



# World Service Global Strategy 2013–2018



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A woman carries water and vegetables home in the Doro refugee camp in South Sudan's Upper Nile State. © Paul Jeffrey

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Cover photo:	Ethiopia - Lemlem is seven years old, and lives in Abaya in southern Ethiopia. She now has the opportunity to go to school, through LWF World Service's Integrated Community Development Program in her village. © LWF Ethiopia / S. Larsson
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# Foreword

This LWF World Service Global Strategy updates the 2007–2012 strategy. It covers 2013-2018 and takes into account new developments and aligns them with the wider strategy of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The World Service Strategy provides a common platform for all World Service programs.

With this strategy we:

- Affirm our dual focus on humanitarian response and development targeting people affected by emergencies, conflict and poverty.
- Confirm our commitment to sustainable development, a rights-based empowerment approach and to connecting our program activities to advocacy work.
- Aim to strengthen our capacity for disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and response and to sharpen our



Eberhard Hitzler , Director for the Department for World Service © LWF

- profile as a faith-based organization with locally rooted, global connections. World Service is uniquely placed to contribute to the much needed improvement of the humanitarian system.
- Strongly emphasize working with our major partners and actively explore models for closer cooperation with UN organizations and LWF related agencies.
- Maintain a leading role in the ACT Alliance in addressing emergencies and disasters.
- Express our strong commitment to accountability, quality and strengthening our organization through

effective communication, resource mobilization and management of resources and knowledge.

This strategy takes into account the current global context and, in particular, responds to the following challenges:

- The increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons and the shrinking humanitarian space. This implies enhanced emergency preparedness and response capacity and a change in the humanitarian system.
- The growing gap between rich and poor people and nations and the challenges associated with chronic poverty, including the lack of access to human rights

and essential services. This implies a strong focus on a rights-based empowerment approach and connecting our program activities with advocacy work.

- The events around the so-called Arab spring pose operational challenges for a Christian faith-based organization. This implies paying attention to the role of religion in development and emergencies and building on and enhancing our cooperation with people and organizations of different faith communities.
- The growing impact of climate change on poor and marginalized populations. This needs to be taken into account in our program strategy and approach

- The impact of the global financial crisis on our opportunities to raise funds. This necessitates diversification of income and efficient communication and fund-raising.

We continue to work under the motto, “Uphold the rights of the poor and oppressed” (cf. Ps 82:3). Thereby we affirm that a rights-based approach is rooted in the Bible. We are committed to “uphold the rights of the poor and oppressed” by empowering them to defend their rights themselves.

Rev. Eberhard Hitzler  
Director  
LWF Department for World Service



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# 1. About LWF World Service and What it Stands for

## 1.1 Mandate

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of churches in the Lutheran tradition comprising 143 member churches in 79 countries all over the world representing 70.5 million Christians.

World Service is the LWF's internationally recognized humanitarian and development arm. We have earned a distinguished record by linking timely, compassionate and professional emergency response with excellence in rehabilitation, reconstruction and effective long-term development efforts.

Mandated by the communion of LWF member churches to carry out "effective and empowering diakonia addressing human suffering, injustice and emergencies," World Service works with and for vulnerable and crisis-affected populations to achieve justice, peace and sustainable lives.



Jordan. Young mother Arnal is dreading the arrival of winter at the Za'atri refugee camp in northern Jordan some 70 kilometers from the Syrian border. © LWF/Thomas Ekelund

World Service's uniqueness is to be locally rooted and globally connected.

## 1.2 Vision, mission and values

World Service programs contribute to transforming peoples' lives and

creating a better world, inspired and guided by the following vision, mission and values.

### Vision

People of the world, living in just societies in peace and dignity, united in diversity and empowered to achieve

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their full potential, claim their universal rights, meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.

### Mission

Inspired by God's love for humanity, World Service responds to and challenges the causes and effects of human suffering and poverty.

### Values

**Dignity and justice:** World Service respects the dignity of every person and empowers and supports vulnerable communities in their efforts to achieve justice, human rights and a sustainable future. We address the underlying causes of poverty and exclusion and work for a more equitable distribution of power, resources and opportunities.

### Compassion and commitment:

World Service cares and shows compassion for those who are suffering. At the same time, we are committed to being professional in program management and implementation.

**Respect for diversity:** As differences among us express the richness of

God's creation, World Service respects diversity within the communities it works with and within its workforce.

**Inclusion and participation:** World Service is committed to being inclusive and enabling the full and equitable participation of women and men, people of all ages and people with disabilities in all its activities, programs and decision-making processes as well as in society.

### Transparency and accountability:

World Service is strongly committed to transparency in all its activities, motives, aims, program and financial decisions and results. We aim to balance accountability towards affected populations with accountability to partners and back donors.

## 1.3 Core commitments

Adherence to World Service's core commitments determines the effectiveness and impact of our programs and is highly valued by the communities we assist, our donors and related agencies.

### Human rights

Human rights are at the core of all that World Service stands for, its actions and operations. The respect for human rights is fundamental to people being able to move out of poverty, to bring about justice and peace and for development to be sustainable.

As a humanitarian organization, we promote and adhere to international humanitarian law in our work for the benefit of the population we work with.

### Impartiality

World Service assists affected people, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religion, race or political conviction. Assistance is provided in response and relative to need, without discrimination or favoritism.

### Accountability to the communities we assist

As outlined in World Service's Accountability Framework, we are committed to being accountable to the populations and communities our programs assist. We strive to achieve a culture of accountability

at all levels—through leadership, policies, management systems and field practices. In 2012, World Service received the 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) Standard in Accountability and Quality Management certification. In the coming years, we will continue to strengthen accountability practice, particularly in the areas of information sharing, participation and complaints handling mechanisms.

### Gender justice

Unequal power relations between women and men result in the unequal distribution of wealth and access to opportunities. The human rights of women and girls must be fully implemented (as must those of men and boys). It is vital clearly to understand the roles and

responsibilities of women and men in a community. Since the role of women is central to development, the equal participation of women must be ensured. Therefore, we include gender perspectives in all aspects of our work and undertake specific advocacy and awareness raising activities to change attitudes and practices as well as to institutionalize gender justice. Moreover, we support the empowerment of women by providing and conceiving specific opportunities and projects for women.

### Climate justice and environmental protection

In light of the escalating effects of climate change on poor and marginalized populations and the frequency and scale of disasters and emer-

gencies, World Service prioritizes adaptation activities and promotes mitigation initiatives. We are committed to incorporating concern for the environment into all development decisions and operations aiming at behavioral change and reducing vulnerability. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is used as standard procedure at program and project levels to assess the environmental impact of our development activities and adopt environmentally responsible and sustainable development strategies.

## 1.4 Strategic approaches

The effectiveness and impact of programs are significantly determined by the way in which World Service works.



© Paul Jeffrey – Jordan



© Paul Jeffrey – South Sudan



© LWF/Karin Brown – Jerusalem



LWD Cambodia. Chey Pen, 57, harvests sugar cane on her small parcel of land, received as part of a 2011 Cambodian government social land concession to demobilized soldiers and other landless families. © Paul Jeffrey

In the years ahead, these strategic approaches will be the focus of ongoing staff development and training programs to ensure that they are deeply embedded in management and field practices. Furthermore, we will focus evaluation and research efforts on demonstrating the way in which these approaches impact and benefit affected populations and communities. The approaches are presented separately below in the understand-

ing that they are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing.

### Community-based empowerment approach

Empowerment is both a means and an end in World Service's work with communities. This implies consulting the people first, considering the impact of decisions and activities on the people and enabling them fully to participate in and own these activities. We engage with communities

in ways that enhance and build on people's competencies and capacities so that they can direct their own development, both as individuals and as participating members of families, groups and communities.

World Service encourages community participation and supports the development of local networks and structures as means to strengthen local civil society. We partner with and work through local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and support and promote local leadership in order to achieve sustainable development.

### Rights-based approach

All human beings have the right to a life in dignity. People who are oppressed, vulnerable and poor are not objects of charity but rights holders. The emphasis on human rights in the context of development helps us to focus on the structural inequities that cause and perpetuate impoverishment and exclusion, so that the root causes of poverty and exclusion receive proper attention. Within the Framework of International Covenant



on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR<sup>1</sup>), World Service raises awareness and advocates for people's rights at all levels.

A rights-based approach implies empowerment and action. At the same time, assisting communities acquire knowledge and skills leads to changed attitudes and transforming

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<sup>1</sup> We refer the three basic international human rights instruments such as The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966, came into force 1976), The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966, came into force 1976).

people into informed decision makers and active citizens. Active citizens are able to challenge policies or actions and existing structures on the basis of principles such as equality, inclusiveness, diversity and social justice.

### Programmatic integration

World Service emphasizes that some actions are interlinked with or affect other areas of its programmatic work. Environmental issues, gender justice, protection and other thematic areas are considered integral parts of all actions undertaken in any given sector. As a result, many development initiatives can be designed in

such a way that a positive impact on multiple aspects of community life is safeguarded.

Emergency relief, rehabilitation, development and disaster preparedness efforts are complex processes that are intrinsically linked, and not always linear. World Service facilitates the empowerment of local people from the very beginning in its emergency operations in order to enhance and sustain local capacity. Bridging the gap between emergency response and development is one of our key areas of competence.



South Sudan. A woman in the Yusuf Batil refugee camp in South Sudan's Upper Nile State. More than 110,000 refugees were living in four camps in Maban County in October 2012. © Paul Jeffrey

## 2. Strategic Program Focus

### 2.1 Priority populations

Globally World Service prioritizes the following populations:

- People affected by major disasters, emergencies and conflicts (refugees and internally displaced persons).
- Poor and vulnerable host communities that are affected by temporary or longer-term settlements of displaced people.
- Poor and marginalized communities that face recurrent crises caused by conflict, climate or political upheavals and have limited resources to meet their basic needs and achieve sustainable livelihoods.

World Service assists and works with people of all faiths or no faith at all. Country and regional programs

prioritize individuals and groups of people who are highly vulnerable and marginalized within affected populations. These include children in need of protection, women affected by physical and sexual violence, victims of trauma and abuse, elderly people, disabled people and people affected by HIV and AIDS and other chronic health conditions.

### 2.2 Geographic focus

World Service works in regions and countries, highly vulnerable to disaster and conflict and areas of extreme poverty. Remote and vulnerable areas that lack local capacities and services are priority focus areas. Our long-term goal is to close the gaps that exist locally and globally between the rich and poor and vulnerable people and which prevent people from leading sustainable and meaningful lives.

World Service works in over 30 countries through regional pro-

grams, country programs, associate programs and regional hubs for emergency response in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and South and Southeast Asia. We assist over two million people in these countries. The World Service Program Areas are shown on the map on pp. 18-19.

### 2.3 Structure and operating model

#### World Service structure

The Committee for World Service, appointed by and responsible to the LWF Council, has governance oversight of World Service, including the approval of policies and global, regional and country strategies.

World Service programs are managed at regional or country levels by management teams covering strategic program management, program coordination and finance. Programs

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vary in focus and areas of intervention according to needs, situation, context, local capacity, geography and the availability of resources.

Programs are guided and supported by a small unit in the LWF Communion Office in Geneva with responsibilities for strategy, policy development and guidance, global program coordination and oversight, financial control, quality assurance and program development and support, networking and partner relationships. This team works in close cooperation with other LWF departments and the ACT Alliance secretariat. Furthermore, country programs are supported by regional staff with specific expertise such as communication, resource mobilization, accountability and finance.

### Program operating model

At regional and country levels, World Service may adopt different ways of operating. Operating modalities within programs and the evolution from direct management to indirect implementation and accompaniment of local actors over time may vary.

- Direct management of operations may cover technical or specially focused projects, facilitation and capacity development in cooperation with affected communities, local, national and international NGOs and government authorities.
- Indirect implementation through local partners, mainly NGOs, with the selection of partners and implementation directed by partnership guidelines and agreements.
- Accompaniment of local CBOs, churches and other faith groups and community leaders in empowerment processes that allow them to assume control of their own sustainable development and advocate for change with their governments and other decision makers.

World Service also carries out its work through **Associate Programs**, former country programs, which are now localized and independent organizations with their own governance structures. Associate programs

operate under a memorandum of understanding and contribute to the global strategy in ways relevant to the needs and priorities in their operational contexts. Support is given through regional World Service program networking and headquarters-level advocacy, consultation, and oversight services. World Service is in a review and consultation process with Associate Programs how to continue and enhance collaboration.

**Regional Emergency Hubs** are established in strategic locations to support country programs by facilitating and coordinating the emergency response within defined geographical areas. They comprise skilled and trained staff on stand-by to realize quick start-up or scale-up of emergency response operations and support country programs in disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction. The hubs may have their own logistical infrastructure (warehouses, stockpiling, information and communication centers, etc.) to be able to cover the supply needs anywhere in the region, at any time.

Hubs have been established for East and Central Africa, Southern Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, and South and Southeast Asia.

When called upon and supported by its partners, World Service is prepared to respond worldwide to emergencies that require international humanitarian response. Decisions to start up a new operation or program are based on need, operational space and financial sustainability and are taken in close consultation with our constituency and partners. Climate change risk is an important consideration in decisions to open up new country programs.

Humanitarian and development interventions are for a limited period of time only. Ultimately, country programs are expected to develop exit strategies, with steps and timeframes appropriate to specific contexts. From the entry stage, World Service programs give priority to planning and facilitating the creation of sustainable solutions within the country and to ensuring local people and institutions assume responsibility for their own development. This



Kenya. Refugees herd goats through the Dadaab camps in north eastern Kenya.  
© Paul Jeffrey

implies paying close attention to enhancing local capacity and transferring responsibilities at the earliest feasible opportunity. Three broad considerations guide the exit from or closure of programs:

- Objectives have been largely achieved.
- It is time for local actors or other agencies to assume responsibility for development.

- The viability and effectiveness of the program are threatened by a lack of resources as well as political and security concerns.

In cooperation with the ACT Alliance and other ecumenical and secular partners, World Service undertakes national, regional and international advocacy to raise awareness of the communities' needs and concerns, achieve policy change and improve the effectiveness and impact of



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humanitarian and development assistance.

## 2.4 Major partnerships and networks

World Service works through strategic partnerships and networks that are guided by internationally recognized codes, principles and guidelines in humanitarian assistance and international development. Managing these relationships in a spirit of cooperation and mutual accountability is key to the future viability and effectiveness of our programs. Partner relations are conducted in line with our values, core commitments and the following LWF's partnership principles:

- Clarity about the purpose of relationships and our partners' roles and responsibilities.
- Respectfulness of our partners' autonomy and their separate accountabilities.

- Making the best use of each partner's capacities, knowledge and contributions.
- Mutual responsibility and accountability, transparency in decision making and openness in communication.

The following partnerships and networks are of strategic importance:

### ACT Alliance and ecumenical networks

The Lutheran World Federation is one of the founding members of the ACT Alliance which brings together over 130 churches and related organizations working in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. Within ACT, World Service is a lead implementing partner for emergency and humanitarian response. The alliance provides the ecumenical movement with structures to mobilize and rapidly distribute resources in response to emergencies and to improve coordination of and collaboration in our work with communities and

local partners. Being part of the ACT Alliance facilitates learning and the sharing of knowledge critical to delivering quality and effective programs and emergency response.

World Service will continue to play a leading role within the ACT Alliance—in the formation, facilitation and development of ACT forums; ACT coordinated appeals and emergency response; joint advocacy as well as governance and overall direction setting. This commitment is based on the understanding that together we can achieve more to improve the lives of people affected by poverty, injustice and emergencies than we could separately.

In addition, World Service works with ecumenical networks of churches of other denominations in emergency response, development and advocacy initiatives. We also cooperate with and undertake joint work with international and national actors within the ecumenical family. Especially in countries where there is no LWF member church, ecumenical partners are often key partners and stakeholders.

### Related agencies

World Service has long-standing, vital relationships with agencies of LWF member churches involved in humanitarian assistance and development. Bi- and multi-lateral partnerships are lived out at global, national and regional levels. Related agencies provide the major share of program funding and collaborate

closely in a wide range of areas such as program planning and operations, joint advocacy and staff secondment. The landscape continues to change as some related agencies seek to expand their own operations through country offices, including in countries where we have a presence. Strategic discussions with all related agencies continue, with a view to

further develop a mutually beneficial cooperation.

### United Nations agencies

World Service is a major implementing partner to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Program (WFP). We have global agreements with both agencies



Nepal. LWF is working in collaboration with UNHCR to assist Bhutanese refugees. © LWF/R. Schlott

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as do the majority of our country programs. Our long history and successful track record in humanitarian response makes us a trusted partner of choice of UNHCR and WFP, with the strategic goal to strengthen and improve these partnerships globally. We also participate in the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) coordinating structures and in UN networks dealing with specific thematic and operational issues, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and UNICEF.

### Global networks

World Service participates in and contributes to other international humanitarian networks and organizations including: the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR); HAP International; International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA); and the Sphere standards network.

### Local and national actors

Local CBOs and national NGOs are strategic partners of World Service's

country programs in program implementation and advocacy activities. The nature and extent of these relationships is influenced by the different program contexts. Local actors may be affiliated with local or national churches, other faith-based groups or secular community organizations. Collaboration with local organizations is critical to ensure that programs are appropriate to the context, effective and sustainable. We help empower CBOs and community networks to assume their roles in civil society.

World Service often cooperates closely with communities in local advocacy while working with local governments so that they are able to respond better as duty bearers. In all our emergency and development work we seek to create synergies between state responsibilities and the role of World Service. We aim to build constructive relationships and foster the cooperation with relevant state entities so that they take up their responsibilities as primary duty bearers. At times, we directly advocate for improvements in the

administration of state responsibilities or changes in policies impacting communities. This requires discussion and dialogue and knowledge of the specific contextual realities as well as respect for the autonomy of states.

### LWF member churches

In some cases, the LWF member churches, which are our constituency, are also operational partners. In the coming years, World Service will seek closer cooperation with member churches in countries most vulnerable to natural disasters and complex emergencies in order to build up a strong capacity for emergency preparedness and response. This will be done in cooperation with the LWF's Department for Mission and Development (DMD), responsible for the accompaniment of and capacity development in the member churches.



South Sudan. Boys play football in the Gendrassa refugee camp in South Sudan's Upper Nile State. © Paul Jeffrey



# World Service Program Areas in 2013

## Central America (R)

- Guatemala
- El Salvador (H)
- Honduras
- Nicaragua

## Colombia (C)

## Peru (A)

## Haiti/Caribbean (R)

## Middle East (R)

- Jerusalem
- Jordan

## Mauritania (C)

## Democratic Republic of Congo (C)

## Angola (C)

## Zambia (H)

## Zimbabwe (A)

## South Africa (A)

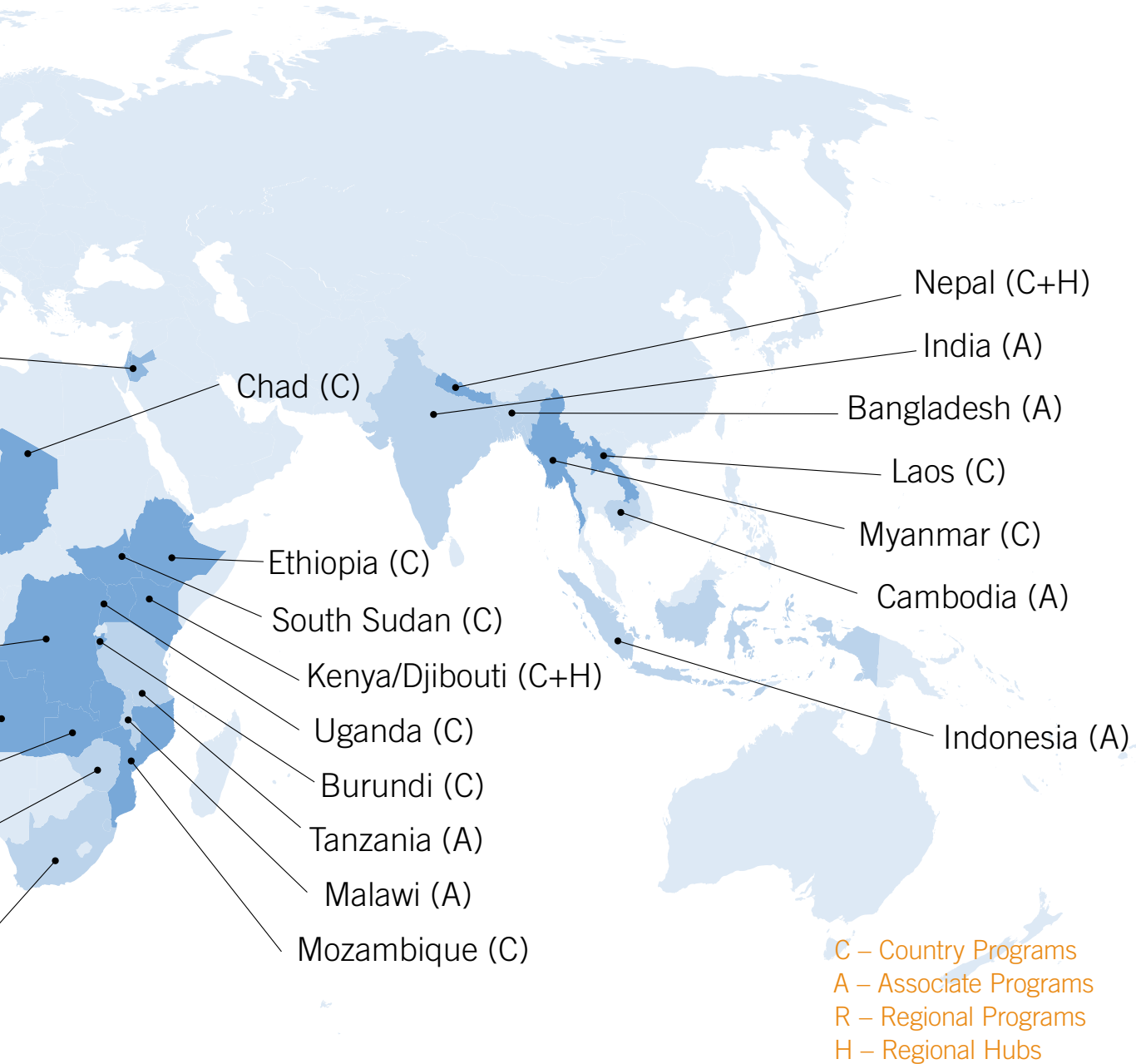


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Nepal. Bhutanese refugees come together to revive their cultural heritage. © LWF/R. Schlott

## 3. Program Direction and Interventions

World Service's work is located in the context of the global challenges to respond to disasters and complex emergencies, promote sustainable livelihoods, achieve reduction in poverty and foster increased respect for human rights.

Global thematic areas of intervention therefore can be directly linked with achieving human rights as well as with specific Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The discussion on what may come after accomplishments of MDGs have been assessed in 2015 has already started. It is likely that the new concept will be closely connected with human rights.

Country and regional strategies are developed within the framework of this global strategy and adapted to specific national development plans and local contexts. Each program will develop and concretize strategic priorities and objectives within its own context and measure the results and impact in relation to

these by developing key indicators in accordance with the overall strategy.

Additionally, periodic evaluations and impact studies—thematic or regional—will reveal the changes at the level of country programs, inform their strategic choices and serve as a source for good practice for other country programs and interested stakeholders.

At the global level, World Service will look into options of how to evaluate the achievements of the strategic objectives during the on-going revision process of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation system of World Service.

### 3.1 Disaster risk reduction (DRR), emergency preparedness and response

Strategic objective: People and communities are better prepared for, able

effectively to respond to and recover faster from all types of disasters and complex emergencies.

Focus on the right to human security and protection and the right to life with dignity during conflicts and emergencies

World Service's experience in managing large, complex emergency interventions worldwide provides a sound basis on which to increase the capacity and preparedness to respond to disasters. Emergency preparedness and response will continue to be a priority together with assistance to refugees, IDPs and others affected by natural disasters, emergencies and conflicts.

It is crucial that we link relief, rehabilitation, development and disaster preparedness in the country programs in order to maintain a

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credible presence and the ability to respond globally. In all our emergency related activities we engage and support communities to be part of the solution - in advocating for their own rights; self-managing aspects of community protection and safety; taking care of the most vulnerable community members (especially women, children, disabled, ethnic or other minority groups); and in establishing community structures that enable participation in decision making.

### Disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency preparedness work aims to build resilient communities, reduce vulnerability and protect assets in the event of crisis. As part of this, World Service is active in strengthening local and national actors, building their capacity to prepare for disasters in their contexts and environment. Contingency planning, community based disaster risk management teams, early warning and assistance systems, food security measures and community shelters are some

of the typical measures initiated by country programs.

Women significantly contribute to community preparedness and risk management, and their involvement and leadership are actively encouraged. Participation in national forums for policy development, coordination and advocacy is one of our priorities.

Together with DMD, World Service will support member churches to develop stronger capacities in DRR, emergency preparedness and emergency response in areas where there is a joint presence.

### Timely and relevant response to emergencies

World Service emergency operations include a strong emphasis on interventions related to food, shelter, water and other life-saving and sustaining activities, especially in the acute phases of crises. We combine material aid with psychosocial support, paying particular attention to those who are most vulnerable and least able to exercise their human rights. Through our regional emer-

gency response hubs we will build and expand our ability to respond to major emergencies and disasters, with an emphasis on better coordination, timely decision making and rapid deployment of experienced staff from the emergency roster.

World Service will continue to be a major player in the ACT Alliance with its substantial implementation capacity for complex emergency programs. In larger scale emergencies, we will strengthen our collaboration with other ACT members and relevant humanitarian organizations at global and community levels. Together we will assess and decide on the best modalities of response and reinforce joint implementation especially at sites outside current operational locations.

### Assisting displaced people and host communities beyond the acute phase

Linking relief to development (LRRD) is integral to the way in which World Service works. Connecting relief to development means assisting displaced people, their rehabilita-

tion and preparing them to return to their country origin, integration in the host country or resettlement to a third country. In more protracted humanitarian crises, we work with the displaced people as well as the host communities living near refugee or IDP camps. In this way we respond to human need in the host community, develop mutually beneficial community relations and reduce the risk of potential conflict.

This commitment implies that country programs develop cross-country strategies and regional approaches to address the issue of displacement in an adapted way. As basic needs are taken care of, emphasis is given to creating opportunities for participation in decision making, skills development, formal education and self-management.

### 3.2 Sustainable livelihoods

**Strategic objective:**  
Greater numbers of poor and marginalized people achieve



Haiti. Girl in class at the College Les Frères Milord, a school in Grand-Goave, Haiti, that was rebuilt after the January 2010 earthquake by members of the ACT Alliance. © Paul Jeffrey

adequate livelihoods without compromising the livelihoods of future generations.

Focus on the right to food, water and a secure and adequate livelihood

World Service pays special attention to economic, social and cultural rights and facilitates the empowerment of marginalized people to hold

their governments accountable. Sustainable development is only achieved when long-term human needs are satisfied without threatening or depleting the resource base on which future generations depend. It requires responsible management of the environment and natural resources. Strengthening CBOs and other relevant actors through training and capacity building related to food production, advocacy on the right to food and adequate nutrition, water, land rights and natural



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resource management are important elements in many programs.

### Access to food and water

Food insecurity is a consequence of poverty, exclusion and displacement arising from emergencies and the effects of climate change, especially for communities living in already fragile and vulnerable areas. Food security strategies aim to address basic needs for food and water and to achieve sustainable development. Food security interventions may be accompanied by nutrition education and other child and maternal health initiatives.

World Service interventions encompass improved soil and water conservation techniques, promoting stable and diversified production of food and storage and transformation facilities as well as supporting communities in developing animal care and husbandry practices. These improved capacities of communities aim at generating self-sufficiency in food production and at increasing income from food production and transformation. Our model

of working recognizes indigenous knowledge and materials, promotes organic methods as well as new or alternative practices.

Access to sufficient, safe and affordable water is a prerequisite for life and for achieving sustainable solutions to food insecurity. Scarcity of fresh water often contributes to increased competition over resources, conflict and forced migration. To increase access of water for people, animals and crops in a sustainable manner, our interventions include drilling wells, protecting aquifers and natural springs, establishing retention structures and rainwater harvesting. To avoid conflicts the communities are involved from the onset and get organized to manage the water points themselves, for example as water users associations.

### Economically sustainable livelihoods

Access to savings, credit schemes and markets are essential elements to help communities achieve sustainable livelihoods. Women's groups participating in income generating

activities and credit schemes will be a particular focus in World Service programs since evidence suggests that the success of such groups has a multiplier effect in communities.

Value chain approaches have proven to be effective in many rural development settings and shall form a specific focus of our interventions. Strengthening farmers organizations for production, marketing or policy influence are important measures alongside training and capacity building.

Increasingly, World Service focuses on formal and informal vocational training for male and female youth to achieve sustainable livelihoods and to provide additional community services.

In promoting equal access to economic opportunities and well-being, World Service strives to address barriers faced by groups marginalized or discriminated against because of race, ethnicity, disability, age or gender. At the national level, we participate in policy development processes and advocate for improving frameworks such as land rights.



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© LWF/Thomas Ekelund – Mauritania

### Environmental assessment and climate change adaptation

World Service supports communities that are extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change. We assist communities to assess environmental impact and climate change risk. We integrate ecological considerations into the identification and design of programs in the areas of: agricultural food production and food security; land use management; soil conservation and forestation; emergency preparedness for natural disasters; population growth; and rural and urban health and sanitation.

Adaptation strategies as part of disaster risk management and sustainable livelihoods are inextricably linked to the protection and management of natural resources

and will be a core aspect of this work in the years ahead. The affected communities have to decide and take responsibility for environmental conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for the strategies adopted. World Service will encourage the use of traditional knowledge and practices that support sustainable development, while introducing alternative practices of interest to communities. Women play a special role as resource managers and disseminators and as such will play a major role in community-based planning and the management of natural resources.

World Service prioritizes education in sustainable management of local natural resources and supports communities in their attempts to hold governments and external

actors accountable for environmental neglect, mismanagement and destruction. In support of global advocacy on environmental management and protection, we pay special attention to gathering and disseminating stories from the field to the LWF and other ecumenical bodies. This will include documenting the adverse impacts of climate change on the environment and vulnerable communities, and success stories in adaptation and mitigation.

### 3.3 Community led action for justice and peace

**Strategic objective: People are able fully to exercise their human rights, participate in decisions**

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affecting them and  
advocate for and build  
a strong civil society.

Focus on the right to  
essential services,  
participation, human  
security and protection

Country and regional programs engage in a range of strategies that help communities achieve their goals of justice and peace in contextually relevant ways. This includes human rights education and advocacy, peace building and conflict resolution, developing local capacities for leadership and governance and promoting access to essential services. Furthermore, we link people of concern with church partners and other agencies with expertise in trauma healing, psychosocial counseling and non-violent conflict management.

Focus areas may relate to economic, social, civil and political rights, access to services, education, social and recreational activities (especially for children and young people) and

processes and structures for community governance. Civil society groups and organizations are supported in their role as rights holders and encouraged to act intentionally in holding governments and other duty-bearers accountable.

### Advocacy and human rights education

Advocacy is a dimension of World Service's work at all levels. We focus on human rights, the needs and rights of affected populations, policy change and improving the adequacy and effectiveness of humanitarian and development assistance. Human rights education is an important part of our work in order to empower rights holders to advocate for their rights and to build an active civil society.

World Service has the dual role of accompanying and supporting communities of concern in advocacy and gathering information that can be used in local, national and international advocacy efforts. We intend to strengthen our capacity in advocacy by connecting local knowledge with

international lobbying and advocacy work. We work closely with the LWF Office of International Affairs and Human Rights, ecumenical partners and the ACT Alliance to influence international policy. Our specific focus is working with the respective UN organizations in Geneva and New York. We contribute to the LWF's advocacy work before the UN Human Rights Council and participate in the advocacy work of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the ACT Alliance.

### Community access to essential services

Sustainable development requires that all communities can provide and access essential services in such areas as education, healthcare, child protection and recreation. World Service helps communities acquire the resources and capabilities needed in their communities. Such services and initiatives should respond to the needs identified by the community. These initiatives, facilitated and supported by us, should be led by the community.

Such services add value in communities, way beyond the activities themselves. Establishing schools and healthcare clinics, for example, provides opportunities for community members to be trained and employed while increasing the management and administrative capacity of the communities. Furthermore, it indirectly empowers community members as rights holders in specific sectors (i.e., water, health, recreation, or education). World Service's priority is to support activities that contribute to sustainable change for individuals and the communities they are a part of. Here, children and youth are an important focus group and we work with communities to ensure the most vulnerable and marginalized people can access services and support.

### Local capacities for leadership and community governance

Across our relief, rehabilitation and development work we focus on recognizing and building capacities for community self-management



Colombia. A workshop promoting safe behaviour for avoiding landmine accidents.  
© LWF/DWS Colombia/M. Sjögren

and governance. This involves leadership training for individual community members, strengthening community and civil society based organizations in their local advocacy and development work and assisting communities develop networks and community structures.

### Peace building and conflict prevention

World Service works in situations where emergencies, inequity and injustice generate violence and inse-

curity and a more direct approach to peace building and conflict resolution is necessary. This includes introducing peace education curricula in schools, churches and other social institutions, bringing the conflicting partners together in carefully guided discussions, dialogue and negotiations, or participating in composing shadow reports.

While all humanitarian and development programs and activities have the potential to create or exacerbate tensions within affected

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communities they can also bring conflicting communities together to work collaboratively toward shared development goals.

World Service consciously strives to understand the causes, drivers and triggers of violent conflict in the context of our work. Based on this understanding, we aim to apply “Do No Harm” principles across all programs and interventions.

Throughout its history, World Service has nurtured close and fruitful relationships to and cooperated with people and communities of other faiths, including Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. In various country programs, our workforce reflects the national religious context and directly contributes to interfaith initiatives. We will continue to work together with different faith-based organiza-

tions that share our objectives and the international humanitarian standards. Our ambition is to extend and develop new models of partnership that support mutual understanding and result in effective actions for reconciliation, peace and justice.



Uganda – Supporting women's Income generation activities in Kitgum, northern Uganda  
© LWF/L.Felgate



## 4. Organizational Strategy

World Service seeks to be a high quality, effective and professional humanitarian and development agency. To live up to our global ambitions and program objectives and have a positive and sustainable impact on people's lives requires a proactive and intentional approach to organizational management and development. Our organizational objectives are in line with priorities for organizational sustainability included in the broader LWF Strategy. Detailed strategies should be addressed through country and regional program strategies and in the annual operational planning.

### 4.1 Quality programs and practice

Strategic Objective: Country and regional strategies are coherent with the World Service Global Strategy and program operations are in line with its core



Guatemala. An LWF-supported fishing project to create sustainable communities.  
© LWF/DWS Central America

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## commitments, standards, policies and guidelines.

Quality development of programs and practice is a continuing commitment, leading to a common understanding and consistent implementation of World Service's program approach and to increased effectiveness. While country programs are at different stages of development and have different needs, globally priority will be given to:

- Consistent application of the rights-based empowerment approaches.
- Strengthening accountability to people of concern and to partners and funders.
- Developing regional emergency hubs and improving timeliness and coordination of emergency responses.
- Continuing to link relief to long-term development and ensuring the integrity and quality of programs.

- Ensuring the viability of new programs in highly vulnerable contexts.
- Developing competence and capacity in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation of country programs, local partners and LWF member churches.
- Interpreting policies and standards into user-friendly practice guidance and toolkits for field staff.
- Further development of a robust program monitoring and evaluation system (PME) with well defined results and quality indicators that inform programs.
- Strengthening the focus on results and impact measurement through program monitoring and evaluation, including ways of observing the achievement of strategic objectives of the Global Strategy.

In cooperation with its ecumenical partners and the WCC, World Ser-

vice is committed to reducing its own carbon footprint. All our offices will adopt environmentally friendly practices as far as possible.

## 4.2 Effective communication

**Strategic objective:**  
World Service has increased its visibility and understanding of its work and impacts to enhance effective partner and donor relations and fund-raising.

The strategic priorities for World Service are aligned with the current LWF Communications Strategy.

The following three messages will shape our communication:

- Mission driven: World Service upholds the rights of the poor and oppressed.
- Communion based: World Service is locally rooted and globally connected.

- Relevant: World Service reaches its target audiences with relevant, timely information and meeting donor needs.

The strategic priorities include:

- Production of powerful messages, news features and stories to reach World Service's target audiences (partners, donors and member churches) and more strategic news planning.
- Training local staff and identified communications focal points in country programs with the aim of strengthening these focal points so as to be more effective communicators.
- Implementing a new visual identity in all publications and Web news and features and ensuring World Service reaches its target audiences with the right communications material at the right time.
- Strengthening internal systems and processes that support

robust communication with our target audiences and our advocacy work.

### 4.3 Resource mobilization and finance management

**Strategic objective:**  
World Service ensures and improves financial sustainability by achieving secured, well managed and diversified income sources.

World Service relies on funds from its church related agencies, UN bodies and other national and international donors. Resource mobilization to achieve a stable and more diversified funding base is a priority for World Service at global (Geneva office), regional and country program levels.

To this end the strategies include:

- Donor confidence: Ensuring high quality, well managed programs and effective leadership and well developed staff capacity. Dem-

onstrating impact and results in the communities we serve and thereby reinforcing increased donor confidence in World Service.

- Donor consolidation: Maintaining and managing strong relationships with and meeting expectations of existing donors and partners, underpinned by strategic and effective communication with the aim of retaining and increasing funding from traditional sources. This requires a well-coordinated approach by programs and World Service's headquarters.
- Donor diversification: Seeking new opportunities for funding at international and national levels with potential donors and partners. This includes the European Union, ECHO, US Government and others as well as establishing contacts and relations with their respective offices/delegations in country. Building capacity and regionally and globally to help programs access direct funding

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from institutions, governments and others (foundations, corporate, other) is a focus of World Service work.

- Meeting core costs: realizing and growing unrestricted funding to cover core costs.
- Building adequate reserves: after covering core costs additional unrestricted funding will enable World Service to build reserves and create the flexibility and funds to invest in new programming and where possible to use those funds to leverage funding from other donors.
- Strong stewardship: Promoting good stewardship of resources which encompasses more effective, efficient and different ways of working. This includes measures of control and reduced costs in program implementation and administration.
- Continuous improvement in financial management and ac-

countability: Adhering to international standards, investing in improved financial controls and systems and recruiting and developing highly qualified staff.

## 4.4 Human resources management

**Strategic objective: World Service attracts and retains best available talents in all staff positions.**

World Service will be strategic in human resource planning, recruitment and development, because program capability and effectiveness rely on having highly skilled and competent staff. Attracting the best talent and retaining quality staff are both critical elements of the future human resources strategy.

Humanitarian and development work is especially challenging and usually involves hardship postings. Adequate terms and conditions, staff safety, security and welfare are paramount and given priority across country programs.

Specific priorities in human resource management are:

- Addressing high staff turnover in hardship field postings: Provide guidelines for establishing set standards for decent living conditions in such positions and develop processes to benchmark, monitor and improve conditions. Advocate for better conditions with donors and partners and include costs in program budgets.
- Developing and implementing a strategic leadership and development plan in close collaboration with the LWF Human Resource Office to guide action across the organization, covering consistent compensation, performance appraisal, competency assessment and gap analysis and training plans.
- Improving workforce gender balance: Take steps to achieve a better gender balance across all staff teams and ensure male and female staff have equal opportunities for development



© LWF/R. Schlott – Nepal



© LWF Myanmar



© LWF/Thomas Ekelund – Mauritania

and promotion. Recruiting more women to senior positions remains a high priority at country and headquarters levels.

## 4.5 Learning and knowledge management

**Strategic objective: World Service fulfills the highest programmatic and management standards and constantly improves the quality, efficiency and coherence of its work.**

World Service is a learning organization committed to constantly improving the effectiveness and coherence of its work. Knowledge management comprises a range of practices used to identify, create, represent,

distribute and enable adoption of insights and experiences. Knowledge management efforts focus on organizational objectives. These include improved performance, competitive advantage, innovation, the sharing of lessons learned, continuous improvement of the organization with an emphasis on management, the retention of knowledge as a strategic asset and a focus on encouraging the sharing of knowledge. Data collected through project monitoring, evaluation findings, staff knowledge and experience all play a part in organizational learning. Collating and disseminating such learning requires effective systems for data and knowledge management.

Specific priorities in the areas of learning and knowledge management are:

- Embedding a culture of learning and knowledge management at all levels of the organization.
- Promoting an environment which stimulates innovative programming and retention of learning.
- Maximizing opportunities for sharing lessons from practice and analyzing and using the outcomes of evaluations and program reviews.
- Investing in electronic and technological systems for retention, management and sharing of knowledge.



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# Closing remarks

This strategy provides a common platform and framework for all World Service programs. It furthermore informs our partners who we are, how we work and what we intend to do in the coming six years. In a fast changing world six years are a rather long period. We will therefore continuously monitor our progress and in addition conduct a mid-term review in order to be able to adjust and modify this strategy if needed.



Jordan. Setting up refugee operation in Za'atri camp. © LWF/R. Schlott

# Partners & Networks

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Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.



Deutsches Nationalkomitee  
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*Australian  
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, LASTING PROMISE.

**HAP** Humanitarian  
Accountability  
Partnership



Uphold the rights of the  
poor and oppressed



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