

Objective:

Equality for all



Music and dancing at a workshop in Para, northern Brazil. Our partner CPI helps indigenous and marginalised groups to understand risks from mining and dam projects, and to assert their legal and cultural rights.

Equality for all

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

What we want to achieve:

- To bring about changes in the social and political environment to promote equal gender relations and women's empowerment.
- To challenge and change social and political factors that reinforce exclusion on the grounds of identity.
- To ensure that we integrate analysis of gender and exclusion into all aspects of our work and thinking.

Highlights

Tackling gender inequality and other forms of exclusion cuts across all our projects globally. In 2017 we influenced UN policy making on tax, and expanded the faith movement for gender justice and equality. In Nigeria, we have helped challenge norms that negatively affect adolescent girls, while in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory (loPt), India and Brazil, we supported marginalised people to claim their human rights.

Linking economic justice with gender equality

An important event took place this year for gender equality – the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the principal global policy-making body on gender equality. Together with the Global Alliance for Tax Justice, and our national and regional partners, we successfully advocated for the final outcome document to recognise the importance of progressive tax policy for funding women's human rights. We also ensured that the document referred to combatting illicit financial flows: this is one of the main ways in which developing countries lose vital domestic resources for financing women's human rights.

At the UN, we advocated for progressive tax policies to fund women's human rights

Establishing a faith movement for gender justice

Christian Aid, through the work of Side by Side, has increased the recognition and support for multi-faith actors to address gender and identity-based exclusion. Side by Side has continued to grow in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Middle East, and Africa. At a regional West Africa conference in Ghana, Side by Side succeeded in bringing together traditional, Christian and Islamic faith actors from 10 countries.

By championing this role of faith actors, Side by Side is establishing an authoritative voice. The Department for International Development consulted Side by Side in drafting a gender equality policy paper in March 2018, which highlighted the role that faith can play in shaping identity, attitudes and practices. Side by Side co-leads a Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development workstream that helps international institutions to support a faith response to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Alongside Global Affairs Canada and Islamic Relief Worldwide, Side by Side has contributed to supporting indicators of SDG 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. This has ensured that we achieve international recognition and support for faith actors in promoting gender justice.

Defending the human rights of the most excluded

Through our partners, we support excluded communities to access their rights, including access to land in India and Brazil, and the empowerment of women in Gaza to hold local authorities to account.

In Gaza, **loPt**, where civil society space continues to shrink and legal accountability mechanisms are being eroded, our local partner the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) has supported 670 women to secure legal aid services including child custody and alimony support in 2017 (a 10% increase from 2016). Women have reported feeling more trust and confidence

in seeking legal services after participating in human rights training led by our partner. In all, 25 young people raised their human rights concerns with decision makers. This was significant, as it was the first time that these young people had challenged decision makers publicly.

Our two-year Collective Action for Adolescent Girls Initiative, completed in July 2018, has reached over 700 adolescent girls in 12 communities in northern **Nigeria** with knowledge, capacity and life skills. In collaboration with the Gender Awareness Trust and Development and Peace Initiative, we helped communities to openly and safely discuss issues including early marriage and economic empowerment for adolescent girls. This safe space revealed that certain social norms were not acceptable to everyone in the community, but there had been no opportunity to challenge them. Work with men and boys in Makarfi and Chikun, on positive masculinity and gender sensitivity, increased their knowledge of issues affecting adolescent girls, giving them the skills to become champions on these issues. Our internal report shows that the project engaged with 144 faith actors who are now supporting parents to rethink the choices presented to girls. A growing number of adolescent girls who were out of school are being re-enrolled.

In India, our partners helped around 1,500 households claim individual land titles

In **India**, under the Forest Rights Act 2006, marginalised communities are fighting to regain lost cultural and social rights and to restore their relationship with forests and other natural resources. Through increased access to information and rights to services, three Christian Aid partners in four Indian states have ensured that indigenous and tribal communities can make claims under the Forest Rights Act. Enhanced involvement of village governance members and collaboration between civil society organisations, local councils and the state administration have led to the protection of the indigenous rights of tribal and Adivasi communities. Our partners report that, last year, around 1,500 households received individual land titles from government authorities (1,508 acres) and 17 villages received common community land rights (338.2 acres).

The official decision not to grant a licence to build a thermoelectric plant in the Piaçaguera region of **Brazil** has been hailed as a victory for indigenous people, environmental organisations and the population of the region who, since early 2017, have been denouncing the negative consequences of pursuing the project without the necessary participatory debate. Work by our partner CPI and communities has included raising awareness about impacts on indigenous lands, developing joint actions with the indigenous communities and environmental NGOs, and advocacy work with government institutions and local politicians to expose technical gaps in the project, as well as its impacts on the Atlantic Forest and indigenous communities.

Challenges and learning - addressing inequalities

Across our programmes, we continue to see that projects to enhance women's leadership at community level must engage traditional male leaders. Where we are working with human rights defenders, a key learning is that they can adequately respond to atrocities and violence against women with less backlash only when they are effectively networked and supported through capacity building.

A lack of government data and its inadequacy for evidencing excluded groups, coupled with limited resources and expertise within civil society, including Christian Aid, poses a significant challenge. However, where we have drawn upon external expertise, we have taken more confident steps in areas where we have less experience. In Brazil, for example, the country programme is taking guidance from our longstanding partner the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) on how to respond to landless people who are also marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Our work on gender and inequality has highlighted the need for us to continue to move beyond traditional approaches that often see inequality through a single lens, and to develop a deeper understanding of multiple axes of inequality in political and social settings. We are challenged to further develop our adaptive and flexible approaches to programming, invest in in-depth analysis, community-based approaches and the involvement of multiple stakeholders if we are to realise our commitment to gender justice and equality for all.