a lack of adequate housing, no running water at home, shared toilets, little or no waste management systems, overcrowded public transport and limited access to formal health care facilities.

Women and children are also among those bearing the heaviest brunt of the pandemic's effects. Disruption to health and vaccination services and limited access to diet and nutrition services have the potential to cause hundreds of thousands of additional under-5 deaths and tens of thousands of additional maternal deaths in 2020. Many countries have seen a surge in reports of domestic violence against women and children.

School closures have kept 90 per cent of students worldwide (1.57 billion) out of school and caused over 370 million children to miss out on school meals they depend on. Lack of access to computers and the internet at home means remote learning is out of reach of many. About 70 countries reported moderate to severe disruptions or a total suspension of childhood vaccination services during March and April of 2020

As more families fall into extreme poverty, children in poor and disadvantaged communities are at much greater risk of child labour, child marriage and child trafficking. In fact, the global gains in reducing child labour are likely to be reversed for the first time in 20 years.

## **Fratelli Tutti - the Pope's encyclical on putting forward "a new normal"**

Fratelli Tutti is Pope Francis' third encyclical. Released in 2020 on the eve of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the eight-chapter papal document studies the effects of our social ills and proposes a pathway to human fraternity and social friendship. (For those who aren't Catholic, or who don't follow papal news particularly closely, an encyclical is just a letter put out by the Pope. It's the Greek for circle).

In brief, there are 8 chapters:

**Chap 1. Dark Clouds over a Closed World** - covers the loss of respect for cultural history, limitless consumption, throw-away cultures, stalled expansion of human rights, fear of immigrants and the superficiality of digital media with all of its negative effects

**Chap 2. A Stranger on the Road** - citing the parable of the Good Samaritan, Pope Francis asks us to reflect on the persona of each character: the victim, the neglecter, the Samaritan and questions how we have contributed to either the care or failure of society.

**Chap 3. Envisaging and Engendering an Open World** - talks about fraternity as a conscious and careful cultivation of recognizing each person's dignity and worth, meeting basic needs, and giving everyone the means to achieve personal potential.

**Chap 4. A Heart Open to the World** - focuses on the issue of immigration recognizing cultural diversity as a gift of enrichment to all and acknowledging that countries who provide mutual assistance augment each other.

**Chap 5. A Better Type of Politics** – states that politics must be about service to the common good with special concern for the vulnerable and working for social and political order is the soul of social charity and "charity is at the heart of every healthy and open society."

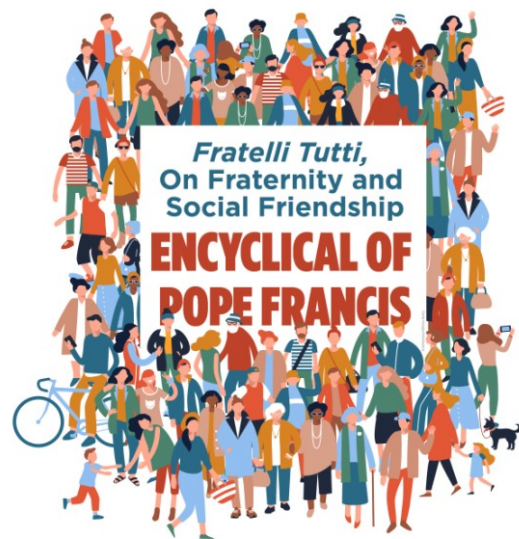
**Chap 6. Dialogue and Friendship in Society** - Common ground, Pope Francis explains, can only be found through dialogue, and that dialogue cannot be feverish or manipulative nor can it withhold information. Rather, our dialogue must respect another's rational view in an effort to grasp the whole truth.

**Chap 7. Paths of Renewed Encounter** - Peace, built on justice, mercy, and truth, requires collaboration and a legitimate assessment of a situation. "This requires us to place at the center of all political, social and economic activity the human person" understanding "that inequality and lack of integral human development make peace impossible." The Pope here focuses on the "false answers" of war and the death penalty as means to resolve conflict.

**Chap 8. Religions at the Service of Fraternity in our World** – should promote wisdom through reflection on religious traditions.

## **Cafod's Campaign to "Reclaim our Common Home"**

There is still some way to go before the end of the coronavirus pandemic, but Cafod has hope for the future. Pope Francis has warned that the rush to return to normal risks leaving many of the world's problems unsolved. Right now, there is an opportunity to reshape the world. With this in mind Cafod will make sure the recovery from the pandemic includes everyone and tackle global poverty, injustice and the climate crisis through the Reclaim Our Common Home campaign.





- **Reclaim Our Common Home campaign will run throughout 2021.**
- **Reclaim nature** so that everyone can breathe clean air and be protected from the threat of climate disasters.
- **Reclaim the world's land and resources** so they are more fairly distributed and all our brothers and sisters around the world can live in dignity.
- **Reclaim power** so that everyone can be involved in decision making and have agency over their own lives.

We have a chance to rebuild the world differently after coronavirus. The eyes of the world will be on Britain this year as it hosts:

- the G7 annual meeting in the summer;
- UN 'COP26' climate talks take place in Glasgow in November.

We must ensure our government uses this moment to bring in the necessary changes to build a more sustainable world. "Anyone who thinks that the only lesson to be learned was the need to improve what we were already doing or to refine existing systems and regulations, is denying reality" Fratelli Tutti.

#### Q and A

JT: Thinking about critical action - how much leverage has Cafod in decision making at government level? CH: Church groups are very good at lobbying and Cafod does have a voice along with other major NGOs.

GM: Referred to statement "Reclaim power" and asked how this would work. Could it be misunderstood? For instance, Donald Trump supporters wanted to "reclaim power". CH: It's been made quite clear in Catholic Social Teaching that the statement means taking power away from large corporations and giving people a voice.

LS: Is there a sense of something we can do, believing that we can act - this could be way to reclaim?

GM: Have Cafod produced list of actions/sustainable ideas? CH: Lots of ideas on the website including information on the "Live Simply" award for schools and parishes

BR: Asked about how budget spent to maintain a balance between supporting projects and lobbying/campaigning. CH: Explained how Cafod works with local partners overseas (Caritas) so they really understand what the community needs. BR also asked about working in Middle East.

CH: Cafod works through Caritas in Palestine.

GW and BR: Re fundraising this year. CH: The pandemic has made a difference as few fundraising events have taken place in schools and parishes. But individual giving has been so generous. In that respect fundraising is down but the situation is not as bad as predicted.

Cafod has to turn down 1 in 3 appeals for support. The aim is to get to stage where no-one has to be turned away.

*Just a bit of extra information from AM as a postscript .....*

*For every £1 that is donated, CAFOD will spend 88p on international development, emergencies, education, campaigning, and advocacy work. 12p will be spent to generate future income. Of that 88p, the breakdown is the following:*

*50p is spent to fund our international programmes work*

*29p is spent on emergencies*

*5p is spent on advocacy and campaigning*

*4p is spent on UK education development.*

# CWDF Business Meeting

- 1 Welcome:** JT chaired the meeting in TG's absence  
**Present:** John Tacon, Bernard Payne, Vicki Jenner, Lindsay Cussons, Gill Miller, Georgina Wilson, Ann McCarthy, Susan Flynn, Angela Macquiban, Brian and Katy Rowe, Linda and Stuart Shuttleworth, Heather Swainston, Alan Vernon, Tony Walsh, and Diane Williams  
**Apologies:** Terry Green, Heather Lannin.
- 2 Chair to report on key issues covered in the Committee's recent Zoom Sessions**
  - **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020:** JT gave a brief background to Eco- Communities Virtual Fair which took place at the end of November during which JT gave a talk on CWDF's background and interests and HS gave a talk on Fairtrade in CWaC. Just as a matter of interest HS has heard that CWaC has been reaccredited as a Fairtrade Borough.  
Other issues discussed revolved around getting speakers for the next few meetings
  - **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**  
Discussion took place about the new flyer - some new suggestions to be considered
- 3 Finance update:**

The last bank statement balance was £295.45 on 30 November 2020. Since then CWDF has received a 2021 subscription payment of £8 and ended the year with £16.83 in cash giving an effective total of **£320.24** at the end of the year. Since then, JT has been notified of £81 in BACS payments, and received £23 in subscription cheques which will have to be paid in via the Post Office. These will increase the effective total to **£424.24**.
- 4 Further CWDF events, Zoom based, details to be announced:**
  - **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March**, 7.00pm - GM suggested "TED talks" on You Tube – includes some very motivational talks particularly on climate change. For instance "How climate change can make our food less nutritious". BP would send around the link, we could watch and then discuss or we could watch it all together. GM will come with some suggestions. She has watched one entitled "Hans Rosling and the magic washing machine" which was very interesting and educational.
  - **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May, CWDF AGM**, 7.00pm. This may coincide with Cathedral Exhibition but looking unlikely that this will take place.
  - **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July**, 7.00pm. Arrangements TBA
- 5 Other events**
  - **Wed 24<sup>th</sup> March**, 7.30pm, St Mary's Without-the-Walls, Handbridge  
Stories, poems, and music for Passiontide with all proceeds going to Christian Aid. Need to contact Trevor Dennis, chair of Chester Christian Aid Committee. Details will be in the next Diary update.
  - CFoE/Eco- Communities - Tellus TV is live at 7pm each Tuesday on Eco Communities TV. Example of talks – session 2 was entitled "Active Travel Special". February sessions taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Search CFoE/Eco-communities website for details – programmes can be watched later.

- **May 2021**, “Our Journey to Sustainability” exhibition and conference  
*(latest news awaited from Chester Sustainability Forum)*

**6 AOB/ closing remarks:**

JT: mentioned “Green Pledges” - Chester Sustainability Forum are working hard with local authority on climate emergency and the green pledges are part of that. KR and HS need new sub form.

HS: Fairtrade Fortnight – takes place from 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb to 7<sup>th</sup> March. HS has put in a request for funds to support events.. Cannot say as yet what events could take place. Next meeting 28<sup>th</sup> Jan so if anyone planning anything please let her know. Are some national resources from Fairtrade Foundation. HS will put out on Twitter

SF: commented on UK aid and expressed concern about where Aid going in future. Aid going to become more “politicised” and UK is in danger of losing its aid status.