

Christian Aid Ireland Programme Strategy 2016 - 2021



Christian Aid Ireland is an international aid and development agency. We work with local partners in over 40 countries worldwide.

Our work is based on our Christian belief that everyone, regardless of faith or race, is entitled to live a full life, free from poverty.

We believe in tackling the root causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. We believe the world can and must be changed so that there is equality, dignity and freedom for all.

We are driven to make this change happen and to inspire others to help make it happen.

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1. Introduction

Christian Aid Ireland is an international aid and development agency working with local partners and communities of all faiths and none, in over 40 countries worldwide.

We are an independent legal entity within the Christian Aid family and are part of a global movement of individuals and organisations passionately committed to ending poverty and social injustice.

Our work is inspired by Christian values and a belief that everyone, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, age, gender or other identity is entitled to live a full life, free from poverty and injustice. An essential part of these values is the obligation and responsibility on us all to tackle injustice whenever and wherever we find it.

Our vision

In Christian Aid Ireland we understand poverty to be 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. We believe in tackling the root causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. We believe the world can and must be changed so that there is equality, dignity and freedom for all. By acting together with our partners and supporters, we believe that we can change political, economic and social structures to create a fair and just world.

Our strategy

This strategy reaffirms our commitment to end poverty and injustice. Its purpose is to focus our work over the next 5 years, including the choice of priority areas, countries and partners to work with in our overseas work, advocacy and campaigning, fundraising and communications, outreach and development work with churches and supporters. This strategy contributes to Christian Aid Ireland's organisational vision in **'From Inspiration to Impact'**¹ and Christian Aid's global goals and strategic aims in **'Partnership for Change'** by building on our specific strengths

and experience. It also serves to inform our churches, supporters, donors, peers and other interested parties of our strategic programme direction.

The strategy is informed by consultations with staff, trustees, partners and other key stakeholders including supporters, donors and allies. Christian Aid Ireland has built its own distinctive identity and niche within both Christian Aid and the development sector in Ireland. We have strong relationships with programme staff, partners, allies and different actors at all levels, capable and committed staff and volunteers together with generous supporters and donors who make our work possible.



EAB Godence Miburo (35, left on photo) is sorting out sorghum seeds at EAB's community seeds centre. EAB is helping poor families resettle after 12 years of civil war by teaching them agricultural techniques, animal husbandry and by distributing seeds and tools to them. The programme in Burundi aims to bring families from different communities together and promote peace and reconciliation.

1. This document briefly sets out our vision for other elements of our work not included in this strategy including fundraising, supporter development and outreach work in Ireland.

2. The challenges in a changing world

The world in which we operate is changing dramatically.

Our strategy recognises that we face a number of key challenges to end poverty:

- Global inequality is persistent, with 20 per cent of the population enjoying over 70 per cent of total income. Global wealth is increasingly concentrated among a minority of elites with the combined wealth of the richest 1 per cent of people controlling half the world's wealth, and a reported 85 people – world's richest – holding as much wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion people.
- Inequalities within countries are as important as between countries and simplistic categorisations of 'rich north' and 'poor south' no longer apply. The majority of people living in poverty today are in middle income countries such as India and Brazil and it is in such countries that we also see 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.
- Worldwide, women and girls are disproportionately represented amongst the poorest and most marginalised. They continue to face violence, discrimination, constrained economic choices and exclusion from decisions over their lives; for those in conflict-affected and humanitarian settings, the situation is even worse. One in three women worldwide experiences sexual and/or intimate partner violence at some point in their lives. Every day there are almost 800 preventable deaths of women in pregnancy or childbirth. Despite the introduction of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, women are almost entirely excluded from peace negotiations. Women and girls are disproportionately responsible for care work and are twice as likely as men to be living in extreme poverty.

Almost half of the world's wealth is now owned by just one per cent of the population.² 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.

Where gender inequality intersects with other inequalities such as income levels, race, ethnicity, disability, caste, age, marital status and sexuality, the abuse of rights is further compounded.³

- Over the last 5 years the issue of tax justice has risen on the political agenda. There is an unprecedented awareness and understanding of the role of tax in functioning societies, underpinning the ability of states to deliver essential services to citizens. Frequent media reports of elaborate tax avoidance schemes involving large multinational corporations have served to undermine people's belief in the fairness of the current system and generated anger. A global movement has emerged demanding a reform of the international tax system which has contributed to entrenching inequalities within and between countries. This will mean addressing structural power imbalances which are supported by unfair tax systems.

2. Credit Suisse, October 2015, Global Wealth Report 2015, <https://publications.credit-suisse.com/tasks/render/file/?fileID=F2425415-DCA7-80B8-EAD989AF9341D47E>

3. Source: Turning Promises into Progress, Gender equality and rights for women and girls – lessons learnt and actions needed, GADN, 2015.

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- The scale of humanitarian crises through war, conflict driven emergencies, natural disasters, and climate change increases human vulnerability and inequality. Humanitarian crises can reverse decades of progress in seconds. The impact of climate change and environmental degradation is seen in 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.
 - Conflict driven emergencies are increasingly complex and protracted and affect more people each year. With armed conflicts around the world rising, many more people face an insecure, fearful future, displacing millions, without adequate access food or shelter and placing the most vulnerable, particularly girls and women at risk of gender based violence and sexual exploitation. Globally there are almost 60 million people displaced, either as refugees (19.5 million), internally displaced persons (38.2 million), or asylum seekers⁴.
 - Terrorism, fundamentalism and 'the war on terror' have together fuelled a global climate of fear in which the erosion of civil liberties and the violation of human rights has become commonplace in many countries. The heightened international focus on counter- terrorism along with other factors has contributed heavily to restrictions on civil society organisations and human rights activists. In particular restrictive laws have been used to target organisations that are critical of the state and undertake advocacy, litigation and mobilisation to hold governments to account on their human rights obligations; target activists who scrutinise public policies and, especially, counter-terrorism policies; harass business and human rights activists that challenge the economic interests of states and corporations and in some cases, target organisations who work on contested and marginalised issues, including women's rights, LGBTI rights, migrants' rights and the environment⁵.
 - Increasingly power is shifting away from democratic governments and institutions towards powerful multinational entities, including foreign investors, that exert unprecedented market power and political influence, which often results in tax dodging, worker exploitation and land grabs. Human rights defenders and civil society actors who speak out against such abuses increasingly face restrictions and threats.
 - In the 21st century the power of the private sector is rapidly expanding at the expense of government. 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, resulting in the breakdown of community structures and further straining 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.
 - Increasingly governments and civil society organisations of the global north are forced to examine their own domestic policies to ensure they are not inadvertently undermining the development of other poorer countries. Credibility among the partners with whom we work demands that NGOs devote time to ensuring no damage ensues from their respective governments domestic policy. This is particularly true in issues such as taxation, climate change, energy and trade - all areas close to the core of Christian Aid Ireland priority issues. There are also obligations under the Lisbon treaty, as well as the Irish government's One World One Future to ensure policy coherence for development.
 - Continued rapid population growth, population ageing, urbanization and migration influence all of the concerns and objectives at the

4. UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/558193896.html>

5. Civicus, The State of Civil Society 2015, <http://civicus.org/images/StateOfCivilSocietyFullReport2015.pdf>

top of international and national development agendas. They shape and are shaped by economic development, employment, income distribution, poverty, social protection and pensions; they affect and are affected by access to health, education, housing, sanitation, water, food and energy; and they influence and are influenced by the sustainability of cities and rural areas, environmental conditions and climate change.⁶

- The world has also witnessed notable successes and there is room for optimism. Since the Millennium Development Goals were launched, 74 countries halved their levels of poverty with 700 million fewer people living in conditions of poverty, 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. The Sustainable Development Goals and post 2015 agenda, which aims to 'leave no one behind' represents a new commitment and clear opportunities for the future. Across the world we are also witnessing civil society organisations and people coming together to organise and advocate for justice and change and to ensure a more just and equitable world. This gives us hope that another world is possible.



Thomas Mortensen, Colombia Country Manager, Christian Aid, enters the humanitarian zone in Bueneventura, Colombia. Humanitarian zones offer protection to people living in conflict zones and are recognised by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

6. (UNFPA) - See more at: <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/population-and-sustainable-development-post-2015-agenda#sthash.VjuUO20S.pdf>

3. Our understanding of change

When people do not have access to food, water, shelter, education, health or live in a safe environment, then the ordeal of poverty and humanitarian disasters are exacerbated.

Each of these issues needs to be tackled in their own right. But our experience demonstrates that the vicious cycle of deprivation and marginalization cannot end by addressing only the visible symptoms of material needs or achieving participation rights in an existing, unfair system. To address poverty we need to tackle structural issues that underpin poverty and transform unjust systems and structures. Christian Aid's understanding of change, set out in detail in *No Small Change*⁷ and *Partnership for Change*⁸, is based on an understanding that poverty and the ability to break the cycle of poverty is fundamentally an issue of inequality of power and resources.

Unequal and unjust power relations are systematically imposed in both poor and rich countries on the basis of gender, age, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious belief, health status and race. From one generation to the next privilege and prejudice are maintained and reproduced by a complex web of power in our societies and transforms inequitable access to rights and resources, and the deeply embedded norms that perpetuate inequality and poverty.

Change to make society more just and equitable will only be viable in the long term if it alters the balance of power in our societies and transforms inequitable access to rights and resources, and the deeply embedded norms that perpetuate inequality and poverty.

For this to happen we will need to see shifts and transformation in:

- The empowerment of people marginalised or living in poverty, irrespective of their gender, status, sexual orientation or identity so that that they can make their voices heard, exercise their

human rights and improve their lives.

- Governance systems and unjust laws, policies, and practices that are unaccountable and unresponsive to the needs of people living in poverty, deny people or certain groups their human rights and limit civil society space to operate.
- Market and economic policies, to counter the way they work to concentrate wealth, power and resources and undermine the environment and human rights.
- Civil society and the leadership, governance and ability of civil society organisations, including faith based organisations, to collaborate and expand space to operate, promote public oversight and challenge unjust social norms and the structures that sustain them.
- Values, beliefs and norms that reproduce and sustain inequality and discrimination, and shape how individuals and groups perceive the world including the role of men and women, governments and the market.
- Development efforts, built up over years, can be swept away by the onset of armed conflict, or eroded by a creeping tide of violence in society. Feeling safe and secure is as fundamental as food or shelter – we cannot plan for the future under a constant threat of violence.
- The public's understanding of the structural causes of poverty and their commitment and support to challenge and take action in solidarity on issues of justice and equity.

7. <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/no-small-change.pdf>

8. http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/2012_strategy.pdf

4. Our distinctive approach

People living in poverty are the real experts on their situation. Their voices and interests should have the power to shape their future as citizens and see the fulfilment of their human rights.

We work with partners to support the active engagement of people living in poverty, especially women and excluded groups, in decision making forums and public debates, strengthening their ability to hold elected representatives, local authorities, churches and companies to account and access the services and justice to which they are entitled. This approach also informs how we work in conflict and disaster situations to ensure that women and men can prepare, respond and recover from crisis.

We believe that a strong and autonomous civil society is a catalyst for positive change that can challenge unequal power relations at different levels. Civil society partners have been and will always be at the heart of our work and approach. The effectiveness of the programmes supported by Christian Aid Ireland derives from the quality and the range of civil society partners and alliances that we support and work alongside⁹ from community to international level. Their capacity can be boosted through sharing know how, training, technology and links between communities in the global north and south. Christian Aid Ireland is well placed to act as a broker in these processes.

Working entirely through local partner organisations means that we are able to provide support to communities as soon as a crisis happens, and ensure that a locally led response is sustained both during and after an emergency.

Despite the decline of institutional religion in Ireland, the influence of faith groups worldwide is increasing. In countries with weak or corrupt governance, they often create the social infrastructure on which people depend and can play a strong advocacy role in speaking out against injustices and economic, social and cultural rights violations.

In 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 through initiatives such as Jubilee 2000 and debt cancellation campaign. Christian Aid Ireland is well placed to encourage and support networks of activist faith groups and through our sponsoring churches we can challenge Church leaders worldwide to be more inclusive and to act boldly against injustice.



Cambamba II - a refugee camp in Luanda, Angola. The people living here had their homes bulldozed by the government to make way for new apartment blocks. Christian Aid partner SOS Habitat is helping to raise the profile of the plight of these families in the national and international media to put pressure on the Angolan government to help them.

Our vision is clearly aligned to international human rights and humanitarian law in working to ensure that the human rights and dignity of people living in poverty are respected, protected and fulfilled. We therefore focus on the responsibility of the state and of other powerful institutions and individuals in respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of people living in poverty. Where injustice and human rights violations occur, we work alongside our partners to expose and campaign against it.

9. External Evaluation: Final Evaluation of Irish Aid Funded Programme 2012-2016 Christian Aid

Key programming principles:

The following principles will shape how we work and the support that we will provide to programme staff and partners.

We also work in Ireland and the EU and in other international arenas to highlight injustices, such as unfair tax systems, that have a damaging effect on development and human rights in poorer countries.

1. Addressing poverty:

We understand poverty to be much more than lack of income. It is the lack of power to exercise basic personal, economic, political or social freedoms. We will support communities in claiming their right to escape poverty and move towards thriving lives.

2. Challenge power imbalances:

Programme design will be informed by a thorough analysis of the context and power relations. Programmes will be designed to mitigate, address and ultimately change unfair power dynamics, exclusion and inequality.

3. Gender equality:

We are committed to gender equality and recognise that all people have a gender identity, which can be both a source of power and of vulnerability depending on the context. Gender roles, identities and expectations are socially, culturally and politically constructed through the power relations between men, women and those identifying with other gender categories – as well as through the power relations within these groups¹⁰. Programme design will be informed by analysis of gender dynamics including intersections with other forms of discrimination. Our programme will promote women's rights, given the historic discrimination against women and girls¹¹.

4. Inclusion:

Our commitment to equity and justice requires us to work to ensure equal opportunity to everyone irrespective of race, age, gender, health status, ethnicity, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, ability or other specific identity.

Everyone will be treated equally and given fair and free opportunity to participate and influence in decisions and activities which affect their lives. Choices made on who to work with will be based on our context analysis and an understanding of power, gender and other intersecting inequalities.

5. Meaningful participatory approaches:

We are committed to using meaningful participatory approaches to ensure legitimacy in our work with our target groups in line with our conviction that people living in poverty are the main actors in the struggle against poverty and injustice.

6. Humanitarian principles and protection:

In all our work we aspire to uphold humanitarian principles and standards and respond appropriately to urgent human need. We are committed to strengthening our capacity in humanitarian protection and strengthening our understanding and responses to gender based violence in emergencies.

7. Safety, dignity and Do No Harm:

We seek to prevent or minimise as much as possible any unintended negative consequences of our intervention/programme which could increase people's vulnerability to risks. We will ensure a conflict-sensitive approach, support the development of self-protection capacities and enhance community cohesion.

10. 'Measuring Gender in Peacebuilding: Evaluating peacebuilding efforts from a gender-relational perspective', International Alert, Henri Myrntinen, Nicola Popovic and Lana Khattab, April 2016

11. Christian Aid Gender Strategy, p5

8. Accountability:

As a Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) accredited organisation we are committed to being accountable to all of our stakeholders, particularly those whose people directly benefit from our work and those we work with in partnerships and alliances. It also includes people who entrust us with resources to make this change happen, both private supporters, churches and their members and institutional donors.

9. Partnership:

Recognising that Christian Aid can only make a contribution to the overall change needed to bring about an end to poverty and injustice in each context, we will work with a mix of partners, civil society organisations and alliances with various capacities, faith based and non-faith based on shared values of solidarity, trust, respect, humility, justice, commitment to human rights, equity and accountability, so that the effect of our work is appropriate, locally led and long-lasting.

10. Advocacy:

We are committed to advocacy as an essential approach across all of our work in addressing the systems, structures and practices that deny people their rights. We are prepared to speak out against the unjust use of power – even at the risk of losing support and funding.

11. Adaptive and flexible programming:

We recognise that the contexts where we work are unique, dynamic and unpredictable, and that change does not necessarily happen in a linear fashion. We are committed to supporting programming that adapts to changing contexts and can respond when situations change or when approaches are not working. We will value programming that develops new ideas and applies new learning.

12. Evidence and research:

We will work with our partners, communities and allies to find credible and practical solutions and alternatives to the problems of global poverty and injustice. We will ensure we learn from our programmes and inform our messaging and positions with strong analysis, research and evidence based on the legitimacy of our partners' work.

13. Integrated approach:

We believe greater impact will be achieved through a more holistic approach to our development and humanitarian work and we will support Christian Aid staff and partners to work in this way.



Claudia Mejia, Director of the Sisma Mujer Corporation, participates in the presentation of recommendations and proposals in the Gender Subcommittee of the Negotiating Table in Havana, December 2014.

5. Geographical focus and rationale

Core Countries supported by Christian Aid Ireland

Africa:

Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Mali, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Zimbabwe

Asia, Middle East:

India, Iraq/Syria/Lebanon, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT), Myanmar, Pakistan

Latin America and the Caribbean:

Colombia, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua

Christian Aid globally works in over 40 countries, through both faith based and secular organisations, ensuring the flexibility to use our resources to the best possible effect.

To ensure the impact of Christian Aid Ireland resources and avoid overstretch we will focus on a set of core country programmes where we believe we can add value and based on the following criteria:

- Country programmes that share our strategic objectives
- Where we have already established, effective relationships with Christian Aid programme teams and partners
- Where there are serious concerns that the government is limiting civil, political, social, religious or economic human rights and freedoms
- We aim to achieve a spread over regions and thematic priorities and a mix of humanitarian and development contexts
- Where there are strong strategic linkages with church partners for advocacy and influencing purposes
- Where there are communication opportunities on stories of change to support our outreach work in Ireland with the church, schools and communities
- Where Christian Aid Ireland can be effective in influencing and engaging the Irish Government in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland Assembly and European Union

- Where country programmes align with our donor priorities and strategic objectives

We will review our reach over the course of this strategy based on our learning and as work develops but also in response to changing contexts and emerging issues.



Women throughout the DRC are at risk. 'We were living in the Mabala forest area before. There were problems with armed groups there. We decided to flee to ensure our safety but I was captured by armed men in November 2014. They took me far away. They raped me. I was held for four days. When they (the armed group) were distracted I used it as an opportunity to escape. When I received the \$60 from the project, I started to sell cassava flour. I was then able to start to send my children to school'.

6. Our programme objectives 2016-2021

Supporting people living in poverty to realise their human rights

We believe in life before death, where all people have an equal right to reach their full potential and the power to shape their own future.

Christian Aid Ireland's starting point is a fundamental identification with the aspirations and rights of the poor and oppressed and our desire to speak and work with and on behalf of them. We believe that change happens because people fight for it, individually or collectively. We believe this change will be most successful when driven by local organisations or individuals. Civil society therefore needs to be strong and autonomous to initiate and drive locally owned change processes and shift power dynamics in favour of the poor. Our work is entirely implemented by these local partners.

Programme Objective 1 – Participation, accountable governance and human rights

To increase accountability of governance systems at all levels and challenge unjust power dynamics, so that marginalised people, especially women and girls, can demand and access justice, resources and essential services and fully realise their human rights.

Key outcomes

- 1.** Women and men living in poverty enjoy a better quality of life through secure and equitable access to land, housing, sustainable livelihoods, quality healthcare and justice.
- 2.** Women and men living in poverty are able to influence decisions at all levels to secure their human rights.
- 3.** Governments and/or power holders are accountable to and fulfil the human rights of women and men living in poverty, including providing sufficient and stable resources for the realisation of these human rights and implementing policies that deliver economic justice and equality.

Why this is important

- It contributes to **SDG 10** to reduce inequality within and between countries.
- Christian Aid Ireland believes poverty is political, therefore wherever possible we link poverty to political and institutional factors. We believe that in the first instance it is the responsibility of the state to guarantee citizens' human rights and to ensure that actors such as the private sector do not violate these human rights.
- The role of the state is increasingly being challenged and undermined by unaccountable non-state actors. Our aim is to contribute to the establishment of strong relationships between state and citizens that ensure both sides see the benefit of playing by agreed rules. Understanding how power plays out and supporting local organisations and communities to influence existing, and create new, power structures is thus fundamental to this strategy.
- Global economic rules and processes are concentrating wealth, assets, protection against crisis, and power in the hands of a few. We believe economic rules and processes should be at the service of development and ultimately reduce inequalities. We believe a multiplicity of alternative economic models can exist where economic rules and behaviour are inclusive. We will nurture alternative economic models (e.g. starting from environmental limits rather than growth and delivering tax justice) and challenge uncompetitive private sector behaviour.
- In some cases marginalised people may not be citizens of the state they live in, while power holders who influence their well-being are not the state. This makes them particularly vulnerable. We will take this into account when identifying effective strategies to ensure that all people's human rights are realised.
- We believe that if citizens participate in the decision-making processes that will enable these

human rights to be upheld, there is a greater chance that the state takes into account citizen demands, and ensures the fulfilment of these human rights in accordance with its capacity.

Christian Aid Ireland's specific focus and contribution

- Contribute evidence based research on key governance and human rights issues to organisational learning, academic exchanges and policy debates.
- Provide expertise on governance, inclusion, gender, power analysis, adaptive programming, and monitoring and evaluation to country programmes and partners.
- Build alliances and links between country programmes, Irish civil society, Irish/EU legislators and the general Irish supporting public, to highlight human rights issues and contribute to solutions and alternative models of development.
- Develop advocacy messages and campaigns on governance and human rights aimed at specific Irish and EU decision makers, to complement those championed by Christian Aid globally.
- Source additional funding for new and high quality governance and human rights programming.

Programme Objective 2 – Tackling violence and building peace

To tackle the root causes of violence and use our understanding of the key drivers of violence to promote transparent and inclusive peace building that contributes to lasting peace, justice and security for all, especially vulnerable women and men.

Key outcomes

1. Vulnerable women and men living in difficult and violent contexts are safer, more secure, protected and resilient.

2. Gender based violence is reduced, survivors receive adequate support, and women, men and institutions are working to change the conditions which lead to gender based violence.

3. Vulnerable women and men feel empowered to successfully challenge the key drivers of injustice and violence, efforts are made to hold perpetrators to account but also to inspire them to rehabilitate, and peace building initiatives at all levels are inclusive and contribute to lasting peace, justice and security.

Why this is important

- It contributes to **SDG 16** to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Millions of people are kept 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, resulting 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.
- Conflict between and within nations destroys infrastructure, agriculture, industry and the essential services on which citizens depend. It is always disastrous to development.
- 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 families or 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 or tolerated.
- An urgent priority will always be to find practical ways to protect victims from their oppressors.
- Effective peace building cannot be imposed: it must grow in the hearts and minds of both oppressor and oppressed.

Christian Aid Ireland's specific focus and contribution

- Provide organisational leadership and strategic direction to Christian Aid globally on tackling violence and building peace, by promoting better and more coherent strategic programming and policy.

- Use our experience in power analysis, our emphasis on governance in all areas of work, and our strength in linking programming work to policy and advocacy to underpin our approach to tackling violence and building peace.
- Continue to build relationships and foster learning and research collaborations and potential partnerships in Ireland with civil society organisations and academic institutions in Ireland focused on human rights and tackling violence and building peace.
- Develop new research and potential partnerships for learning on gender based violence and other issues related to tackling violence and building peace. Use this learning to develop appropriate tools to support staff and partners to work on both programming and policy and advocacy related to gender based violence including stigma, social norms and reintegration for survivors.



A couple walk from Miratovac on the Macedonia-Serbia border to take the bus to Presevo. Towards the end of 2015, approximately five to six thousand refugees have been arriving in Serbia across the Macedonia border every day.

- Develop staff and partner capacity to address gender-based violence.
- Source institutional and donor funding for programme work on violence and peace building.

Programme Objective 3 – Humanitarian response

To respond to humanitarian crises, with a particular focus on protracted and forgotten emergencies, providing lifesaving assistance, restoring livelihoods and protecting the dignity of the most vulnerable.

Key outcomes

1. Vulnerable women and men receive timely, needs-based, accountable life-saving assistance during times of humanitarian crisis.

2. Vulnerable households recover their livelihoods and are better prepared to cope with future shocks.
3. Increased safety, protection, resilience and dignity of vulnerable women and men of all ages affected by humanitarian crises.

Why this is important

- Humanitarian work is central to Christian Aid Ireland’s mandate and part of our identity.
- In the 21st Century we are witnessing increased global frequency and intensity of humanitarian crises driven primarily by conflict and climate change that need urgent responses.
- Inequality, lack of power and protection increases vulnerability to disasters and reduces people’s ability to recover, this is complicated by gross violations of international law (humanitarian, refugee and human rights).



Salsabeel Al Arabasi, aged 11, pictured here with her father 48-year-old Nazeeh. Salsabeel needs kidney dialysis three times a week for renal failure. She requires a kidney transplant but her parents are not a match. Physicians for Human Rights Israel, a Christian Aid partner, helps her parents secure permits to allow Salsabeel to travel from her home near Nablus in the West Bank, to the August Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem. It’s a long journey through checkpoints and requires a 4am start.

- While we recognise the need to undertake immediate lifesaving work in the short term, our humanitarian work is clearly set in the context of longer term development. We are committed to tackling the root causes of disasters and investing in local capacity to ensure that our work contributes to stronger, more resilient and secure communities in the long term.

Christian Aid Ireland's specific focus and contribution

- Provide expertise to programme staff and partners on appropriate humanitarian response and accountability, in line with humanitarian standards.
- Build alliances and links between country programmes, Irish civil society and Irish/EU legislators and the general supporting public, to highlight humanitarian issues and protection needs that arise from our programmes.

Programme Objective 4 – Women's empowerment and gender equality

To challenge patriarchal power relations so that everyone, especially women and girls, can claim their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, while mitigating threats of violence or intimidation.

Key outcomes

1. Reduced exclusion and violence on the grounds of gender, age and other identities due to changes in attitudes, behaviours and practices.
2. More women living in poverty are able to influence decisions to secure their human rights.
3. More women living in poverty have access to and increased control over resources, (e.g. land, housing, education, sustainable livelihoods, quality healthcare, finances) leading to economic security.

Why this is important

- It contributes to **SDG 5** to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Gender inequality is primarily an issue of unequal power relations - of inequitable relationships between men and women. It violates human rights, constrains choice and agency, and negatively impacts upon people's ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development.
- Gender inequality harms economic growth and can lead to inter-generational poverty and violence.
- Fiscal policy has an important role in rebalancing gender inequalities. The gender implications of a shortfall in government revenue are significant, but despite women being more vulnerable to poverty and the most in need of essential services, there is still little understanding of the impact of fiscal policy, especially revenue raising, on men and women .
- Patriarchal power prevents women and marginalised men from reaching their potential.

Christian Aid Ireland's specific focus and contribution

- Focus on women's empowerment and rights in our programmes, inspiring our partners to promote fairer and just power relations between men and women.
- Bring a strong focus on gender based violence, contributing to expertise and learning across the global organisation and with peers such as the Irish Gender Based Violence Consortium.
- Provide expertise on power and gender analysis (identified through disaggregated data on gender, age, diversity), including on intersectionality, to ensure that those whom we aim to reach, benefit from our programmes; and that men are engaged in achieving gender equality and creating more caring societies.

Programme Objective 5 – Taking an active lead in the global movement for social justice

To inspire and mobilise support and action in Ireland for a just and sustainable world.

Key outcomes

- 1.** Churches, the public and other organisations in Ireland, join with us to fundraise, campaign and commit in solidarity and through prayer to tackle the root causes of poverty and injustice.
- 2.** Evidence-based advocacy leads to more informed debates on development and support for initiatives which result in positive change.
- 3.** The policies and practices of the Irish government, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the UK government, the EU and international bodies realise and protect the human rights of women and men living in poverty and facing injustice. This will be enabled as a result of the influence and actions of people across Ireland, engaging globally for a just and sustainable future.

Why this is important

- We recognise that Christian Aid Ireland alone cannot make the transformative changes we want, and that it is only through leveraging the power and influence of other strategic partners that we can achieve our goals.
- Christian Aid Ireland's mandate from the Churches together with our strong advocacy base offers the opportunity to engage new and existing supporters and the wider public to increase understanding and support for our development, humanitarian, advocacy and campaigning work.
- Informed development education will contribute to the increase of public and institutional action at all levels to fight poverty and challenge the structures that keep it in place.
- Our unique relationships with our partners and beneficiaries enables us to communicate our work in an informed and creative way in order

to inspire a movement of people who hunger for transformative change.

Christian Aid Ireland's specific focus and contribution

- Encourage church leaders in Ireland to play a greater role in support of issues of social justice globally, and particularly tackling violence and building peace, by learning from and building on the experience of the Northern Ireland conflict, and the continuing peace and reconciliation process.
- There is a long and honourable tradition among Irish Protestant churches of engaging in issues of social justice. Christian Aid Ireland will build on that unique platform to influence development discourse nationally and internationally.
- Link the experience of marginalised people living in Ireland with the same unjust international systems and structures that are experienced by marginalised people in the global south.
- Develop and raise our public profile in Ireland which will result in increased support for Christian Aid's overseas programmes.
- Contribute significant evidence based research on TVBP and tax justice to organisational learning, academic exchange and policy debate.
- Conduct advocacy in Ireland and the EU on issues of TVBP, tax justice and climate change based on learning from Christian Aid Ireland and Christian Aid Global programmes.
- Mobilise an effective social movement in Ireland, both church-based and in the general public, towards influencing policy debate on development and its practice, in alliance with partners in academia, civil society and the private sector.
- Build and develop links with academic and research institutions to add value to programme learning within Christian Aid and among peers.

7. Impact and learning

We will develop a framework to assess our progress against the strategies and priorities we have set and critically reflect, innovate, learn and adapt as the strategy progresses.

Building on key programming principles:

The key programming principles in this strategy outline an approach built on respect for people we work with and for, and a commitment to be as effective as possible. To know whether we have achieved change is an important part of this commitment, both in terms of being accountable to our stakeholders – those who work with us, those that benefit from work we support, and those that provide funding for it – and so that we can learn from our programmes and strengthen our impact.

Linking with Christian Aid’s monitoring, evaluation and learning systems:

Christian Aid Ireland’s approach to monitoring and evaluation is closely aligned to that of Christian Aid. It overlaps wherever possible with Christian Aid’s programme cycle management (PCM) systems, to avoid additional and burdensome reporting processes. We will participate in the development and improvement of PCM systems, which provide guidance on planning, monitoring and evaluating projects and programmes (at partner level and at organisational level), including an evaluation policy, annual planning and reporting systems, guidance on partner portfolio management, and on gender and value for money.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems that are appropriate to the interventions and partner capacity:

We are committed to providing a reliable and rigorous review of our work, but we avoid, as much as possible, the imposition of complicated, time and resource intensive systems which would stretch partners beyond their existing capacity.

We recognise that often, we will need to provide specific capacity support to partners to develop their monitoring systems further, and to understand the impact of their programmes in a way which facilitates learning and enables us to report on it.

Using theories of change and testing our strategies:

Christian Aid Ireland has become better at framing results at an outcome level, to better understand the change we are bringing about. We have developed the use of Theories of Change from a once-off planning exercise to a means of regularly assessing our progress in complex and changing contexts. We have learned from development sector thinking on improving effectiveness through more politically smart approaches and building more adaptive and flexible programmes.

Thus, we are committed to a monitoring, evaluation and learning approach which allows us to constantly assess the assumptions underpinning our Theories of Change and to adapt to new opportunities to achieve change, rather than using a more linear, logical framework approach. Applying an adaptive, flexible approach to programme monitoring means that we will also put most of our effort into understanding how our programmes are contributing to the achievement of high-level outcomes in an often changing and complex environment. Our emphasis will be on reflective conversations rather than in-depth data gathering against programme outputs.

Meeting reporting requirements:

Where programmes we support are funded by institutional donors, Christian Aid Ireland commits to compliance in line with donor requirements and will develop systems that allow us to do so. However, our approach remains

partner-focused: we learn our lessons on what works through the innovative adaptation of well-known monitoring and evaluation approaches, listening to the experience of our partners, and then building our learning into new programme design so that our funders also benefit from our improved approaches to monitoring our results.

Monitoring the Strategic Plan: To ensure that our Programme Strategy guides our work over the next few years, Christian Aid Ireland will build a high-level, outcome focused performance management framework, to enable us to understand how we have progressed towards our objectives. As part of this, each team will develop a framework that will allow us to track implementation of programme strategies, including the work with our partners.



Liliana Turbequia stands outside a sign indicating that she lives in a humanitarian zone, a place to which her community returned after conflict. Her father was killed when she was nine. These humanitarian zones offer protection to people living in conflict zones in Colombia, and are recognised by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Liliana, who is a Youth Group Leader, feels safe here.

8. Making this happen

This is an ambitious strategy – making it happen will require phasing our work. A key priority will be to align our fundraising and communications strategies to ensure that Christian Aid Ireland has the necessary funds, communication materials and support in place to realise our vision.

In the first instance, our key focus will be to develop a more detailed strategy for the Tackling Violence and Building Peace objective. Christian Aid Ireland is leading on this objective on behalf of Christian Aid and therefore we have committed 40% weighting of our programme funding in support of this work over the next five years.

Gender, governance and humanitarian work are cross cutting as well as distinctive objectives in their own right. We will ensure that Christian Aid programme staff are supported to make the linkages across the different programme objectives during their planning and strategising. And in Ireland our focus will be on awareness raising with churches and supporters so that they are clear why Christian Aid Ireland has chosen to focus on these themes and what actions and support need to be taken.

A key priority will be to align Christian Aid Ireland's policy and advocacy work more closely with our programme work as well as continue to build on our work on tax justice and Christian Aid's global advocacy priority on climate change post Paris 2015.

We will be dynamic and effective and ensure that our systems and management processes support us to work together as an organisation across teams in Ireland and with Christian Aid global, country programmes and our partners in ending poverty and injustice.

We are driven to make change happen and to inspire others to help make it happen. The changes we want to contribute to through our work with partners and supporters may take decades or happen overnight. We know there are no blue print approaches and that change doesn't follow a predictable path. We also know from experience that gains made can also be lost or set back through a change of government, humanitarian crisis or conflict. Most change

builds on smaller changes that occur every day because of the commitment, passion and vision of people working together at different levels and these need to be celebrated too. Let us now translate the strategy into action and results.



Thousands of people at the Big IF Belfast concert in Botanic Gardens, Belfast on 15 June 2013 called on G8 leaders to take urgent action to end the scandal that sees one in eight people go to bed hungry every night. Eight thousand people signed up for the event and the good-natured crowd braved the rain to ensure their message was heard less than 48 hours before world leaders descended on Enniskillen for their two-day summit.

Glossary of terms

Adaptive programming	An approach to planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning that encourages regular review and reflection processes to support staff and partners to gain a better understanding of complex social and political change processes and to encourage a more adaptive approach to interventions linked to this understanding as well as capture both the intended and unintended consequences of their work.
Civil society	A term used to describe a wide range of organizations, networks, associations, groups and movements that are independent from government and that sometimes come together to advance their common interests through collective action.
Civil society organisation	A broad term covering any non-governmental, non-profit organisation working to bring about change in a particular area.
Marginalised	A term applied to groups of people who, due to factors usually considered outside their control, do not have the same opportunities as other, more dominant groups in society. Examples might include people living with HIV/ AIDs, refugees, persons in detention or exclusion based on caste, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation.
Vulnerable	Vulnerability relates to the risk of harm from a future rights violation event or hazard. In emergency work it helps identify who might be at risk and how to minimise that risk. Forms of exclusion that existed before emergencies are often exacerbated during them, and in the relief and rehabilitation phase.
Gender	Gender refers to the set of roles and characteristics that different cultures and social groups prescribe for women and men, girls and boys. It is thus a culturally determined phenomenon that can change over time. All persons are gendered and have a particular gender identity, which frequently falls within a male-female binary, but can also fall outside it.
Gender Based Violence (GBV)	Gender based violence (GBV) refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It includes physical, emotional or psychological and sexual violence, and denial of resources or access to services. Violence includes threats of violence and coercion.
Gender inequality	Refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender.
Governance	The concept of governance in development work refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country's affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. (UNDP source)

Inclusion	The method of ensuring that everyone, regardless of gender, age or other dimension of diversity is treated equally and given fair and free opportunity to participate and have influence in decisions and activities which affect their lives.
Intersectionality	Intersectionality is a tool for analysis, advocacy and policy development that addresses multiple discriminations and helps us understand how different sets of identities (such as gender, class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation) impact on access to rights and opportunities.
Patriarchy	Christian Aid Ireland derives its definition of patriarchy from feminist theory, which defines it as an unjust social system that enforces gender roles and is oppressive to both men and women. It often includes any social mechanism that evokes male dominance over women.
Power holders	Power is exercised by various people in different ways in any given context. For Christian Aid Ireland, understanding the characteristics of arenas in which different people exercise their power is key to identifying the different entry points for change.
Non state actors	An individual or organization that has significant political influence but is not allied to any particular country or state.
Theory of change	Theory of Change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.

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