

Turning hope into action

A vision of
a world free
from poverty

2005-2010 Strategic Framework

Contents

Hope into action	1
Our values	2
Our approach	3
The challenge	4
Focusing our work	5
Strategic focus areas	
1. Secure livelihoods	6
2. Economic justice	8
3. Accountable governance	10
4. HIV	12
5. Strengthening the movement for global justice	14
6. Strengthening the organisation	16
An agent of change in an uncertain world	17

Hope into action

Today 1.3 billion people live in extreme poverty. Tonight 800 million people will go to bed hungry. This year 12 million children will die before their fifth birthday. At the start of a century of unprecedented wealth, we reject a world where such suffering exists amid such plenty.

It needn't be like that. We can hope for a better world, where everyone lives a full life, free from poverty. And we have the power to turn that hope into action.

Doing, not dreaming

Hope is about doing, not dreaming. It makes things change. Since 1950, life expectancy in developing countries has risen by 20 years, access to clean water has doubled, child death rates have halved, and food production has grown 20 per cent faster than population.

The unprecedented economic development of the last few decades has created unprecedented wealth, as well as pockets of extreme deprivation, across the globe. But it's not simply a matter of economics. Poverty has been eroded partly because people have fought together for justice: rich and poor, North and South, people of all faiths and all races. They didn't give in to despair. They hoped – and acted.

The scandal of poverty

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 which favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

We contribute our passion and experience to the broad movement of people who use their faith, talents and energies to fight for a better life for all.

In supporting this movement, we serve the churches in Britain and Ireland. We are driven by the gospel of good news to the poor, and inspired by the vision of a new earth where all people can live in justice, peace and plenty.

Christian Aid's work is founded on Christian faith, inspired by hope, and acts to change an unjust world through charity – a practical love and care for our neighbours across five continents.

Our values

Only one thing can matter for Christian Aid: to help those in need.

So we don't play politics or calculate how to protect our own interests. We always speak out to highlight inequality and injustice, however unpopular the cause. We try to provide hope and inspiration to those in despair, however difficult or dangerous the situation. And we know we can achieve nothing on our own: we must work with others – poor and rich, of whatever religion or none – to make things happen.

The dream of a new earth often seems to conflict with the reality of widespread pain and injustice. But the gospel tells us that ending poverty and suffering is not just a dream, but an imperative from God. It gives us the faith to turn this hope into action through down-to-earth, practical work that challenges both the causes and consequences of injustice.

Put human life first

We believe that all people are created equal, with inherent dignity and infinite worth. Individual human needs must always come first, ahead of dogma, ideology or political necessity. We know that each one of us, in all our diversity and varied talents, can make a real difference in the battle to end poverty and injustice.

Struggle for justice

Poverty is a condition created by an unjust society, denying people access to, and control over, the resources they need to live a full life. So we take the side of poor and marginalised people as they struggle to realise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. We believe in the just and sustainable use of the earth and its resources, so that the greed of one generation will not create poverty for the next.

Speak out courageously

We have a duty to speak out and act with conviction to challenge and change the systems that create poverty. Christian Aid always remains independent of governments and other powerful institutions. We work to educate and mobilise people from all kinds of backgrounds to build a global movement which can change the course of history.

Test everything against experience

We know that poor people are the true experts on the nature of poverty, and our work is shaped by their voices and concerns. In a spirit of humility, we try to learn from our own mistakes and from the experience of those we work alongside, to improve the impact of our work. We know that lasting solutions can never be imposed on communities from the outside.

Work together with others

All our work is based on the spirit of cooperation and partnership. We help to build a world free from poverty through inter-faith and inter-community dialogue and cooperation. We nurture the talents, commitment and energy of all our supporters, volunteers and staff. Together we uphold a commitment to honesty, mutual respect, accountability and diversity.

Our approach

In 1945, the British and Irish churches created Christian Aid to put faith into action amid the ruins of a horrific war. Sixty years on, we work with church partners, the ecumenical family and sister agencies, such as APRODEV, the network of Protestant European agencies, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the international emergency network, Action by Churches Together, as part of a global movement for social justice and poverty eradication. We also cooperate with alliances of other faiths and secular groups which share our passionate determination to end poverty.

The gospel paints pictures of God's preference for the marginalised, the disadvantaged, and the poor. Our approach is also to strive for this new earth. Anyone, rich or poor, can be generous, wise and creative because everyone is made in God's image and everyone is impoverished when one person is excluded or marginalised. Everyone has a right to a full and decent life. Whatever our background, we must challenge the persistence of evil – greed, power, violence and our silence – when people and systems oppress others. Loving our neighbours means working for justice. Change will only come about as a movement is built of individuals who are committed to a better world for all.

Partnership

Partnership for us is not a matter of convenience, but of principle. However well-intentioned, the North has no right to impose its solutions on the South. So everything we do in the field is built on mutually accountable relationships with partners with roots in the communities of the South. We help to fund their work, facilitate their learning, and develop their capacities. They in turn enrich us with their wisdom, experience and vision. More widely, in an ideologically divided world, Christian Aid promotes dialogue between faiths and communities wherever this can help bring about justice and peace.

Empowerment

Working together with partners, we hope to reach into communities to support projects which give men, women and children the power to control the structures and processes in their lives which keep them poor. Since women and girls are disproportionately affected by poverty, we do everything possible to overturn the injustice which denies them an equal share of resources and opportunities.

Integration

However effective, development and relief work cannot on its own change the systems which keep half the world poor. We know we must integrate practical activity on the ground with global education, advocacy and campaigning. Christian Aid has a unique reputation for speaking out courageously on controversial issues. The power of our words is rooted in the experiences and hopes of the people we and our southern partners seek to support.

Enthusiasm

In Britain and Ireland, in the same spirit of partnership, we inspire people to become agents of change by mobilising a passionate army of supporters to raise money and campaign on issues of poverty and social injustice. Christian Aid Week each year is the largest house-to-house collection in the UK, with the involvement of over 300,000 volunteers and 20,000 local churches and committees. It successfully raises funds, hugely raises our profile, and attracts vital publicity to our campaigns.

Professionalism

We strive to achieve the highest professional standards in everything we do. We use monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment to measure the difference we've made, and to learn from experience. We encourage creativity and innovation. We share our experiences and concerns with supporters and take care to equip staff and volunteers with the knowledge they need to carry out their work effectively. We help our staff to minimise the risks of working in a much more divided world.

The challenge

Poverty has many dimensions. Hunger. Lack of shelter. Being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Not being able to go to school or to read. Fearing for the future and living one day at a time. Not being able to sell what you've made or grown. Being powerless, unrepresented and oppressed.

And the challenge is greater than ever before. Rising numbers of people live in poverty and the gap between rich and poor is widening. And as people are driven into poverty, they are cut out of the very economic and political processes which should protect them – an unkind irony heightened by the wealth of the world today. Globalisation and the liberalisation of trade too often act against the interests of the poorest.

Within this context, some suffer more than others: women and girls; people discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, ethnicity or caste; people living with HIV, who are often treated as outcasts. Poor communities are hardest hit – by disasters, war, disease, environmental degradation and the effects of climate change.

Since 2001 the threat of terrorism has also made vulnerable communities even more vulnerable as resources and public attention have been diverted from the battle against global injustice to a so-called war on terror.

We know that there are no quick fixes. We know that poverty is complex and cannot be solved through one simple route. And we know, too, from listening to the voices of poor people, how great is the challenge of tackling poverty and how difficult it is for people to claim their rights. Nonetheless, the inspiration of the gospel gives us the strength to confront these huge problems head-on.

Christian Aid's strategy over the next five years will be driven by a single practical vision that combines the delivery of direct benefits to poor and marginalised people, with a determination to speak out to challenge and change the systems that keep people poor.

Focusing our work

We have indentified six key areas in which to focus our efforts over the next five years. These are not separate channels of activity: we know that the strength of our vision lies in the ability to integrate our work across all the dimensions of poverty. But we will give priority, energy and resources to achieving the 18 goals we set for ourselves across these six areas of focus.

We will set ourselves challenging performance targets to ensure we meet the expectations of our stakeholders. They will show whether we are using our resources efficiently and demonstrate that our work is making a measurable difference to the lives of poor and marginalised people.

We will commit ourselves to high standards of transparency and accountability, giving particular priority to assessing our progress, learning from experience and openly reporting both our successes and setbacks.

1. Secure livelihoods

We will strengthen the capacity of poor and marginalised people to protect, rebuild and improve the quality of their own lives.

Why this matters

We know from long experience that the most effective way to tackle poverty is through working with local partner organisations at community level. Most of Christian Aid's funds are spent on helping poor people to secure their livelihoods through cooperative action.

Poverty denies people access to the material and social resources that sustain a fulfilled life. Essential materials include land, clean water, infrastructure and finance, while social resources include health, education and the ability to participate in decision-making. So eradicating poverty must give power to poor communities to enjoy the benefit of these resources in ways which can be sustained in the future.

Poverty is not just about lack of assets and resources. Men and women also need the power to access information and make their own decisions. This is particularly true for poor women, who often face huge extra constraints in patriarchal societies. Though it is important that campaigning charities such as Christian Aid should speak out against the structures that perpetuate poverty, it is vital that poor people themselves have the tools to speak for themselves, challenge injustice and claim the right to take decisions about their own lives.

Disasters and conflict make marginalised communities even more vulnerable. It's not enough to respond to the immediate crisis. Unless we understand the lasting risks to livelihoods faced by communities in emergencies, we cannot help them rebuild their lives afterwards. At the core of any emergency response must be long-term development strategies to give people the resilience to rebuild secure livelihoods months and years after an emergency.

Even the most prepared communities can sometimes be overwhelmed by the effect of disasters. Chronic, long-term emergencies, often linked with climate change and environmental degradation, are particularly intractable problems. The impact on livelihoods and people who are especially vulnerable, such as women, can be devastating.

It is vital to understand these situations in all their complexity. Emergency intervention must go hand-in-hand with high-quality analysis. It is all too easy to do lasting harm, despite idealistic intentions. We take seriously our responsibilities of being able to respond effectively to large-scale emergencies, and will work to strengthen our organisational capability to react promptly and ensure we contribute to meeting the needs of those affected.

Our strengths

- knowing how to help poor people to access the resources and assets necessary for a secure livelihood
- expertise in supporting and developing the capacity of partners to prepare for and respond to the needs of vulnerable people in emergencies
- enabling poor people to take part in decision-making that affects their future livelihood
- the ability to share learning across our global partner network and to assist our partners in staying abreast of critical developments
- a strong link between our livelihoods-support work and our supporters, campaigners and the public in Britain and Ireland.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 1.1

Equip and empower greater numbers of poor and marginalised people to protect and claim their rights to the resources and assets essential for a secure livelihood.

Evidence of change

- increased access to resources to improve the lives of the men, women and children supported
- increased numbers of poor and marginalised people whose livelihoods are secure and safe.

Goal 1.2

Strengthen vulnerable people and communities to address and protect themselves against the impact of both natural and man-made disasters.

Evidence of change

- reduced mortality and morbidity in vulnerable communities where we work during times of disaster
- rebuilt lives and community structures in the aftermath of emergencies
- increase in communities' capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies and mitigate risks.

Goal 1.3

Gain a deeper understanding of the impact of environmental threats and respond to its effects in the way development is managed.

Evidence of change

- greater public awareness of the relationship between development and the environment
- incorporation of environmental threats into Christian Aid's development programmes and strategies
- international development policies changed to reflect a commitment to respond to the effects as well as the causes of global climate change.

2. Economic justice

We will challenge and change the unjust systems which create poverty, and help poor people both to build sustainable incomes and to claim their economic rights.

Why this matters

We live in a world in which no-one needs to live in poverty. Two centuries of technological advance and economic development have created unprecedented wealth. The problem is not lack of resources, but a grossly unjust distribution of wealth.

This injustice has been deepened by the global economic systems which favour the interests of the rich minority at the expense of the poor majority. Unfair policies on trade and finance, the overwhelming power of corporations, and unfulfilled promises on aid and debt conspire to make this inequality worse.

The UN has agreed the goal of halving poverty by 2015. We recognise that this is a move in the right direction but it is still not enough. Progress will require a major transfer of wealth and resources from the rich North to the poor South. To eradicate poverty we must substantially raise the quantity of aid. But equally important is the quality of targeting that aid. Much greater quantities of aid must directly reach the poor so they can secure lasting changes in the quality of their own lives. And aid must not be conditional on governments following policies which they believe will undermine development.

Economic orthodoxies currently forced on poor countries weaken and undermine their economies. They are compelled indiscriminately to open fragile markets to imports of subsidised goods from rich countries, pitching fledgling industries into full competition with powerful multinationals. This forces poor people, especially small farmers and traders, out of business, further distances poor communities from the provision of essential service and leads to more entrenched poverty.

Christian Aid continues to have a leading role in the successful mass campaign to persuade western governments to commit themselves to cancelling the debts of developing countries. But many are still saddled with huge repayments, undermining their ability to provide basic health and education services. The financial crisis in poor countries must be dealt with once and for all by first cancelling all of the existing debt and then putting in place measures which prevent unpayable debt from accumulating in the future.

We will argue against the imposition of destructive economic policies, whether by donor governments or international financial institutions, and campaign vigorously for western governments finally to meet the UN aid target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. The challenge of achieving economic justice is immense, but we can build on Christian Aid's unique campaigning strengths to bring about change over the next five years.

Our strengths

- a well-resourced policy, advocacy, research and campaign operation with particular expertise on issues of economic justice
- Sixty years' experience of supporting and enabling long-term economic development programmes that enhance poor peoples' ability to sustain a living
- an ability to mass-mobilise passionate and committed supporters, who can link into global alliances and networks campaigning against poverty and injustice.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 2.1

Improve the capacity of poor people and their organisations to address and overcome local, national and international economic structures and systems that perpetuate poverty.

Evidence of change

- poor and marginalised people, particularly women-headed households, are able to secure and sustain an income
- creation of peoples' organisations and movements to build economic justice and food security.

Goal 2.2

Mobilise mass support to campaign for the rights of poor countries to implement pro-poor economic policies, specifically on trade, challenging enforced liberalisation and corporate power.

Evidence of change

- global economic policies and practices – especially those on trade – are challenged by a strong global movement defending the interests of vulnerable communities and persuading governments of the need for change
- poor country governments implement economic policies that help their citizens to secure long-term sustainable livelihoods
- global human rights, environmental and financial norms are introduced for corporations which are legally enforceable by governments.

Goal 2.3

Support the need for urgent, full debt cancellation for poor countries and increases in aid that lead to a sustainable financing of development.

Evidence of change

- a new international mechanism on debt that sees the poorest countries receive a 100 per cent write-off and others qualify for some cancellation
- UK and Ireland governments and other donor countries demonstrate significant progress toward the UN aid target level of 0.7 per cent
- conditions attached to debt cancellation and aid that force poor countries to follow economic policies harmful to poor people are ended.

3. Accountable governance

We will work with our partners in communities across the world to hold those who control resources and wield power to account for their actions at community, national and international level.

Why this matters

Christian Aid believes that poor, unaccountable governance at local, national and international levels is one of the root causes of poverty and injustice. Many of the factors that perpetuate deprivation are political.

Most poor women and men have little or no say in the decisions that most affect their lives, whether they are taken by governments, big corporations or financial institutions. Governance is rarely transparent, and the people whose life-chances are determined by the policies of the powerful are denied the opportunity to hold them to account. So the real experts on poverty and development – poor people themselves – are cut out of the policy process.

The situation is even worse in weak states where political systems and processes are absent, or in failing states which suffer from large-scale corruption, human rights abuses and endemic violence. People in such countries are trapped in poverty and suffering, with no means of redress or reform.

Women often face additional constraints, linked to conservative social attitudes, male-dominated cultures and religious systems. This hinders the effective development of female leadership within communities, and so prevents the development of truly representative democracy, both locally and at the national level.

Christian Aid will campaign for greater accountability from those who control the resources that poor people have a right to enjoy. We will support poor people as they demand the right to decide their own futures. And we will challenge national governments and multilateral institutions to be more open and accountable in taking decisions which affect the lives of people in the South.

Our strengths

- supporting programmes that equip poor communities to fight for the right to accountable democracy
- experience of developing the policy, advocacy and campaigning skills of southern partners
- strong research capacity in issues of accountability in multilateral institutions
- effective tools for global campaigning work through Christian Aid's external relations department and links with international alliances and networks
- a reputation for speaking out and publishing relevant and hard-hitting reports that expose the scandals of poverty, injustice and human-rights abuses, no matter how unpopular the cause
- wide experience of governance issues in conflict and post-conflict countries.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 3.1

Work to strengthen civil society to enable poor and marginalised women and men to hold decision-makers to account for the delivery of services and benefits at local and national levels.

Evidence of change

- representative groups of poor people empowered to engage successfully with policy-makers on issues critical to their lives and livelihoods
- greater levels of accountability and enhanced quality in the provision of local services for poor people.

Goal 3.2

Hold Northern and Southern governments, global institutions and businesses to account for the impact of their policies on poor people, and persuade them to be more open, accountable and subject to international human rights norms.

Evidence of change

- growing public pressure on governments, global institutions and corporations to change their policies to benefit the lives of poor people
- growing recognition of multilateralism and global governance to influence the eradication of poverty and social injustice.

Goal 3.3

Strengthen the capacity of our partners to support poor communities vulnerable to human rights abuses and to resolve the structural causes of conflict through promoting more accountable governance.

Evidence of change

- strengthening of accountable institutions in respecting and upholding the international law on human rights in areas of conflict
- increasing the capacity of partners to engage in dialogue that promotes conflict resolution and long-term sustainable peace
- enhanced protection from abuses for particularly vulnerable groups.

4. HIV

We will provide support and care for people living with the effects of HIV, and challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with it.

Why this matters

HIV is one of the most serious challenges to development. It is inextricably linked to poverty. Ninety-five per cent of people with HIV live in developing countries. Christian Aid recognises that we cannot contribute to poverty eradication without working on HIV. Rates of transmission continue to rise, despite the intensifying efforts of governments, UN agencies and NGOs.

HIV thrives in situations of poverty, inequality and conflict. Poor countries often lack sufficient resources and infrastructure to reduce HIV infection and limit its impact on society. Poor people, particularly women, children, young adults and elderly carers are the most vulnerable – physiologically, economically and socially. It is only through coordinating efforts at national and community level that the increase in HIV infection will be contained.

The virus flourishes particularly where there is inequality between men and women, since women cannot protect their sexual health in ways that men can. Many women also have limited power to negotiate safe sexual relationships, or protect themselves from sexual violence. They also bear the brunt of caring for people living with HIV, and for orphaned children. Addressing the link between gender inequity and HIV is critical if we are to reduce its spread and impact.

Stigma and discrimination hinder effective prevention and care programmes. Faith leaders have an important role to play in denying the connection of HIV with shame and sin. In its work with religious leaders, churches and faith-based communities, Christian Aid is well placed to reach vulnerable communities and promote sensitive HIV prevention and care.

We believe that the voices and actions of ordinary people – in Britain, Ireland and partner countries – should be at the heart of efforts to respond to HIV. Communities living with HIV are in the strongest position to raise awareness and promote behaviour change, to care for people affected, to challenge discrimination, and to lobby for effective policies at national and international levels.

Our strengths

- direct experience of working with people living with HIV and developing community-based programmes and advocacy
- ability to reach into vulnerable and affected communities through churches and faith-based groups, which often provide the most important community networks in many of the most affected countries
- an integrated approach to poverty eradication, ensuring that HIV work is not treated as a stand-alone strategy, but as an integral component of all our relief, development, emergency, advocacy and communications work
- a partnership and community-based approach to HIV prevention, care and support
- broad range of faith-based and ecumenical relationships based on collaboration in programme implementation and advocacy
- commitment to developing the knowledge and capacity of staff, partners, supporters and religious institutions to address HIV issues in their personal and professional lives.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 4.1

Prevent HIV transmission.

Evidence of change

- raised awareness and changed attitudes among target population groups of how HIV is transmitted and of behaviour change to reduce its spread
- 30 per cent increase in the number of partner organisations working on HIV prevention
- donors, international financial institutions and churches providing adequate finance for prevention, and introducing economic policies which support prevention
- challenge the underlying factors that contribute to women's greater vulnerability to infection.

Goal 4.2

Provide comprehensive community-based care, treatment and support for people living with HIV and their families.

Evidence of change

- 30 per cent increase in number of partners working on HIV care and support
- increased attention of donors to the importance of community support and strengthened advocacy for better treatment of HIV
- Christian Aid seen as the leading agency supporting HIV programmes in disasters and emergencies.

Goal 4.3

Challenge the stigma and discrimination linked with HIV.

Evidence of change

- a decrease in HIV-associated stigma and discrimination in Christian Aid and in partner organisations and programmes
- increased attention to supporting anti-stigma work by donors
- increased advocacy and prevention work at national level by groups of people living with HIV.

5. Strengthening the movement for global justice

We will increase the capacity of people's organisations to fight together against global injustice, at local community, national and international levels.

Why this matters

Each day the number of people living in poverty increases; the gap between rich and poor widens. But men and women acting together have the power to overturn injustice, however overwhelming the odds: poverty is the result of human failure, not an inexorable fact of life. So strengthening the people's movement for global justice underpins all our work across each of Christian Aid's focus areas.

At local level, a secure livelihood often depends on community groups fighting successfully for access to housing, health, education and other resources. A strong civil society is essential in pressing local and national governments to transform the structures that create inequality and exclusion. Grassroots organisations can empower people living with HIV and implement preventive measures. Women's organisations act to redress gender injustices – something that is fundamental to progress in all areas of development.

But even national organisations are too small to confront the challenges of globalisation. We must work with regional and global movements to campaign on trade and debt reform, and to press for the accountability of international financial institutions and UN agencies. A vital component of this effort is the ecumenical movement, committed in Britain, Ireland and overseas, to justice, peace and dialogue with other faith communities. Networks such as the World Social Forum demonstrate an inclusive approach that transcends religious, political and ethnic divisions in the common pursuit of justice for the poor.

To play a full part in the movement for global justice we must strengthen Christian Aid itself as a movement, by increasing the active participation of sponsoring churches, supporters and volunteers in our campaigns. The process starts with raising awareness and education, and ends with energetic action. While affirming our church base, we must reach beyond it. And we must involve young people in everything we do.

Expanding our campaign efforts to match the scale of the challenge we face will require a substantial increase in funding, both for our own campaigning and advocacy and for the work of our partners. The challenge is huge and urgent, and it will only be met through a massive mobilisation of resources, both human and financial.

In campaigns such as Jubilee 2000 and the trade justice campaign we have proved that the enthusiasm and outrage of millions of ordinary people can change the way the world works. Strengthening this movement is the thread that links

our supporters with the people around the world to whom – even if they never meet them – they feel committed.

Our strengths

- the credibility which comes from Christian Aid's deep roots in the British and Irish churches
- legitimacy, based on the experience of partners and of the networks to which they belong, in building up movements to affirm the rights of all people
- the confidence to speak out boldly which comes from long participation in the struggles of the ecumenical movement against racism and other forms of discrimination and for the rights of the communities where we work
- involvement in national and international networks, both ecumenical and secular
- a large number of supporters and volunteers passionately committed to fundraising and campaigning with Christian Aid
- an ability to reach out to non-church audiences and institutions by communicating in compelling and accessible ways.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 5.1

Actively engage and serve churches, supporters, volunteers and partners to reach out in our vision of strengthening a movement to eradicate poverty and social injustice.

Evidence of change

- people and churches resourced, inspired and equipped to put their faith into action in working with others to build a better world
- strengthened and significantly increased supporter and volunteer base, enabled to mass mobilise on activities and action towards poverty eradication.

Goal 5.2

Energetically support local, national and international organisations and networks, both secular and ecumenical, as they contribute to the eradication of poverty and injustice.

Evidence of change

- development of people's organisations at all levels, encouraging their networking and increasing their ability to put pressure on governments
- success by the Trade Justice Movement and other alliances in Britain and Ireland in mobilising public opinion and influencing governments
- the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies play a creative and positive role in relief, development and advocacy
- concrete achievements by global networks campaigning for reform of trade, debt relief, aid and international financial institutions.

Goal 5.3

Raise public awareness of the work of Christian Aid and of the root causes of poverty, to increase understanding and involvement of supporters, especially of young people, in campaigning and fundraising.

Evidence of change

- issues of poverty and injustice in the world are understood, acknowledged and acted upon
- growth in Christian Aid's active supporter base, with a higher proportion of 18- to 25-year-olds.

Goal 5.4

Mobilise individuals and institutions in a supporter-led commitment to an annual income of at least £100 million (€140 million) by 2010.

Evidence of change sought

- Christian Aid establishes a supporter-led approach to its work with an integrated system of supporter care
- institutional funding contributes proportionately to the increased income, in line with Christian Aid's values
- a rise in total income year by year to reach a sustainable level of at least £100 million (€140 million) in the fifth year of the period.

6. Strengthening the organisation

We will strive to make the best possible use of our resources, human, financial and material; learn from our experience; and be open and accountable in all our actions.

Why this matters

In order to make the strongest possible contribution to poverty eradication over the next five years, Christian Aid is committed to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the way it manages its work.

With 60 years of practical experience and a strong sense of shared purpose embedded in our Christian values, we have a clear vision of what we can achieve to improve the lives of poor people. We must always make optimum use of our finite resources.

We recognise the importance of valuing and investing in the skills and talents of our staff and volunteers in achieving our goals. We will nurture a highly motivating environment where good performance is encouraged and recognised.

We understand the importance of being open and transparent in whatever we do and being accountable to our stakeholders.

Rigorously pursuing the strategic goals set out in this document, we will enhance our capacity to make a real difference to poverty eradication in the field, challenging and changing the systems that keep people poor, and strengthening our role in the movement for change.

Our strengths

- a strong organisational culture with deeply embedded principles and values
- an understanding of poverty that has been developed through 60 years of work rooted in the poor communities that we support
- enthusiastic and committed supporters, volunteers, professional staff and governing board
- a strong commitment to honest and transparent communication, both internally and externally.

Our goals for 2005-2010

Through our work

Goal 6.1

Develop a working culture that is underpinned by Christian values, and based on efficient and effective business structures and systems that promote the delegation of authority.

Evidence of change

- a working environment that fosters mutual respect and values diversity
- staff and volunteers are supported, rewarded and highly motivated to strengthen their capacity, skills and competencies to attain consistently high levels of performance in their particular areas of work
- Christian Aid improves the efficiency and effectiveness of its structure, systems and processes.

Goal 6.2

Improve our ability to be an open, transparent and learning organisation, accountable for its actions and able to meet high standards of public and stakeholder reporting.

Evidence of change

- improved systems to assess corporate achievements and performance with regular reporting mechanisms in place
- increased public and stakeholder trust in our honest and transparent approach to reporting on our activities
- growing support for our work as a direct result of a trustworthy reputation
- increased organisational sensitivity to the need to be more open and accountable in a complex and challenging environment.

An agent of change in an uncertain world

Any organisation's five-year strategy must contain the flexibility to respond to the unexpected. For Christian Aid, operating in some of the world's most volatile areas, this is acutely true. Five years ago, few would have anticipated events such as the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington DC and the so-called war on terror which followed. These events have made our work more difficult and, in several areas, much more dangerous.

The strategy set out in this document is based on a number of key assumptions and risks.

Assumptions

Concern

Despite the decline in church attendance, popular sympathy with practical Christian principles remains strong. Gospel imperatives of honesty, justice, tolerance and loving care will continue to resonate, particularly in a world where these values are threatened by a growing mood of fear and intolerance.

Support

We are confident that the public and our supporters will continue to respond generously to emergency appeals, and to the vital annual campaign of Christian Aid Week. We expect support for development and poverty eradication to remain a key priority for British and Irish governments throughout the strategic period.

Internal

Our strategy assumes that Christian Aid's income will continue to increase as planned, and that we can respond effectively to donor and public demands for transparency and accountability. We will continue to recruit and retain the experienced, skilled and motivated staff and volunteers to achieve our goals.

External

We hope that a deteriorating security situation will still allow us access to areas of greatest need. We will be able to help partners to scale up their capacity to develop and implement effective programmes. We believe that issues of climate change and environmental degradation will become increasingly prominent over the next five years.

Risks

To resources

One clear risk is of an economic downturn in Britain and Ireland. This might reduce government spending on development, and at the same time cut back charitable spending from individuals. Christian Aid's traditional support from mainstream churches might be reduced if there is a continued decline in the attendance of regular church-goers. Increasing competition from other charitable organisations may limit the numbers of volunteers supporting Christian Aid's work.

To our capacity for action

The violent aftermath of the 9/11 attacks has resulted in a deep polarisation which has eroded the space for dialogue on poverty and injustice. This situation may deteriorate further if the war on terror intensifies. Our humanitarian work in areas of conflict and need is threatened by further decline in respect for international law, the Geneva protocols and other humanitarian agreements. For the first time, significant areas are simply off-limits for international development organisations. This will seriously weaken the capacity of our local partners to implement effective programmes.

Christian Aid in 2010

We believe the world can be different. This strategy helps us to change it. By 2010, we will be recognised as a leading force against global poverty, respected for our stand on social injustice. We will be known for our unwavering willingness to speak out courageously on difficult issues where others would prefer to remain silent. We will take risks in pursuit of our uncompromising belief in justice. We will be contemporary, relevant and clear about our analysis of poverty, and our views and actions will be shaped and influenced by the voices and aspirations of our partners and poor people themselves.

Rooted in the life and witness of British and Irish churches, and expressing the hopes of a much wider society, we will have earned respect for inspiring and challenging others, young and old and of all faiths and none, to be active in a global movement to build a better world. Working in alliances with others, Christian Aid will support high-quality, sustainable development programmes that have real and lasting impact on the lives of poor communities. This will be complemented and strengthened by our messages to governments, international institutions and the public in the UK and Ireland, and by our campaigning to make change happen.

Our duty of stewardship compels us to support a sustainable approach to the use of finite natural resources. As stewards of scarce resources, Christian Aid will be a well-managed, flexible and professional organisation, fostering a culture based on Christian values which respects and nurtures the potential and development of staff and volunteers. It will be efficient and effective in raising resources, reaching out to new audiences and donors in Britain, Ireland and beyond. We will use our resources wisely ensuring everything we do is grounded in our essential purpose of eradicating poverty and social injustice. We will be open, accountable and transparent in the use and allocation of those resources, and have a strong reputation of trust and confidence.

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 which favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

Christian Aid works in some of the world's poorest communities in more than 50 countries, wherever the need is greatest and regardless of religion. It works with more than 650 local organisations to eradicate poverty and injustice.