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Every day, I am hearing stories about climate change, political turmoil, malnourishment on one side of the world, and obesity on another, exclusion, a loss of social ties, and the list goes on. These issues concern everyone to some extent. Yet, for me, my generation, and those that are to come after me, they are – and increasingly will be – lived reality.

I am probably not the only one who feels discouraged about this at times. Who feels like these issues are out of my hands and far beyond my sphere of influence.

With issues this big, what is it that we can do? And, can we do anything at all?

I think we can.

It is because of TRANSMANGO that I have learned that all of these issues can develop in many different directions and can shape a wide range of possible futures. Some desirable. Some not desirable at all. And most of them in a way that we are not even able to imagine.

But it is also because of TRANSMANGO that I have learned that we have more power than we think to steer these developments. That we can actually prepare and build resilience for the future. And - more importantly – that we are *all* able to do that. Because in the end, it is us, people, that shape the future, and that can change the course of events.

This is not to say that we all have the same level of power. But, we do all have *some* power. Some will be able to influence developments at a macro level, by designing policies for example. Some at a local level, by creating robust local strategies. Others at the level of the household, by changing their daily habits.

And I believe that we can do this, partly, although not solely, through food.

We all need to eat and for many of us, food at first sight is only about nutrition. I once heard someone say that he saw food as fuel for the meat machine that he is carrying around. However, I don't think I need to tell a room full of food scientists that food is so much more than that.

Whether it is directly or indirectly, food touches upon all facets of life: be it economically, politically, socially, psychologically or culturally.

Also, our agro-food system is causing, is strongly affected by, or both by all of the issues that I mentioned earlier. So, whether we realize it or not, it is through the daily act of eating that we touch upon, cause and are influenced by all of these issues.

Food always has a story behind it. Whether we want to see it or not. That of the producer, that of the environment. Stories of power. Stories of economics, of lack and abundance. Of our histories, our cultures and our identities.

It is partly through the food we choose, that we choose the world we want to live in. Food can be a tool to keep existing power relations in place. To keep on contributing to climate change, social inequality and exclusion. To keep on choosing convenience over connection, transparency and health.

But, food can also be used as a tool for change. To make pressing issues visible. To conserve soils and biodiversity. To reconnect people and communities. To reconnect to the land, our bodies and our health. In short, to contribute to change within our own sphere of influence.

I think it is this that we have seen, mainly in the local case studies of, TRANSMANGO – the part of the project that I was most involved in. That it is starting from food, that people start to reimagine a different world. That they take this part of their lives back into their own hands. That they move from being consumers to citizens. That they challenge existing ways of doing. That they start addressing issues of entitlement, poverty, land ownership, questions of access to and availability of food for people now and for next generations.

So, in my view, these cases show us that it is through food that we - as people - can contribute to a world we would like to see in the future. That we can reimagine different ways of living and being. Away from what we have come to see as being so normal and towards a more just system now and for generations that are yet to come.