

## Food waste feast

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Food waste feast is a TEARFUND event that I attended at our

church last Friday evening. Over 30% of global food production is wasted. Where this proportion of food is wasted depends on where it is produced. In the developing world it is wasted at the production end. I saw examples of this myself in SE Asia some years ago. To remove the husk from rice, women (and it was always women), would stand by the side of the road and sweep rice so that passing traffic ran it over. Its self evident whilst this method was easy it was also wasteful with much rice going missing. (As an aside the rice I eat there was of very high quality with no grit in it.) In the developed world the waste is almost all post production, i.e. shop onwards. Both types of waste have proved stubbornly resistant to reduction. TEARFUND'S food waste feast is one recent attempt and is part of TEARFUND'S post Paris campaigns to use the church (as one of the last community organisations left) to tackle this problem. As this site has blogged previously food production particularly in the developed world is very oil intensive and uses a lot of energy. Therefore food is a direct cause of greenhouse emissions. Food is also an indirect cause of carbon emissions since waste food ends up in landfill where it produces methane, a much more potent greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. This problem is reducing though as more waste food is collected by councils. If we could cut this 30% waste it would give us a supply ceiling going forward into the future to cope with population increase. The last reason not to waste food is its an immoral waste. The food waste feast involved eating waste food (safely in date) which would have been otherwise threatened with being chucked out. We started off with knibbles and dips with old stale bread crisped by heating in the oven (above)



which was much better than it sounds.

After sitting at the tables

we had a short introduction based around the theology of food and in particular the feeding of the 5000. Food (especially bread) is seen as a mark of God's salvation and it was pointed out that Jesus commanded that the leftovers should be picked and not wasted (Jn 6v12). Something I had not noticed before, but it is the case in every one of these stories that



along with courgette and sweet potato loaf (particularly yummy) followed by banana ice cream and bread and butter pudding. As we were doing this we were given a number of questions to answer.



We finished the food waste feast with teas and coffees with

TEARFUND emphasising some of the points I made earlier made through the example of a woman farmer in Malawi. All in all a good evening with excellent food. As a final point I would point out that food is one of the easiest ways to cut your carbon emissions especially by cutting down meat consumption as well as waste. For further details about getting your church involved [see this link](#). Neil

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