

# PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE: THE POWER TO END POVERTY

*'Lover of justice, you have established equity' – Psalm 99:4*



STRATEGIC  
FRAMEWORK

This strategy will guide  
our work from 2012 onwards

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# OUR VISION

Christian Aid has a vision – an end to poverty – and we believe that vision can become a reality.

We live in a world of unprecedented wealth, and yet, despite all of our technological advances and the vast resources at our disposal, the scourge of extreme poverty remains humanity's most pressing challenge.

In a world of plenty, the scale and reach of the suffering across the globe is a scandal. Today, 1.4 billion people suffer from the injustice of extreme poverty. It robs them of their dignity, denies them access to their rights of shelter, food, healthcare, education, safety and a life of fulfilment. It renders them powerless, unrepresented, oppressed and vulnerable to harm and abuse often on the grounds of gender, ethnicity or other aspects of their identity.

Over recent decades, unprecedented economic development across the world has exacerbated the scale and reach of poverty, creating a growing divide of inequality between rich and poor. We reject a world where extreme suffering exists amid such plenty. Unequal growth and inequality affects all of us. It destabilises local, national and global relationships and interdependencies; it exhausts our natural resources and limits the access of vulnerable and marginalised people to basic necessities.

The interconnectedness of our world means that we can no longer be shielded from the suffering inflicted elsewhere through war, natural disasters or economic migration. The presence of this unnecessary suffering diminishes our collective human potential.

Central to our Christian faith is our belief that all people are created equally in the image of God, with inherent dignity and infinite worth.

We believe that poverty is not inevitable and that there is hope for a better world. Created and perpetuated by human systems and structures, poverty can be ended by human action. This belief is founded on our understanding of scripture and the work of a creative and loving God who calls all people into partnership to bring about a new creation.

We believe that things can change. When people work together to achieve a common goal for the common good, the impossible is made possible. We saw this in historic campaigns to end slavery, apartheid and poor country debt. We see it today in hundreds of communities transformed through the inspired hard work of our partners in cities, towns and villages across the globe.

Since 1950, life expectancy in developing countries has risen on average by 20 years, child mortality has more than halved and the number of children accessing primary education has now grown to just under 90 per cent globally. Access to clean water has doubled and food production has grown 20 per cent faster than population. Poverty has been eroded when people have fought together for justice: rich and poor, women and men, global north and south, people of all faiths and none.

# OUR PURPOSE

The world can and must be changed so that poverty is ended: this is our core belief. It expresses what Christian Aid stands for. Everything we do is about ending poverty and injustice: swiftly, effectively, sustainably.

Our strategy is founded on this essential purpose: to expose the scandal of poverty, to help in practical ways to root it out from the world, and to challenge and change the systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

We work for fundamental change, as well as supporting vulnerable groups to meet immediate needs and build long-term security. Christian Aid exists to support communities in claiming their right to escape poverty and move towards thriving and resilient lives.

Working in partnership with others, of all faiths and none, we are part of a global movement of individuals and organisations passionately committed to ending poverty and social injustice.

Our work is founded on the Good News lived and proclaimed by Jesus; it is inspired by hope and sustained by faith. The work of Christian Aid is a way of living out the sacrificial love of God in Jesus.

Christian Aid was founded on a partnership of church communities throughout Britain and Ireland, compelled by love and justice to respond to the broken and impoverished communities of Europe after the Second World War. For over 65 years, it has been at the heart of a movement for radical change thanks to the support of these church communities. A key strength comes from these deep roots in thousands of congregations, and from trusting partnerships with churches and Christian organisations across five continents.

Alone, one organisation can achieve little. But as active partners in a global movement for change, we believe it is possible to end poverty in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**“ Poverty has been eroded when people have fought together for justice: rich and poor, women and men, global north and south, people of all faiths and none**

# OUR PRINCIPLES



## Love

**Christian Aid is founded on love.** To 'love your neighbour as yourself' is to place others needs and hopes on a level with your own. It means showing empathy through practical action: neighbour working hand-in-hand with neighbour. It means recognising the human dignity and worth inherent in everyone, whatever their gender, race, creed or social position.

Christian Aid aims to be a catalyst in building the relationships needed to turn hope for a loving world, free from poverty, into action.



## Respect for experience

**The true experts on poverty are those who fight it day by day.** Not outsiders who want to impose 'one-size-fits-all' instant solutions on very different societies. Since its inception, Christian Aid has learnt from the experience of hundreds of inspiring community organisations at the frontline of the battle against poverty.

We value practical experience over ideology. What works in one society may not work in another. Lasting solutions are found only through listening to people in poverty, and sharing experience as equals.



## Collaboration

**All our work is based on trusting relationships.** We bring people from different cultures and faiths together to fight poverty as global neighbours.

Our partners may be village cooperatives, multi-agency campaign networks or private sector companies striving to deliver pro-poor enterprise-based development. Brave individuals risking their lives to fight injustice, or church members in Britain and Ireland doing their best as active citizens to promote fair trade. Our shared aim is to create a more just, collaborative world.



## Speaking out

**We are prepared to 'speak truth to power', even at the risk of losing popularity and funding.** Ending poverty demands fundamental change to the structures that create inequality. Without bold campaigns and advocacy, the systems and structures that ruin millions of lives will never be dismantled.

We follow the duty set out in the book of Proverbs, to 'speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all who are destitute'. But we do so in humility. It is not Isaiah who 'sets captives free and binds up the broken-hearted', but those who act on his call – people of goodwill, rich and poor, with the courage to create a better world.



## Clear thinking

**Our actions are founded on rigorous research and analysis.** The forces of globalisation are creating a world of ever-growing complexity, and at the same time our planet faces a dangerous crisis of sustainability.

There are no 'off-the-peg' answers. Instead, in each situation we must identify both the root causes of poverty and the sources of power that help to eradicate it. A passion for justice is ineffective without understanding and clear thinking.



## A hunger for justice

**We are moved by Jesus' 'good news for the poor'; his promise of a world where everyone can 'have life and have it abundantly' (John 10:10),** and also inspired by the everyday heroism of people and communities fighting injustice in villages, towns and cities across the world.

We are impatient and determined to create change. At first, many saw the Jubilee Debt Campaign as a wild dream, a practical impossibility. But throughout history the power of people hungry for justice has proved the sceptics gloriously wrong.



## Responding to urgent human need

**Those in immediate need cannot wait for global structures to change.** They need support now. The capacity to provide a timely humanitarian response is central to our purpose today.

We assist people with life-saving support following disasters and then help them to rebuild their lives. In responding to crises, we also think of the need to increase the long-term resilience of vulnerable communities, and the importance of growing people's capacity to challenge the systems that cause their poverty.



## Effectiveness

**We strive to achieve high standards in everything we do.** We monitor and evaluate our work to measure the differences we are making, and to improve our impact and effectiveness.

In humility, we analyse our mistakes and try to do better. We learn from experience, recognising that the factors fuelling social change are many and varied. This is how we deepen our understanding and the effectiveness of our own contribution to positive change. We encourage creativity and innovation to identify new and improved ways of tackling the causes and consequences of poverty.

We share our experiences and concerns with supporters, and take care to equip staff and volunteers with the knowledge they need to do their work effectively.

# THE CHALLENGES IN A CHANGING WORLD

The richest 1 per cent today control 40 per cent of the world's wealth, while the poorest 50 per cent own just 1 per cent. Women carry out 60 per cent of the world's labour, yet receive only 10 per cent of total income. Tonight, one person in seven will go to bed hungry. Some 2.7 billion people lack adequate cooking facilities and 1.4 billion live on less than US\$1.25 a day. Meanwhile major companies dodge US\$160bn in taxes each year, far more than the annual global aid budget.

**The world in which we operate is changing dramatically.** Power is shifting to the rapidly growing economies of the global east and south. New ideological and religious tensions are emerging. The power and mobility of global capital has proved difficult for governments and intergovernmental bodies to harness for the common good. Business, government, faith groups and communities constantly interact in unpredictable ways.

In this new world, we will continue to hold firmly to Christian Aid's enduring principles and values, while seeking to build trusting relationships with partners who have the potential to help end poverty. Our strategy recognises that we face a number of key challenges if an end to poverty is to be achieved:

- **Inequality.** Almost all societies are becoming much more unequal as the world economy expands. Simplistic talk of 'rich north' and 'poor south' no longer makes sense. The majority of people living in poverty today are living in middle-income countries such as Brazil and India, and it is in such countries that we are also seeing the greatest increase in inequality. Longstanding forms of inequality and discrimination such as those based on gender or ethnicity continue to limit the lives and opportunities of billions.
- **Resources.** As the supply of resources tightens – from copper to water, food to fossil fuels – new conflicts emerge. Those with the greatest power to influence the market are able to exploit those with less power, increasing inequality both within countries and between countries.
- **Climate change.** Experience of the threats from climate change and resource depletion are not matched by action to counter them. However, with green technology forging ahead, it will be important to develop ways of sharing the world's natural resources fairly and to build a good life within the limits of our planet's resources.
- **Disasters.** The impact of climate change and environmental degradation is seen in more frequent natural and man-made disasters such as floods, droughts and famines. The UN estimates that 70 per cent of disasters are now climate-related, affecting 260 million people each year. Their impact on poor communities can reverse years of progress in development, but disaster-resilient communities can move forward and thrive.
- **Migration** is on the increase, with many millions moving each year from rural areas to the cities, and from country to country in search of safety or jobs. This undermines the strength of traditional family and community structures and is reshaping notions of rights and citizenship.
- **Religion.** While the role of institutional religion is perceived to be weakening in Europe, its influence is undoubtedly expanding worldwide. Extreme versions of belief can promote conflict, both within and between faiths, while religious leadership is increasingly seen as a vital factor in promoting development.



# 40%

The proportion of the world's wealth which is controlled by the richest 1% of the world's population

# 1%

The proportion of the world's wealth which is controlled by the poorest 50% of the world's population

- **Economic power** is shifting from the US and Europe to nations east and south. At the same time, unregulated markets are rapidly eroding the power of governments to act as agents of change. Global institutions found themselves powerless to prevent the 2008 banking crisis, and unable to tackle the consequences.
- **Communications** technology is transforming the way we interact, trade, create communities and build political movements. Geography matters less, online access more. A serious divide opens up between digital haves and have-nots.
- **Globalisation** can create new opportunities for people around the world, but can also squeeze cultural diversity, with an individualistic consumer ethic taking the place of traditional collective values. Multinational marketing power can undermine local enterprise, while privatisation of public services limits the space for civil society and cooperative self-help.

Many of these changes potentially threaten the ability of vulnerable communities to claim their rights to enjoy 'life in all its fullness'. But, equally, many can be exploited to help in the battle against poverty.

Our strategy is a pragmatic attempt to tackle some of the challenges of this emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century world, and to seize new opportunities. We believe that success will depend on building a wide range of partnerships that have the leverage to make a major impact on the scandal of mass poverty in a rich and technologically sophisticated world.

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# POWER OVER POVERTY



‘Poverty is not the real problem of the modern world. For we have the knowledge and resources which could enable us to overcome poverty. The real problem – the thing which creates misery, wars and hatred – is the division of mankind into rich and poor.’

Julius Nyerere, first president of Tanzania

Ours is the wealthiest generation in human history – so wealthy that our excessive appetite for resources threatens our planet’s future. Over-consumption by the wealthy and middle class in industrialised and middle-income countries is reducing the access of vulnerable and marginalised people to basic resources such as water, food, land and energy, and the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation put at risk years of efforts to end poverty.

A century of amazing scientific progress has given us the medical, engineering, agricultural, industrial and financial know-how we need to end poverty, but the will to share these gifts justly among all the citizens of the earth is lacking.

Yet the problem is no longer about a simple gulf between the wealthy global north and the exploited, poverty-stricken south. Across the 21st century world, chronic poverty often exists side by side with grossly excessive wealth. Most people in poverty now live in middle-income, emerging economies. The injustice of poverty is all the more scandalous when it worsens while national income is rapidly rising.

Poverty is about much more than lack of income. Poverty denies opportunity and takes away people’s power to shape their lives or provide a future for their families. It is the lack of power to exercise basic personal, economic, political or social freedoms.

People living in poverty are people with rights. They want to end their poverty through their own actions. They need power to thrive, to share ‘life in all its fullness’.

As Julius Nyerere noted, the division of our world between rich and poor is potentially disastrous for us all.

To end poverty, these broken relationships need to be rebuilt – empowering those who live in poverty, while at the same time inspiring those with power to share their power accountably.

Poverty represents tearing in a web of vital relationships – we seek to realise a web that includes everyone in activities that deliver opportunity, justice and wellbeing to all. Poverty is the mark of economic and political systems that have failed.

We seek to realise a transformation in the way power is shared among the 7 billion inhabitants of our planet, and our role is to act as a catalyst to bring people together in relationships that help to transform an unjust world. Alone the impact we can make is limited, but through working in partnership we can help renew the world.

We know that when we act as good neighbours the world changes. This strategy sets out our plans to create that vital partnership for change to end poverty.

# OUR GOALS

The primary purpose of this strategy is to help marginalised or excluded communities to free themselves from poverty.



**Christian Aid identifies three goals for empowerment: resilient and thriving societies; equity and sustainability; and just power relations. We believe that the achievement of these three goals is not only essential if poverty is to be eradicated, but that the strengths, experience and understanding of the nature and causes of poverty held by Christian Aid place us in a strong position to address these issues.**

- **Resilient and thriving societies** – the power of individuals and communities to live with dignity, responding successfully to disasters and the opportunities and risks that they face.
- **Equity and sustainability** – the power to ensure resources are shared fairly between everyone, while safeguarding the earth's finite resources.
- **Just power relations** – the power for everyone to share in the vital decisions of life, and take a full part in society and the economy.

## Resilient and thriving societies

**All men, women and children have a right to thrive, not just survive; to live decently and safely; to grow their resources and capabilities; to save and reinvest for long-term prosperity and security.**

Moving from survival and subsistence to thriving and resilience is central to ending poverty. In resilient societies, people can provide security for their loved ones. When crises break, they have the resources to cope and plan for the future.

Poverty undermines the capacity of communities to survive shocks, cope with violence and rebuild after disasters. Shocks rapidly become disasters if communities lack the resources, food stocks, safe housing, know-how, health or political structures to tackle them. Communities need to be able to build their own resources and power to cope with threats, in ways that include and protect the most vulnerable. And they need to be able to make the most of opportunities, and create solutions that promote wellbeing for all. To achieve this, people living in poverty require access to resources and infrastructure. And governments and markets need to function in ways that enable communities to participate and thrive in the global economy.

Christian Aid has a long-established record of supporting marginalised communities to move beyond day-to-day subsistence, developing thriving and resilient livelihoods that use the earth's resources sustainably.

## Equity and sustainability

**Inequality is the main block to rooting out poverty from the world.** Indeed, most poverty is now found in fast-expanding, emerging economies. For while GDP may grow, the needs of excluded communities are typically ignored.

The private sector – from village to global level – has a vital role to play in ending poverty, but market forces alone cannot deliver economic justice. Rapid global economic development, in inadequately regulated markets, benefits privileged elites, and excludes growing populations from the benefits of economic growth. Governments must give the political commitment to fair and sustainable economic opportunities. We must support local, regional and global solutions that enable all communities to realise their potential – with equal access to markets, know-how, infrastructure, sustainable technology and investment.

Over-consumption by those benefitting most from growth – the richest 20 per cent of the world's population – fuels climate change and unsustainable use of the world's natural resources, a strain exacerbated in areas where economic growth has been accompanied by uncontrolled urbanisation, which is breaking down community structures and putting further strain on scarce resources.

Growth in the world needs to be constrained and its benefits shared more equally. We need alternative models of economic development and transformation of global systems to allow everyone to play a productive role, and we need to move the world to a low-carbon future while ensuring more sustainable and equitable use of resources for all.

## Just power relations

**Only the transformation of power relations will change an unjust world.** Seeking fairer allocation of resources is essential, but equally important is the right for all – and particularly women – to participate fully in the decisions shaping their future. To secure an equitable and dignified way of life, all people must have a voice in decision-making. This requires power structures that are genuinely representative and responsive to people's demands and that those with power behave accountably.

Development stands the best chance when power is used accountably and for the social good. Many groups are reluctant to address power imbalances and prefer to remain 'neutral'. Christian Aid is not neutral: our work is based on a fundamental identification with the rights and aspirations of oppressed women and men living in poverty. They must have the power to influence and change the structures and processes that keep them poor. We must give voice to the most marginalised and support them to transform power imbalances at every level, from the household to the global.

Communities in poverty have the same entrepreneurial potential as the most privileged, but they need the tools to realise their potential, and to thrive as citizens in a competitive global economy: education; healthcare; access to capital and know-how; communications; infrastructure; accountable government; and the rule of law.

**“ We need alternative models of economic development, and transformation of global systems to allow everyone to play a productive role. And we need more sustainable and equitable use of resources for all**

# PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE



‘If you’ve come here to help me, you’re wasting your time. But if you’ve come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.’

Lilla Watson, Australian Aboriginal elder

Our supporters and partners have taught us that change happens only when people fight hard for it, **and the wider the network, the greater the impact on poverty.** Christian Aid can inspire many different agents of change with a radical but practical agenda for ending poverty.

The agent might be one determined individual. Or a multinational business with supply chains that enable local businesses to thrive. Brave activists exposing government corruption. A village trader. A dedicated priest, imam, rabbi or guru. Women and men sharing family responsibilities more equally. Shoppers making the everyday choice of fairly traded goods. Voters. Or governments negotiating global finance rules.

**Each action counts. But when united behind a shared vision, the opportunity to create change is multiplied.** Christian Aid’s task is to identify and build the trusting relationships that can turn our energies as a development agency into a much bigger practical impact.

**The quality of relationships is critical.** They must be founded on shared values and mutual accountability, not ideology or dogmatism. Some will be close partnerships; others looser, temporary alliances. They should be honest, outspoken relationships: good neighbours are never afraid to speak truth to each other.

**Our strategy excludes no one.** The private sector, governments, intergovernmental bodies and faith groups all have key roles to play. NGOs and UN agencies are natural allies. Civil society partners have been and will always be at the heart of our work, as will, of course, the people in poverty themselves.

This is not about Christian Aid cosying up to big institutions and losing its prophetic, critical edge. Speaking out against injustice is hard-wired into our movement. But so is pragmatism – a **tough-minded realism** about where power lies and how change can be delivered in a complex and troubled 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

Partnership has been a founding principle of Christian Aid. Not only a way of working, but fundamental to our identity, it is as much about who we are as it is about how we work. In the past our partners have almost exclusively been frontline civil society organisations and church-based groups. Those partnerships will strengthen. Yet long experience teaches us that in order to fight poverty we must actively seek to enter into partnership with a much wider group of partners and allies. We believe that Christian Aid has become what it is today partly through our experience of partnership. Within those relationships we have been able to inspire and be inspired, challenge and be challenged, provide support and receive it – we expect this will continue in new ways; and we expect that we will continue to change.

In this strategy, we identify **five groups of partners** with power over poverty: **civil society, faith groups, governments, the private sector** and, finally, the **individual men, women and children** whose initiative and leadership can change the course of history.

## Civil society

**Civil society organisations inspire self-help and enterprise, building on the firm foundations of family and local culture.** These community activists, campaigners, trade unions and faith groups have been core partners of Christian Aid throughout its history. They have shown the courage to confront governments and businesses, and have changed the lives of millions.

Civil society provides a vital counterweight and essential partner to the expanding power of global capital, and a challenge to what is often corrupt or unaccountable governance. It creates the space for debate and decision-making and nurtures a sense of community and self-reliance. With healthy community roots, civil society groups can mobilise a frontline expertise that outsiders lack. They are often the first to respond to emergencies.

Their capacity can be boosted through sharing know-how, training programmes and technology exchange, online social networks, links with the private sector and faith groups, and contact between communities in the global north and south. Christian Aid is well placed to act as broker in these processes.

**“ In Britain and Ireland, our church supporters have repeatedly shown their power as active citizens to rouse the conscience of politicians, and to change the policies of business, large and small, through initiatives such as fair trade**

## Churches and other faith groups

**The call to action from faith leaders can be irresistible.** Despite the decline of institutional religion in Europe, the influence of faith groups worldwide is rapidly increasing. In countries with weak or corrupt governance, they often create the social infrastructure on which people depend: schools, health centres, access to finance, protection for victims of conflict or disaster. In countries with insufficient implementation of economic, social and cultural rights, they can have a strong advocacy voice.

In Britain and Ireland, our church supporters have repeatedly shown their power as active citizens to rouse the conscience of politicians, and to change the policies of business, large and small, through initiatives such as fair trade. We hope to help our supporters to realise the full potential value of their contribution. Through partnerships with churches in Britain and Ireland, Christian Aid is held in an active relationship with its roots. Within the churches and their communities are many thousands of people who give, act and pray in support of Christian Aid; but Christian Aid sees this partnership not only as a means of drawing support, but also as a means of being allies in the mutual endeavour of ending the scandal of poverty.

Worldwide, religion can be a potent political force, for both good and ill. Churches have a long record of fighting for social justice on issues ranging from apartheid to HIV/AIDS. Their commitment to social action reflects the words of St Ignatius of Loyola: ‘Pray as if everything depended on God; work as if everything depended on you.’

Christian Aid is well-placed to encourage and support networks of activist faith groups. We have pioneered training for church leaders in controversial areas such as attitudes to HIV. Through our sponsoring churches, we can challenge Christian leaders worldwide to be more inclusive and to act boldly against injustice.

In many of the countries where Christian Aid works, churches and faith groups are rooted and active in every community. Often, it is to these groups that people turn for support and comfort when disasters strike, for hope and inspiration in their struggle against oppression, and for sanctuary at times of danger. It is there that people find their identity affirmed and their dignity upheld. It is through partnerships with churches, and faith communities such as these, that Christian Aid can best hear the voices of those who live in poverty. We have strong relationships with Christian agencies worldwide through our membership of the ACT Alliance, and we will seek to strengthen our work through this alliance to build stronger partnerships with other faiths.

## The private sector

**In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the power of the private sector is rapidly expanding at the expense of government.**

Businesses, from the largest to the smallest, have a critical part to play in ending the scandal of poverty. Enterprise is the ladder out of poverty for most people. People living in poverty need the private sector to thrive.

We will seek partnership with business – big, medium and small. Enlightened business leaders increasingly realise that fair relations with those involved at all stages of the supply chain are essential for long-term, sustainable profitability. They realise that sustainable development is both good for the private sector and good for those who live in poverty. That awareness can be harnessed, and the resources and engagement of the private sector can be brought together in partnership with Christian Aid's focus on justice, our experience of development at the grassroots, and what we have learnt from partnerships with community-based organisations. We are confident that such partnerships can create a dynamic that will have a positive impact on poverty.

Christian Aid has a record of exposing unjust trade rules and negative business practice; this is a part of our calling to be prophetic and we will continue to be so. We will positively engage with the private sector – from multinational to village level – in helping to end poverty through enlightened business and the creation of enterprising local markets. There are no boundaries to where change and transformation can occur. From our long experience of partnerships we have learnt the importance of ensuring that they are reciprocal, and that we are both able to support others in their work and learn from their experience so that more good can be done.

## Government

**Unaccountable governance stifles development.**

Democratic governments can regulate markets to prevent exploitation, and levy fair taxes to fund public goods. They can protect minority rights and prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion or race. We will support local partners in holding governments and other power-holders to account.

Unless the voices of people in poverty are clearly heard, their needs are disregarded, and corrupt elites monopolise what wealth is generated. Weak or unaccountable governance fails to provide the essential infrastructure – healthcare, education, communications, rule of law, protection – on which development depends.

We will also speak out directly to challenge intergovernmental decisions that disregard the needs of marginalised communities. This work depends on building powerful alliances with other NGOs, as well as UN agencies and academic research institutions.

We will work with our partners to monitor governments, ensuring that decision-making is open and accountable, and that commitments are delivered.

In countries with corrupt or brutal governments, or civil conflict, the potential for positive change may lie in the hands of those outside formal political structures. We have longstanding experience, in countries such as Afghanistan, of working with such groups.

We will work with our supporters in Britain, Ireland and Spain to influence their governments to bring about sustainable change (through the actions of intergovernmental networks and agencies) for people living in poverty.

**“ We will positively engage with the private sector – from multinational to village level – in helping to end poverty through enlightened business and the creation of enterprising local markets**

## Individual women, men and children

**The power to change the world springs from people's hearts and minds, not from strategic theories or global institutions.** We recognise the bureaucratic inertia that can stifle action, and the heroism of those women and men who challenge and overcome it through community action.

Supporting groups and individuals to claim their rights is at the heart of this strategy. In this respect, gender equality is critical to development. The empowerment of women transforms societies, as it unlocks the potential of half the world's population. Yet their voice and leadership is denied in so many countries.

Institutional thinking can be dangerous. In our eagerness to develop long-term partnerships with civil society and faith groups, the private sector and governments, we must not blind ourselves to the sparks of initiative and leadership that flare up from individuals. They are often the ones who change history – not the big institutions.

“ There are no boundaries to where change and transformation can occur. From our long experience of partnerships we have learnt the importance of insuring that they are reciprocal, and that we are both able to support others in their work and learn from their experience so that more good can be done

# STRATEGIC CHANGE OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve our goals – resilient and thriving societies; equity and sustainability; and just power relations – we have identified five Strategic Change Objectives.

Christian Aid's goals describe a world without poverty. The scale of this challenge requires us to work in partnership, focusing our collective efforts where we see the greatest potential to achieve impact with scale and speed, and to stand back from other areas. Our Strategic Change Objectives set out our chosen areas of focus, and these, along with how we achieve them, are the bases on which we will be held accountable.

All the objectives start from the same analysis of the power imbalances and inequalities that create and underpin poverty. We also recognise that by virtue of their exclusion and relative lack of power, people living in poverty are vulnerable to a wide range of external factors that perpetuate and deepen poverty – from natural disasters, to economic crashes, to conflict.

Each objective reflects a specific dimension of this understanding of poverty and how best to root it out. In some cases this involves tackling power and inequality head on; in others it means addressing vulnerability or responding to urgent human need and using this, equally, as an entry point for transformational change.

Our approaches must be integrated and mutually reinforcing if we are to bring about the comprehensive change we seek. To this end, there is intentional overlap between the objectives, which provide broad strength and flexibility.

The Strategic Change Objectives are not prescriptive. If we are to make the maximum contribution to a world without poverty, we and our partners will need to develop the right mix of approaches to solve the specific problems that are faced within each society in which we work. These solutions will also need to evolve in response to a rapidly changing and unpredictable world.

Each objective integrates practical and political dimensions, across local, national, regional and global levels. With our partners, we have achieved remarkable results and developed strong track records in many areas. These objectives consolidate our existing work but also seek to build on our successes and sharpen our focus; to ensure that all of our work is as strong as the best of what we have already achieved; and to achieve even more.

**“ Our Strategic Change Objectives set out our chosen areas of focus, and these, along with how we achieve them, are the bases on which we will be held accountable**

## 1 Power to change institutions

We will join in building a worldwide movement of people working in solidarity to demand that governments and other institutions share power with those they serve in ways that are just, accountable and inclusive.

### Why it matters

Societies create powerful institutions; local and national governments, the private sector and intergovernmental agencies. These institutions have the ability to serve citizens' needs, but they can also become unaccountable, at the expense of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

If poverty is to end, the voices of vulnerable and marginalised people need to be heard, and institutions must be held to account by all citizens on the basis of equality. Everyone has the right to exercise power to shape their future, and to take part in making key decisions that affect their lives, irrespective of their wealth, status, gender or identity.

Dialogue with institutions can raise their understanding of their duty to be truly accountable and responsive to the needs of people living in poverty. Unaccountable institutions must shift their concerns from self-interest, or the short-term interest of their shareholders, towards serving the long-term needs of all their citizens – poor as well as rich – in ways that are environmentally sustainable.

- Since people who live in poverty are the real experts on poverty, their voices and interests must help to shape decision-making.
- Women and girls living in poverty are typically even more excluded and ignored, and their voices and perspectives need to be amplified and brought to the heart of institutions and decision-making.
- Without being accountable to poor communities, all bureaucracies lose touch with the wishes of those they exist to serve.
- As the power of the private sector grows at the expense of governments, it is vital to protect and expand the space for effective civil society action.

- Successful development and emergency response, promoting good governance and confronting problems such as corruption, require full participation and accountability at all levels.
- Inclusive debate is essential in order to find the right answers to poverty and inequality for each situation.
- This objective develops our work in accountable governance, most obviously our learning about power analysis. It takes forward our work promoting accountability and dialogue between power holders and marginalised people, communities and societies. We will continue to challenge the forces that prevent poor people, civil society and poor countries from speaking out.

### Essential partners

- **The private sector.** As the power of the private sector grows, a realistic development strategy must involve multi-faceted engagement with business. Such a strategy must argue the advantages of pro-poor business practice, and of business models based on relationships of respect and trust, up and down the supply chain.
- **Global institutions** create the framework of trade, law, finance and environmental sustainability on which development depends. We need to work with them so that we can harness their power to act on what they hear from the frontline of poverty.
- **Civil society** groups have been our partners for 65 years, making sure that poor and marginalised people's voices are heard in the corridors of power. Working in partnerships, we must help to expand their space for action. In countries with weak or ineffective democracy, civil society and faith groups are often the sole champions of women and men living in poverty.

- **Trade unions and professional associations** often represent large numbers of people who have day-by-day experience of whether the public are being properly served. They have the authority to pressure governments to act.
- **Churches in the global north and south.** Networks such as the ACT Alliance bring together perspectives from the north (where most global businesses and agencies are still based) with the south, amplifying the voices of women and men living in poverty. Faith leaders can be expert persuaders, standing alongside people who live in poverty and speaking out with a strong moral voice.
- **Supporters** are members of civil society and have networks of friends and colleagues. They can use their influence and networks to promote changes in government and other institutions in which they play a part, to bring in greater accountability, sustainable ways of working and reform of unfair systems that work against the poor.

### Our priorities

- Help increase the capacity of our civil society partners to ensure that the voices of those living in poverty are heard by the powerful, and to ensure the capacity of poor communities to participate and hold powerful institutions to account.
- Engage with the private sector to share thinking on pro-poor business practice, and develop new market models.
- Hold governments and private institutions to account for their record of policies and practices that combat inequality, discrimination and exclusion.
- Help build a mass movement to bring about radical change in global finance, the private sector and intergovernmental institutions, so as to make them accountable and their systems transparent.
- Ensure that analysis of power, gender and inequality informs all Christian Aid programmes, campaigning and advocacy work, putting these issues at the centre of our thinking and practice.

### Our outcomes

In areas where we work on this objective we will focus our efforts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Significantly greater inclusion and voice of poor and marginalised women and men in decision-making at all levels.
- Private and public institutions basing their decision-making on long-term thinking, environmental sustainability, and the building of secure, thriving communities.
- Reduced inequality in the global system, and reforms to international institutions that strengthen the position of developing countries in setting policies that affect their futures.

## 2 The right to essential services

We will help to increase access to services essential to ensuring healthy lives, coping with emergencies and creating resilient livelihoods – with a particular focus on maternal and child mortality, and preventable diseases such as malaria, TB and HIV.

### Why it matters

Essential services are basic rights and should be provided by governments equally to poor and rich, women and men. We will support excluded communities in challenging governments to fund these services adequately and manage them effectively.

Vulnerable groups – particularly women and girls – must be empowered to take a full part in decisions on how their individual needs are to be met.

Preventable disease destroys the power of people to earn a living and rise above subsistence. Poverty, in turn, blocks access to services essential to health, such as clean water, sanitation, health-education and medical care.

- Physical weakness takes away the power to grow food or earn a living.
- High costs of medicines or treatment consume funds, leaving people less able to invest in their future.
- Children are denied the chance to gain an education because of sickness, extra caring responsibilities, or because money set aside for school fees is needed to pay for healthcare.
- Limited access to healthcare nearly always has the greatest impact on women and girls, who usually take on increased caring responsibilities, closing down opportunities for their own education and employment.
- Lack of essential services within communities can turn otherwise survivable crises – such as floods or droughts – into disasters.

This objective builds on our well-established work in HIV, which we have already begun to broaden out into wider community health. We will continue to work with faith and community-based partners to deliver essential health services to people who are currently excluded, especially women and girls. However, growth

will not come through providing more services, but through building the responsiveness and inclusiveness of services provided by government, private sector, and other actors, and increasing the accountability of these providers. It's in this overlap with 'Power to change institutions' that we see opportunities to broaden our work still further, to encompass the rights to education and other essential services.

### Essential partners

- **Civil society partners** in the global north and south. We have longstanding experience of working with local partners in community health to build capacity, share know-how and innovate. We can also bring expertise together from north and south, bridging the gap between global agencies, government and business, and those working at the front line. We will strengthen our work with partners in supporting communities to claim their rights, enabling them to hold their governments accountable for providing access to high-quality, equitable services
- **Faith groups** in developing countries. They have a strong record of providing a range of services when governments fail to do so. They can show leadership to communities, particularly in areas such as sexual and maternal health, gender equality and discrimination against people living with HIV. They often wield the political clout to convince local and national governments to prioritise health, education and other essential services.
- **Churches and supporters in Britain and Ireland.** Supporters will be inspired to act, pray and give to ensure that poor communities gain access to equitable, high-quality essential services. Building on long experience of campaigning and development issues, they can urge governments and businesses to adopt pro-poor policies and pricing strategies. They can also influence faith leaders to take more enlightened approaches in controversial areas; in

particular stigma, discrimination and gender. Our membership of the ACT Alliance and APRODEV gives vital global leverage on these issues.

- **The private sector.** The private sector plays an increasingly important role in the provision of essential services and can contribute further through innovation, the use of technology and efficiencies that deliver value for money. It also has rapidly expanding roles in charitable giving, and setting affordable prices. We believe business interventions must be effectively regulated and form part of an integrated national strategy in the provision of quality and equitable services.
- **Governments.** We believe that a key duty of governments is to secure the delivery of essential services for their people. With our partners, we will work to establish strong and trusting relationships with national and local governments to strengthen policy and resource commitments and ensure this is turned into action at the front line. Key relationships will continue to be strengthened with governments in Britain, Ireland and elsewhere to ensure policy reflects community needs, resource provision and best practice.

### Our priorities

- Build on our existing approach to HIV prevention, care and support, and work with faith leaders and institutions to end stigma and discrimination in order to strengthen integrated responses to maternal and child health, HIV, malaria and TB.
- Identify opportunities that empower poor and vulnerable people to mobilise and claim their rights to a range of good quality, equitable essential services.
- Inspire our supporters to continue to act, pray and give to ensure poor communities gain access to equitable and quality essential services. Build supporters' understanding of our ambition to see poor communities claiming their rights to these services.
- Support our partners to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised people have access to essential services during times of humanitarian crises.

### Our outcomes

In areas where we work on this objective we will focus our efforts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Governments increase resources for good quality essential services that ensure equitable access and community involvement.
- The most vulnerable and marginalised, in particular women and girls, are able to access quality health services.
- Faith and community-based organisations' responses are well-integrated with government systems, increasing the coverage and impact of service delivery.

### 3 Fair shares in a constrained world

We will work to transform unjust and unsustainable economic policies and practices so that poor and vulnerable people can gain thriving livelihoods, and face disasters more effectively while protecting the natural resources on which all our futures depend.

#### Why it matters

All men, women and children have the right to 'life in all its fullness': to enjoy a fair share of the wealth and rich opportunities our planet offers, in ways that safeguard its ecosystems and finite resources. Our present economic system fails on both counts.

While economic growth can bring benefits and opportunities, the pursuit of growth at all costs has led to massive increases in inequality, while excessive consumption is causing irreparable environmental damage. New economic models are needed, which put human wellbeing, equality and sustainability first.

To escape poverty, people need fair and inclusive markets to provide the income, goods and services they require. They may have the energy and enterprise to succeed, but the dice are loaded against them. We need to see a huge shift in the balance of economic power in favour of disadvantaged people and countries.

Disasters, global commodity price crises and other shocks have always hit the poorest communities hardest. Supporting vulnerable communities to cope with these crises better – to be more resilient – is essential if they are to stay out of poverty.

- Benefits of economic activity must be felt locally, with a fair share of products and profits staying within communities. Local enterprise must be supported, and global trade needs to become the servant of local markets, rather than their master.
- Vulnerable communities already pay a high price for past environmental damage caused primarily by the rich – in pollution, soil-loss, deforestation and climate change. Yet they missed the benefits of a century of global growth.
- Climate change and other legacies of unconstrained growth are resulting in increased frequency and severity of natural shocks, such as floods and

droughts. These hit the poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest.

- Women and girls are consistently discriminated against and exploited in economic activity at every level, from local to global. To secure equitable and dignified ways of making a living, they also need a greater voice in economic and market decision-making.
- The present lifestyle of the rich world is environmentally unsustainable. As the global middle class expands, this problem increases. Businesses and consumers must bear the true environmental costs, without passing them on to poorer communities.

This objective seeks to integrate our existing work in secure livelihoods and economic justice at every level, from local to global. Our work on climate change is a model for this integrated approach, linking innovative techniques helping farmers respond to changing rain patterns with long-term climate forecasting and disaster risk-management, with advocacy on global climate financing.

#### Essential partners

- **The private sector**, particularly businesses run by and for people who live in poverty. Sustainable and thriving communities require enterprises and markets that deliver goods and income directly to people who live in poverty, and that keep a fair share of products and profits in the communities where they were generated. Larger businesses – national, regional and global – must open up to poor and marginalised people as suppliers, customers and/or employees, providing decent and predictable prices and wages, sharing know-how and complying with economic, social, environmental and labour standards.

- **Environmental movements** and climate scientists can provide expertise vital in helping poor communities adapt to the impact of climate change. Bringing the development and environmental movements together can foster new 'fair and green' alternatives that do not deny people in poverty the fruits of development enjoyed by the rich.
- **Churches and other faith groups** can offer compelling visions of social justice and of how human beings can live at one with the rest of creation. They have the potential to inspire citizens, communities and policy-makers with an alternative vision of development.
- **Supporters** will use their influence as voters, consumers, activists, business people and professionals to promote national and international policy frameworks and regulation that promote fair market access, and participation by people living in poverty and their communities. They will continue to challenge unsustainable consumption patterns and build support for fair and green alternatives in their communities.
- **Civil society networks** can mobilise public opinion and build political pressure for radical change in economic/environmental policies and market regulation, in the global north and south.

### Our priorities

- Build on partners' experiences in livelihoods, climate resilience and disaster risk reduction work to develop integrated resilient livelihoods programmes.
- Continue to support vulnerable communities to anticipate and prevent threats and risks, and respond to disasters that overwhelm them.
- Strengthen advocacy and campaigning in both the global north and south on pro-poor markets and economic policies, tax justice and the role of the private sector in development.
- Work with the private sector and other partners around the world to develop and disseminate alternative, fair and green, economic and development models and innovative solutions

that are equitable and inclusive, serve poor communities and countries and promote long-term sustainability rather than profit at all costs.

- Use networks of influence, including churches, to change the prevailing mindset that the good life depends on ever-increasing material wealth and consumption.

### Our outcomes

In areas where we work on this objective we will focus our efforts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Women and men living in poverty move beyond subsistence, take advantage of opportunities and better manage risks and shocks affecting their lives, livelihoods and resources.
- Poor and excluded people and communities secure greater shares of income, value and assets through markets and economies that function more fairly.
- Greater adoption by governments, private sector and citizens of alternative approaches to development, based on justice, equity and sustainability.

## 4 Equality for all

We will help to reduce structural and gender-based inequality and create a more inclusive world, where identity – gender, ethnicity, caste, religion, class, sexual orientation – is no longer a barrier to equal treatment.

### Why it matters

As a Christian organisation we believe that all human beings are created with equal, unique value, and that equality lies at the heart of Jesus' command to love our neighbours as ourselves. As a development agency we also know that inequality is the most vicious and persistent driver of poverty, discrimination and exclusion.

The deepest-rooted injustice is based on identity, where the powerful discriminate against others, because of who they are. It is particularly difficult to tackle, since its source lies deep in each society's culture and belief system. It intensifies in times of conflict or crises when resources are squeezed. And even those who grossly violate the human rights of marginalised women and men often go unpunished.

Gender discrimination is a fundamental driver and cause of poverty, as it prevents women and girls from realising their potential and from exercising power to direct their own lives.

- Societies that deny basic rights and freedoms to women or other excluded people deny their potential to develop, innovate, and take an active role in development.
- Discrimination on the basis of identity prevents the opportunity for a dignified life, leaving people either in a state of poverty or dependency.
- Unequal treatment of people because of aspects of their identity is a major cause of civil conflict, and can be a motive for war between nations.

'Equality for all' is at the core of all our Strategic Change Objectives: the key reason for describing it as a separate objective is to hold ourselves and our partners accountable for including women and girls, and other groups suffering discrimination and exclusion, in every aspect of our work. In addition, we will increase our involvement in local, national and international

campaigns with faith groups and social movements to promote gender equality and challenge gender-based violence and discrimination.

### Essential partners

- **Community based organisations, coalitions, trade unions and others** help shape the nature of day-to-day relationships between people. They have a strong record of taking action to overcome inequality, and they succeed because they have local-level credibility and gain impact through working together.
- **Supporters** will hold governments and institutions in the global north and south to account on their record of implementing policies and laws that combat inequality and discrimination, and promote inclusion. They will challenge inequality in all its forms, including through their churches and faith communities.
- **Churches and faith groups** have an indispensable role in changing prejudices that are deeply rooted in culture and tradition. But intolerant religious beliefs are major factors in creating inequality. Christian Aid is ideally placed to interact with faith groups to unlock their full potential as agents of positive change.
- **Social movements and networks worldwide** are effective in campaigning on this issue, bringing passionate commitment together with advocacy and research.
- **The media** is one of the main instruments for producing and reproducing social norms, attitudes and behaviours, and is therefore a critical stakeholder in our work.
- **The private sector and its associations** will be key stakeholders for securing inclusive and non-discriminatory business practices that enable large-scale, innovative solutions to end inequality.

- **Governments** are crucial in setting a firm legal framework for equal rights, and for resourcing the services that help make them a reality.

### **Our priorities**

- Incorporate analysis of power, gender and inequality into all our programming, campaign and advocacy work, in order to put this objective at the heart of every area of our work and our own future development.
- Challenge inequalities so as to create inclusive practices within churches and faith groups, and support interfaith initiatives that promote inclusion and challenge discrimination.
- Hold governments and institutions of the global north and south to account on their record of implementing policies and laws that combat inequality, discrimination and exclusion.
- Forge strong links with social movements worldwide that challenge inequality, to change the reproduction of damaging social norms.
- Work with partners and allies to prevent and reduce gender or identity-based oppression and violence.
- Work with the private sector and government to build innovative, scalable solutions to end oppression, discrimination and inequality.

### **Our outcomes**

In areas where we work on this objective we will focus our efforts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Changes in the social and political environment that promote and enable equal gender relations and women's empowerment.
- Social and political factors that reinforce social, cultural or economic exclusion on the grounds of identity have been challenged and changed.
- Christian Aid integrates analysis of gender and exclusion into all aspects of its work and thinking.

## 5 Tackling violence, building peace

We will help to protect vulnerable people from violence, identify and challenge its causes, and transform conflict peacefully.

### Why it matters

We believe that every person is made in the image of God, and that the right to life and security is a fundamental human right. Violence is also a prime agent of poverty, capable of wiping out years of development and destroying thriving societies.

Millions of people are imprisoned in poverty by conflict, violence or the threat of violence. It is the crudest of social controls, a tool of those who wish to exploit others. It results in unacceptable human suffering. No one should have to live day by day under the destructive shadow of fear.

The underlying causes must be addressed. Effective peacebuilding cannot be imposed: it must grow in the hearts and minds of both oppressor and oppressed.

An urgent priority will always be to find practical ways to protect victims from their oppressors. We will also help to monitor violence and publicise its impact, campaign for effective legal action, and use lobbying and advocacy to influence parties in violent conflict.

- Conflict between and within nations destroys infrastructure, agriculture, industry and the essential services on which citizens depend. It is always disastrous to development.
- The rule of law is not just fundamental to civilised life: it is essential to the creation of thriving, economically viable societies.
- Violence creates inequality by destroying the capacity of its victims to participate fully in society or realise their potential to contribute to the development of their communities.
- Violent conflict splits families and breaks down social structures, leading to forced migration, long-term displacement and dependency as refugees.
- Criminal violence, often linked with official corruption and extortion, prevents enterprise, undermines economic development, and scares off necessary outside investment.

- Social and domestic violence feeds off and perpetuates the oppression of women and minorities. It is particularly insidious because it is so often hidden.

While Christian Aid has always worked on these issues, we have not previously recognised this as a separate priority. Rather than seeking to grow our work dramatically, the intention is to build a distinctive competence in this area, drawing together our learning from different contexts, developing approaches that get to the root causes of conflict, and articulating more compelling advocacy and policy messages at national, regional and global levels.

### Essential partners

- **Social movements.** A core aim must be to help build a broad-based social movement that can tackle violence at all levels, from global campaigning to street-level action. This will bring together a wide range of agents – supporting women to play a central role – including traditional leaders, youth and community organisations, human rights lawyers and specialists, trade unions and campaigning NGOs.
- **Civil society groups,** with roots in the societies they serve, will be key partners. In the past their work in tackling violence and brokering peace has shown extraordinary courage and self-sacrifice, but they are also entitled to protection.
- **Churches, other faith groups and alliances.** All religions teach peace, yet religion is often enlisted to legitimise conflict. As part of ACT and APRODEV we have links with Christian activists worldwide. Our faith base helps us engage with community leaders from other religions in interfaith action to tackle violence together, and protect victims.
- **Supporters** will be part of social movements for change which challenge attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that perpetuate violence. They will be inspired and resourced to pray for peace and justice, to build pressure for those responsible for violence and

conflict to be held to account, and for governments to prioritise peaceful alternatives.

- **Specialist agencies.** We will build advocacy ties with NGOs and UN agencies involved in specialist areas such as international criminal justice, election oversight, human rights monitoring, and provision for refugees.
- **Governments** in theory have the power to build peace. In practice they may provoke conflict, institutionalise violence, or be too weak to act against root causes. Through our partners we can help bring governments together with other agents of change: community leaders, traditional justice systems and faith groups.
- **Perpetrators of violence.** A realistic approach to peacebuilding must include critical dialogue with those who use violence. They may not respond – or they may come to realise that peaceful alternatives can be created that deliver solutions for the benefit of all.
- **The private sector.** The private sector, and multinationals in particular, play a crucial role in the causes of violent conflict, especially in their control over extraction of resources.

### Our priorities

- Support efforts to expand protection for people suffering violence and for their defenders. Strengthen community and traditional justice mechanisms where state structures fail.
- Help bring perpetrators of violence to account through local, national and international lobbying and human rights monitoring, with the aim of inspiring positive changes of behaviour.
- Help to grow the means for civil society to address root causes of violence, and build networks and systems to contribute to conflict transformation.
- Develop peaceful alternatives to violence that draw on the traditional strengths of communities and fully engage young people, women, faith organisations and marginalised groups. Help to share good practice in this area worldwide.

### Our outcomes

In areas where we work on this objective we will focus our efforts to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased protection for those most vulnerable to violence – women, children, minorities and refugees – and equipping them to address the causes of violence, tackle impunity and resolve conflict peacefully.
- Development of peaceful and effective alternatives to violence and armed conflict.
- Broad social movements for change with women at the centre, that successfully address root causes of violence and act to transform them with justice.

# EVIDENCING CHANGE

We will work to ensure an integrated approach across the five Strategic Change Objective areas, and in order to assess the impact of Christian Aid's progress against this strategy we will use 11 overarching success criteria. These criteria reflect our holistic understanding of poverty, inequality and vulnerability. We will use them to evidence progress across social, political, economic and environmental dimensions of change in all our advocacy and programme work.

## Strategy success criteria

1. Women and girls are achieving greater social, political and economic equality, and Christian Aid is placing gender and exclusion at the centre of its analysis and work.
2. Through partnership, everyone is inspired and supported to play their part in ending poverty.
3. Poor and marginalised people have gained greater voice in decision-making at all levels.
4. Governments are responding to the voices of poor and marginalised people in their decision-making and allocation of resources.
5. Poor and marginalised women and men can access essential goods, benefits and services, and can successfully manage risks and threats.
6. Business and market activity and regulation are more fair and inclusive, and provide sustainable benefits for poor communities.
7. Churches and faith groups are increasingly playing a distinctive role in securing the rights of poor and marginalised women and men.
8. People with the capacity to do so have taken action to promote fair and sustainable sharing of power and resources with all.
9. Civil society has been protected and expanded, with greater security for those who are vulnerable and a reduction in gender-based violence.
10. Our humanitarian responses are effective and inclusive, build resilience and address underlying inequality.
11. Sustainability and equality are placed at the centre of global development policy and practice through the 2015 revision of the Millennium Development Goals and subsequent action.

# ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

The global financial crisis that began in 2007 has had major social, political and economic impacts that will last far beyond the eventual stabilisation of financial markets. These events have made our work more difficult and, in several areas, much more unpredictable. Acknowledging this complex external environment, the strategy set out in this document is based on a number of central assumptions and risks.

**Concern.** Despite the decline in attendance in mainstream churches in Britain and Ireland, popular sympathy with practical Christian principles remains strong. Gospel imperatives of honesty and justice continue to resonate, particularly when political discourse around the economic crisis is dominated by concerns about the lack of transparency and accountability in markets, and in a world where inequality is a major and growing threat in all countries.

**External.** Our analysis implicitly assumes variable rates and degrees of change in a range of important areas, including the speed of the UK's decline as a world power and the growing role of non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in global decision-making, and the economic, social and political changes to crisis-hit countries.

**Internal.** We will continue to recruit and retain experienced, skilled and motivated staff; we will seek to provide a working environment that reflects our commitment to right relationships, and we will seek to avoid disproportionate influence resting with individuals rather than being shared across the organisation and its structures.

**Resources.** Despite the continuing financial crisis, we will seek to ensure personal and institutional commitment to shared aims so that we do not see a major decline in individual donations and institutional funding.

**Credibility.** We will continue to base decisions – from country programmes and global advocacy, to fundraising and our own governance – on rigorous evidence, drawing on our experience, on technical expertise and on pragmatic analysis of the development implications.

**Dramatic global change.** Dramatic changes could include, for example: a collapse (say, greater than 25 per cent) of per capita income; a widespread return of political violence and greater repression of dissenting voices in crisis-hit countries; a major war between developing countries (for example, between India and Pakistan, or regionally over water-rights along the Nile); or climate change driving unexpectedly rapid increases in the frequency of extreme weather events, making, among other things, current patterns of global commerce unfeasible.

**“ We will continue to base decisions on rigorous evidence, drawing on our experience, on technical expertise and on pragmatic analysis of the development implications**

# HOW CHRISTIAN AID WILL CHANGE

We believe the world can be different. This strategy sets out a radical development in our approach to tackling the injustice of poverty. It puts power at the centre of our thinking: the power people living in poverty need to claim their right to 'life in all its fullness'.

Our strategy identifies potential sources of empowerment that we believe can, through a spirit of inclusive partnership, help us to realise this vision.

So the Christian Aid of 2020 will differ from today, though its historic values and principles remain constant.

- We will be more outward-looking and innovative in approach, constantly seeking opportunities to influence and collaborate with new allies as the world changes.
- We will encourage a more dynamic involvement from our supporters, where fundraising is just one part of a much wider role – as active citizens building relationships between global north and south, holding companies and governments to account, and campaigning for justice.
- We will be rigorous in putting our scarce resources to best effect, accepting that we often make a greater impact by brokering partnerships than by working alone.
- We will nurture and grow the talents and potential of our staff, to inspire them to be the best they can be in their contribution to the achievement of this strategy.
- We will work with people throughout the private sector who understand that in the long term, a pro-poor business is good business, and that markets can and must act in the best interests of people living in poverty.
- We will harness private-sector engagement to encourage pro-poor market development, where everyone involved in the value-chain, from raw-material producer to consumer, shares the benefits of the market in equitable and sustainable ways.
- We will vigorously encourage and challenge church leaders and communities, in the global north and south, to use their power and influence to benefit poor and excluded people, and to deliver social and economic justice.
- We will continue to engage robustly with governments and intergovernmental institutions, confidently speaking truth to power on the basis of strong research, and deep understanding.
- We will continue to take a high profile role in setting the public agenda on global development issues, campaigning for reform and monitoring private and public sector performance against clear criteria.
- We will continue to put environmental sustainability at the heart of all our actions, making sure that economic development enhances rather than depletes the planet, so that communities can continue to thrive from generation to generation.
- We will work much harder to build trusting relationships with other faith-based organisations, so that we can work together to bring about a shared vision of justice and peace.

**These are high ambitions, rooted in our understanding of the biblical vision of a new earth, where women and men act together as true neighbours. Our generation has the tools and know-how to deliver it: Christian Aid's task is to inspire the will to make that happen.**



The essential purpose of Christian Aid is to expose the scandal of poverty, to help in practical ways to root it out from the world, and to challenge and change the systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

**actalliance**

The ACT Alliance is a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy.

[christianaid.org.uk](http://christianaid.org.uk)

[christianaid.ie](http://christianaid.ie)

[christianaidscotland.org](http://christianaidscotland.org)

[cymorthcristnogol.org](http://cymorthcristnogol.org)

[inspiraction.org](http://inspiraction.org)

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