



LWF Mission and Development

Annual Report 2015



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

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Southern African delegates at the May 2015 Marangu conference in Tanzania, receive a banner symbolizing the journey to the 2017 LWF Twelfth Assembly in Windhoek, Namibia. Photo: LWF/Allison Westerhoff

Nurturing the gifts in the Lutheran communion

I am delighted to introduce to you the 2015 Annual Report of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Department for Mission and Development (DMD). As I joined the department as Director only in January 2016, I feel honored to present highlights of the major work carried out by my dedicated colleagues over the past year.

I especially pay tribute to my predecessor, Rev. Silvio Schneider, who served diligently as interim director in 2015, as well as Rev. Dr Eva Sibylle Vogel-Mfato, who left the LWF after many years of faithful service.

Since 1990 the LWF understands itself as a confessional communion of churches based on shared theological convictions and historical ecclesial practices. Its member churches share altar and pulpit fellowship in God's mission. "God's Spirit enables us to listen to one another; to share our joys and sufferings; to grow in practices of



Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki, DMD Director.
Photo: LWF/S. Gallay

mutual care, admonition, forgiveness and reconciliation; and to deepen our understanding of the need for one another as members of the one Body of Christ. It is lived and expressed by member churches in their multiple contexts and in the ways in which they are in ecclesial relationship with each other." (LWF

Strategy 2012-2017). Nurturing this communion is the core task of DMD.

This communion is a gift and a task, given to us by the grace of God. At the same time, we should not take for granted the connectedness between churches, local congregations and individual members in this communion: these relationships are the

very life of the Lutheran communion. The activities presented in this report demonstrate how the LWF strives to intentionally nurture the communion by continuously developing, deepening and protecting the organization's ecclesial foundations. Tensions, fractures and conflicts are inevitable, but we seek to offer spaces where healing and rejuvenation can occur.

The 2015 DMD Annual Report provides a glimpse of the many ways in which the Lutheran communion comes together to celebrate as individual member churches, regional expressions and even globally. It is inspiring to see how LWF-led accompaniment in many cases brings joy not only to church members but to all God's people. You will also see how some of the churches' struggles are still with us. But there is a very positive contribution of the communion as it grows. Many churches have grown in numbers while others are challenged. We see changing

landscapes bringing unprecedented questions and responses from the member churches. Youth involvement and gender justice are becoming more entrenched, not only in global programs of the LWF, but also in many churches.

Our goal in DMD is to continue accompanying churches as they carry out God's mission in their contexts. We want to enable the communion at large to be able to serve together, worship together, pray together and cry together. While there are many ways in which we can improve our approaches, other things just have to be done differently because of the changing times.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all LWF's member churches and related agencies for their support toward DMD's work, both financially and personally. We would not be able to plan our programmatic work without such reliable and dedicated commitment. We count on

your continued generous contribution as we look into a future with new challenges, which we are very keen to turn into wonderful opportunities.

I conclude my introduction to the report by paying tribute to Bishop Em. Niels Henrik Arendt, chairperson of the Mission and Development Committee, who passed on last August. We thank God for his life and dedicated service to the Lutheran communion.

Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki
DMD Director

"[A] glimpse of the many ways in which the Lutheran communion comes together to celebrate as individual member churches, regional expressions and even globally."

Being communion

Lutherans from different countries worshiping and praying together, exchanging views on common issues in mutual discussion, and sharing their joys and challenges, is one way of being in communion. The African Lutheran Church Leadership Consultation held near Moshi, Tanzania, 19-24 May 2015 illustrated this expression. Delegates and invited guests reflected together on an African vision for the 500 years of the Reformation in 2017 and took stock of the 60 years since the first pan-African meeting of Lutheran church leaders in 1955.

“Marangu to Wittenberg: Being a Reforming Church in a Changing African Context,” was the theme of the consultation, hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. It gathered more than 200 delegates from the 31 LWF member churches in Africa including bishops and presidents, women, youth, networks of theologians, diaconal actors and the Global Young Reformers’ Network among others. Invited guests and speakers also re-



LWF Global Young Reformers Network members in Africa plant a tree during a visit to Majengo Parish in Moshi, Tanzania. Photo LWF/Allison Westerhoff

resented LWF member churches in Europe and North America, the LWF Communion Office and global communion leaders.

The theme of a reforming church or a church that is being always renewed, enabled debate on what makes churches sustainable in order to strengthen the African region and the global LWF communion. Church representatives reiterated the need to urgently incorporate contemporary

and practical approaches to theological education that help to build a strong Lutheran identity in Africa. Resource persons discussed how churches can improve their leadership and governance structures, diaconal work, ecumenical and interfaith relations, and promote peace and reconciliation in society.

Plenary and small-group workshop sessions discussed the LWF Twelfth Assembly theme, “Liberated by God’s



Each Marangu conference participant received a small wooden cross souvenir, shown here by ELCT Secretary General Brighton Killewa (left) and LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Martin Junge.
Photo: LWF/David Adjia

Grace” and its three sub-themes focusing on why salvation, creation and human beings are not for sale. Participants discussed why the church’s prophetic voice was important in advocating against injustices such as human trafficking, violence against women, environmental degradation and the impact of climate change. They explored the challenges for Lutheran identity in a continent with numerous Pentecostal and other Christian denominations, other faiths and ideological extremism.

The region’s youth highlighted concern about climate change in a three-day climb to Africa’s highest mountain, Mt Kilimanjaro, where they hoisted a “Care for Creation” banner. This initiative has inspired youth in the member churches to start or join in activities such as tree planting in their own congregations to express their support for good stewardship of the creation.

This was the first major regional gathering at which the African Lutheran Communication and Information Network (ALCINET) played a key role in publicizing the event both in Tanzania and beyond. An ALCINET team with support from the LWF

Communion Office offered news writing, photography and broadcasting support to enhance visibility of the historic gathering.

Worship brings the communion together and includes others. This was evident in the colorful celebration of the closing eucharistic service on Pentecost Sunday. More than 3,000 people gathered in a tented arena, singing, offering prayers and thanksgiving to God for the work of the African and global church. This bond of fellowship included a mid-day meal for all participants.

Major outcomes

- The consultation was a visible expression of communion in a regional context.
- For churches to be sustainable they need to emphasize holistic mission—proclamation, diakonia and advocacy—as core elements of their witness and vocation today.
- The church needs to provide space where networks such as

youth, women theologians and diaconal workers can provide expertise on the challenges that churches are dealing with today.

- Cross-regional exchange and experience need to be developed and strengthened for a sustainable and strong LWF communion.
- Churches can find own solutions that apply to common issues affecting them such as theological education and pastoral formation. Contributing professional and other resources from among the churches themselves strengthens the regional and global communion’s work in mission, diakonia and interfaith relations.
- There is growing ownership of LWF’s core values that include gender justice and youth participation as cross-cutting priorities.
- Participants from other world continents enrich discussions with knowledge from across the LWF communion.



LAC Youth Network member Pablo Catrileo, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile, leads an interactive session on youth participation at the leadership conference in La Paz, Bolivia. Photo: LWF/Eugenio Albrecht

Networking strengthens relationships

Networking and building relationships help churches to learn about each other, share experiences and broaden their pool of human, financial and spiritual resources.

In 2015, leaders of LWF Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) member churches focused on using existing networks and new ones to encourage church members to relate to the issues that confront the region. They encouraged people to share their skills and talents by participating at different levels in the churches in order to increase their common knowledge and enrich the individual church and the region collectively.

The main strategy was to ensure that the networks are linked to the LAC Church Leadership Conference (COL), which brings together all leaders of the 16 LWF member churches in the annual regional meeting. The church leaders renew their commitment to support the networks, hear reports about the respective work and agree on future activities. COL decided that each

church should nominate representatives to contribute to the four networks that the churches identified, namely: communications, youth, women and gender justice, and HIV and AIDS.

Women and Gender Justice Network – Created in collaboration with the LWF Women in Church and Society program, the gender justice network connects women working in LAC churches with female youth in order to motivate and empower them to contribute meaningfully to their churches and society. The LWF Gender Justice Policy is one of the major tools the network uses to promote the inclusion of women and strengthen their participation at various church levels. The women are also connected to the global LWF Women on the Move process, which among other activities shares the stories of pioneer women in the churches.

HIV and AIDS Network – The group comprises diaconal and other work-

ers who are in solidarity with people living with HIV and AIDS. Their activities are structured around two goals: support to the individual church work by developing and exchanging study and worship resources, and empowering people living with HIV and their families by advocating for their dignity and respect in society.

Youth Network – This group motivates young people in the LWF member churches to contribute their views and activities to the global process of marking the 500th Reformation anniversary. Issues such as environmental care and gender justice are discussed in the region, and some of the members are linked to the LWF Global Young Reformers' Network.

Communications – The goal is to make the work of each church visible at regional and global levels by sharing information on the regional LWF website americallatinacaribe.lutheranworld.org. The platform gathers



Leaders of the LWF North American region participated in the April 2015 LAC Church Leadership Conference in La Paz, Bolivia Photo: LWF/Eugenio Albrecht

news from churches in the region in Spanish and translates English news published on the global LWF web site. The site expanded its content to include the history of COL and its role, a description of LAC member churches, LWF Council members, and regular updates about the region's work. It is a critical platform as it helps the other networks to share their activities within the region and beyond.

At its April 2015 meeting in La Paz, Bolivia, COL noted that the networks make communion possible by strengthening relations and alliances,

increasing the exchange of information and experiences, and promoting regional encounters and training.

Across the region

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) continued its focus on how to live out as a church "In Mission for Others." Its activities included the 2015–2017 Reformation Challenge to sponsor 500 refugees in the country; provide 500 scholarships to schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; plant

500,000 trees at home, in Ethiopia and Palestine; and donate CAD 500,000 to the LWF Endowment Fund.

Grace in Action, the first LWF-DMD partnership project with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), is underway in Southwest Detroit. The goal is to help people to live out the gospel in creative ways rooted in the community's needs and gifts. It supports a group of women in a cleaning cooperative and young men working in screen printing. Future plans include media projects to provide wireless internet networks to more than 800 homes in the city with the largest digital divide in the United States.

We continued to explore how we can increase mutual sharing and learning between LAC and the neighboring LWF North American region. Representatives from ELCA and ELCIC participated in the 2015 LAC church leadership conference. One of the outcomes was the decision to hold the North American LWF Pre-Assembly at the same venue as LAC's in Paramaribo, Suriname in August 2016.

New church leaders come together

The LWF offers training support to member churches to develop and strengthen their theological as well as leadership skills and human and financial resources. Platforms are also created to enable churches to learn from each other's experiences.

Geneva's Communion Office and the LWF Center in Wittenberg, Germany, were the venues where newly elected leaders from Africa, Asia,

Latin America and the Caribbean met to get to know each other and gain better understanding about the work of the LWF Communion Office. The 28 September – 9 October program included information sharing about LWF's collaboration with ecumenical partners such as the World Council of Churches and ACT Alliance, and global international bodies especially the United Nations. The two-week

study visit was an opportunity for participants to familiarize themselves with some of the historical places of the 16th century Reformation in Saxony, Germany, and to learn about the joys and challenges of contemporary Lutheran witness.

Newly elected church leaders heard and exchanged perspectives on leadership and good governance that facilitate transformation in church and



Newly-elected church leaders met at the Communion Office in Geneva to gain better understanding of LWF's work, and share perspectives from their regions. Photo: LWF/S. Gallay

society. They also looked at processes that strengthen church capacity to engage more effectively in ecumenical relationships and influence discourse and action in the public sphere.

Communion Office staff hosted open discussions on LWF's support to its members in strengthening management skills of church leaders at different levels. They explored the church's role

in public witness and service, interreligious relations, and management of human and other resources.

Central dimensions such as Lutheran identity, self-understanding and ecumenical commitment were discussed alongside topics such as religion and development and practical processes on project planning, monitoring and evaluation.

The workshop incorporated sharing of experiences as a key methodology to promote participation and dialogue, which enabled the participants from 12 Lutheran churches to develop mutual support towards each other. The leaders pledged to pray for one another, contact each other regularly and encourage each other in their pastoral roles.



Photo: LWF/S. Gallay

"I am thankful to the LWF for the opportunity to be part of the induction and to get to know other leaders of the member churches." (Rev. Antonio Reyes, President of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines)



Photo: LWF/S. Gallay

"I leave Geneva strengthened and encouraged. I know more from the different contexts of the churches in the Lutheran communion, their hopes and challenges, and how they are responding to the challenge of being Lutheran in their contexts." (Rev. Izani Bruch, Bishop-President, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile)

Church leaders at the retreat said ...



Photo: LWFS. Gallay

“My expectations to come to know the Communion Office better and build bridges with other Lutheran leaders were met. I go home with a broader understanding of Lutheran connectedness and outreach set up by the LWF with churches, other religious organizations and NGOs to secure a safe space for God’s creation, men, women, children and nature, including the endangered species.” (Bishop Ernst Gamxamûb, Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia)



Photo: LWFS. Gallay

“I came to this workshop expecting to deepen my understanding of why we live as a communion and how we engage and affirm it. The activity has fulfilled my expectation because I came to know other churches better and the Communion Office. The event gave me more than I expected.” (Rev. Marjory Slagtand, President, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname)



A group discussion in Medan during an evaluation of the human and institutional capacity development process for churches in Indonesia. Photo: LWF Indonesia National Committee

Training for capacity development

The LWF human and institutional capacity development (HICD) program interconnects the components of scholarships, seminars/workshops, virtual conferences, and research to help the churches meet the increasing demand for improved capacity for diaconal responses. HICD promotes gender and intergenerational balance in its work, and encourages candidates to use readily available resources to enrich their studies.

Out of the 75 candidates approved for diakonia or social development work scholarships in 2015, more than 70 percent (55 candidates) were female, and 77 percent were youth (below the age of 30 years). The regional candidate balance was:

- Africa 28 (37 %)
- Asia 45 (60%)
- LAC 2 (3%)

During the year, we also conducted an impact assessment of the HICD program for the period 2010–2014 and studied returning professionals

from 2005 until 2014. It emerged that 675 theologians (300 women and 375 men) and 737 diaconal workers (429 women and 308 men) had been trained over a 10-year period.

The follow-up affirmed that returning theologians are actively engaged in different areas of church ministry. More than 80 percent of the diakonia professionals who achieved qualifications in areas such as agriculture, health, education, accounting & finance and project management returned to their respective churches and societies. The remaining 20 percent are either engaged within the wider community contexts, or found opportunities for further training.

Regional workshops and virtual conferences

Over 110 participants comprising church leaders, diakonia program and project managers, governing

board members, diaconal professionals and other stakeholders were connected through two workshops in LAC and one in Asia. The workshops focused on how to strengthen human resource management for diakonia.

An evaluation in 2015 showed that the 700 persons who participated in seminars, workshops and virtual conferences between 2010 and 2014 upgraded their knowledge and skills for diaconal work. HICD training tools provided a useful foundation for enhancing leadership competence and management of human resources. Virtual conferences are bringing visible outcomes, including some initiatives toward “family-based” diakonia.

At its meeting in December 2015, the LWF HICD Committee took note of the positive outcomes of the program, and suggested a follow-up plan that would consider policy implications.

Staying interconnected and ‘welcoming the stranger’

The three LWF European regions—Central Eastern Europe, Central Western Europe and the Nordic countries—reflect the continent’s diversity and complexity. However, the churches recognize the desire to learn from each other and the significance of togetherness and companionship between the minority and majority churches. The year 2015 began with the first official visit of LWF President Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan to the Baltic churches. During the 26 January – 4 February meetings with LWF member church leaders, representatives of other Christian communities and government officials in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, he urged churches to nurture solidarity and interdependence with all members of the global LWF communion.

The number of migrants and refugees seeking asylum in Europe mainly from countries caught in conflict in the Middle East such as Syria and

Afghanistan, reached unprecedented numbers. By October, up to 7,000 refugees were crossing the Croatian border with Hungary daily heading to Austria and Germany. The influx across the continent led to growing tensions between political leaders and rising support for populist parties.

As authorities tightened border controls including physical fences to stop the flow, civil society actors including aid organizations and parishes of Lutheran churches across Europe stepped up advocacy and material assistance to counter the hostile attitude toward asylum seekers. In 2015, the area secretary for Europe started coordinating information exchange and support for refugees among the LWF member churches. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary was responsible for an LWF-supported program to sensitize, educate and change public attitude towards migrants and refugees. LWF began preparations for

a project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy to support refugees mainly from West Africa arriving in Catania and Sicily.

In statements and letters to churches in Europe, both the LWF Council and General Secretary Rev. Dr Martin Junge repeatedly underlined the need for governments to create refugee policies that reflect the Christian duty to welcome strangers. At the beginning of October, during a visit to Hungary, the three LWF Vice-Presidents in Europe called for a dignified refugee policy in the region.

Conviviality

Another major challenge especially in Central Eastern Europe was the consequences of armed conflict in Ukraine. A “Solidarity Group” of diaconal workers from four countries visited Odessa to support staff and volunteers of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church



European Church Leadership Consultation delegates make a 'Climate Justice Pilgrimage' from the Trondheim Free Church to Nidaros Cathedral, Norway Photo: LWF/R. Rodrick Beiler



From left: Europe's LWF Vice-Presidents, Bishops Frank Otfried July, Helga Haugland Byfuglien and Tamás Fabiny, on a solidarity visit with the Hungarian Lutheran church in October 2015. Photo: ELCH

in Ukraine. The church was providing medical assistance to war victims, psychosocial care for soldiers with post-traumatic problems and strategies for peace-making to promote living together in families, neighborhoods, towns and communities.

The Solidarity Group grew out of the so-called “Conviviality” diaconal process in Europe, which LWF started in 2011 following the economic and social crisis across the continent. The series of workshops to elaborate and share concepts and practices of conviviality—the art and practice of living together and building sustainable communities—continued with the workshop on Convivial Economy in February 2015 in Manchester, United Kingdom. Later in the year, the LWF and the Czech-based International Academy for Diaconia and Social Action published the *Convivial Life Together* Bible studies on the themes of vocation, dignity and justice. The publication offers perspectives on poverty, migration and inequality, and insights into church social service that enhances and protects dignity and promotes justice.



Dave Smith, founder of the Boaz Trust, which works with asylum seekers and refugees in Greater Manchester, United Kingdom, receives members of the diakonia Solidarity Group. Photo: Diakonia Solidarity Group

Reformation anniversary

In May, the Church of Norway hosted the LWF European Church Leadership Consultation in Trondheim, focusing on the 2017 Assembly and 500th Reformation anniversary theme, “Liberated by God’s grace.” Representatives of the 41 member churches in the region discussed the challenges arising from secularization, the need to nurture Lutheran identity, promote Christian values, work collaboratively with other civil society actors and create attractive job opportunities for

youth. They reflected further on the refugee and migrants’ crisis and the church’s responsibility to advocate for and “welcome the stranger.” The consultation included an intergenerational dialogue on climate justice led by LWF Youth and some of the members of the Global Young Reformers’ Network.

The LWF Pre-Assembly in 2017 will provide a framework to address the region’s challenges within contexts of mission that is holistic—encompassing proclamation, diakonia and advocacy.

Supporting churches in need

The LWF is a communion of churches of different sizes, capabilities and contextual challenges. Particular attention is put on smaller and structurally struggling churches that need to improve their governance and management systems to enable members to contribute their skills and knowledge openly.

“Holistic Sustainability: Towards a Sustainable LWF Asia Region” was the theme of the 12–15 April Asia Church Leadership Consultation (ACLC). The 75 participants included church leaders from the region’s 54 member churches, mission partners and staff. The Taiwan Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church of Taiwan (RoC), the Lutheran Church of the Republic of China, and China Lutheran Seminary co-hosted the conference held at the China Lutheran Seminary. The church leaders identified injustice, corruption, leadership struggles, poor succession plans, tribalism, and mismanagement of resources

as key impediments to the mission of the church and its sustainability across the region.

The Asia Lutheran Youth Network was inaugurated at a training workshop of the ACLC, as a platform for young people in the region to share, learn and contribute to global LWF initiatives. A group of 13 young leaders gained skills on networking and using social media to communicate as members of the Global Young Reformers’ Network. They also discussed how to strengthen Christian identity in Asia from a Lutheran perspective among youth.

Cultures and traditions

A subsequent workshop requested by small and struggling churches, was held in August 2015 in Yangon, Myanmar, and included among others, heads of churches—presidents, moderators and general secretaries—as they are responsible for management decisions in churches.

During the seminar participants noted that Asian communities are close-knit, with local cultures and traditions that influence the way the church is governed. But these cultures and traditions can also add value to the church if they are practiced with great commitment.

The workshops were not limited to ideas, concepts and principles of effective organizational management from the secular and development sphere. A common concern was how to develop future leaders. Participants spent time planning and strategizing on second-line—or middle level—leadership and succession plans. They emphasized that the church as a spiritual entity has an ecclesiastical responsibility to offer pastoral care to its members.



Dr Stephen Haar, Australia, and (right) Rev. Selma Chen, Taiwan, during the November 2015 Asian conference on Lutheran Identity and Self-Understanding, held in Manila, Philippines.
Photo: LWF/J. C. Valeriano

Building effective response to disaster

When an emergency strikes, local churches or congregations are often the first places where people seek help. The Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response program was launched in 2013 to support churches in particularly disaster prone contexts. The aim is to enhance their preparedness in responding to catastrophe.

Learning from experiences gained through its pilot phase, the program developed training materials and draft curricula for churches that could also be adapted by other local organizations that respond to emergencies.

Most of the 2015 activities were implemented despite staffing reduction. A workshop held in Senegal brought together 24 participants (14 women and 10 men, including 6 youth) and helped to develop further training materials in French. In Tanzania, 20 persons (4 women, 14 men and 2 youth) were trained and some of the materials were translated into Kiswahili.

A training workshop organized for ecumenical volunteers in Central America in collaboration with ACT Alliance included 17 people from different churches, most of whom were youth. In November, a workshop combining introductory materials about disasters and training for psychosocial support was conducted in Kenya. The 18 participants (12 men and 6 women – including 5 youth) represented seven LWF member churches in Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tanzania, and one emerging church in Uganda.

In December, a follow-up training in Madagascar for nine synods located in disaster risk areas brought together 18 participants (11 men and 7 women – including 7 youth.

The workshops conducted so far have shown that the introductory training curriculum is adaptable to different situations and countries, and can be used in multiple ways. There is an emerging need to deepen

the psychosocial aspect and disaster risk reduction.

Major outcomes

- Madagascar – With focal points for disaster response established in nine synods, the emergency unit of the Malagasy Lutheran Church is developing a contingency plan which will be finalized in 2016. It is looking at enhancing its competence in psychosocial care.
- Kenya – The Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church planned training workshops in four districts followed by a church-wide meeting at the end of the year to develop risk analysis plans at district level.
- Liberia – The Lutheran Church in Liberia has joined the Emergency Preparedness plan of the ACT Liberia forum. The church envis-



Youth from LWF member churches and ecumenical organizations in Central America and Colombia take part in training on emergency relief in San Salvador, El Salvador. Photo: Mercedes Palacios

aged conducting specific training to help increase its participation on the emergency platform.

- Colombia – Contingency planning for a small-scale emergency preparedness and first aid training in Bogota in 2015 was postponed to 2016.
- Most of the churches in the program have taken steps to be

more engaged in ACT Alliance either by progressing towards becoming members (Kenya), relating to the ACT forum (Myanmar) or participating and collaborating with ACT Alliance (Liberia, Madagascar and Colombia). The draft curriculum comprising learning objectives, content and methodologies for a three-day introductory workshop on disaster preparedness and emergency

response will be finalized in 2016.

Other training materials were shared with participants for use in their respective churches.

- Training materials developed or tested during workshops facilitated jointly with World Service were used partly by LWF's churches and related organizations.

DMD publications in 2015



Some of DMD's publications in 2015: DMD publishes global and regional resources in printed and online editions to accompany the churches' work.

A catalyst for learning and transformation

LWF member church projects transform not only individual lives but entire communities. Our program coordination and monitoring work ensures this continuity.

In 2015 the main focus was on capacity support for diaconal projects, strengthening leadership skills for youth and women as well as church institutional development. On-the-spot training was carried out especially for new and struggling churches.

Churches initiated countless remarkable projects with broad participation of project holders. This resulted in higher prospects for the sustainability of such initiatives at the local level and long-term livelihood improvement for thousands of people.

The impact of project support is explained through the following three projects in Cambodia, Latvia and Tanzania.

Rice farming in Cambodia

Rice farming is the main livelihood in the northwestern village of Phum



Thanks to LWF-supported projects, rice farmers in Cambodia have better yields and new activities such as poultry keeping. Photo: LWF/I. Dorji

Krous, where the Lutheran Church in Cambodia is located. There is only one crop a year as farmers depend on rain as the only water source, and poor farming skills only worsen the situation. Most of the men and youth go to look for work in the capital Phnom Penh.

Through an LWF supported project, a group of people from five villages are

acquiring new rice farming techniques and better yields, and taking up vegetable and poultry farming. As a result, households have improved nutrition levels and gained additional income which enables them to meet the cost of their children's education.

In 2015, the 80 families from Phum Krous and two neighboring villages



Guitar students take part in a training concert organized by the Youth Center of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia.
Photo: ELCL/Augusts Kolms

started keeping poultry, introduced new vegetables and fruits (string beans, melons and lady fingers) for family consumption and sale at the local market.

Youth who had dropped out of school acquired computer training in the church computer center, which improves their chances for career paths. In 2015 more than 90 young people acquired new or improved computer skills.

Opportunities for young people in Latvia

Latvia's economy is recovering from the 2008 financial crisis, but youth unemployment is still high at around 16 percent. Family support has declined, as many adults seek employment in other countries in the European Union, which Latvia joined in 2004. The risk of alcoholism, drug abuse, poverty and criminal activity has risen among young people.

The Youth Center of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) was established in 2008 to promote networking among young people, both Christians and non-Christians.

But it risked closure due to the recession and subsequent financial difficulties faced by the church in 2009. LWF's financial support guaranteed the center's operation, and it has since become an alternative place for young people in Old Riga to spend their leisure time in creative ways.

In 2015 the church provided opportunities for youth in non-formal education based on Christian values and promoted their active participation in congregations. They were also trained and encouraged to volunteer in different church activities.

Main activities at the youth center

- Musical instrument classes: guitar, weekly drum and bass lessons;
- Gospel choir performing in Sunday services but also in several music festivals, a retirement home for the blind, and a prison;
- Sports mission for children (football);

- Lectures and seminars on various aspects of Christianity and worship;
- Fellowship events.

The Youth Center continues to be a place of safety and support for young people in need of psychosocial support. A girl who was on the verge of a suicide attempt received counseling. She has become an active member of her congregation, where she helps out with youth work.

Another young woman, who was raised by her grandmother after her mother died and her father abandoned her, has been frequenting the center since its inception, as a source of psychosocial support. Thanks to artistic and music classes offered there, she can play the guitar and paints landscapes and portraits.

HIV and AIDS work

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania has been actively involved in the fight against the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The church helps families

to cope with AIDS related difficulties and promotes behavioral change at community level to reduce HIV infections. The LWF-supported AIDS project is active in all 24 dioceses of the church. It includes distribution of basic information materials about the disease, sharing knowledge about blood safety in health institutions, prevention of mother to child transmission, focus on treatment of sexually transmitted infections, and voluntary counseling and testing services.

In 2015 the project integrated its activities to include a focus on reproductive health, poverty reduction and gender equality. The church developed a strategy to increase awareness on the basic rights of people living with HIV, and

to ensure access to prevention and treatment. It also strengthened local partnerships and collaboration among its congregations and with the government, with the goal of enabling women especially to make informed decisions and choices on reproductive health and understand gender rights.

Major outcome

- A group of 50 evangelists were trained to improve understanding on HIV and AIDS; increase awareness on the legal and ethical dimensions of HIV prevention; and enhance the church's capacity to create networks that exchange knowledge on treatment and control.

- Training helped to build church staff capacity in lobbying and advocacy skills related to sexual and gender reproductive health rights and the rights of people living with HIV.

The AIDS seminars organized by trained pastors and evangelists promoted HIV prevention and care including support for orphans.

2015	
LWF supported	94 projects in 40 countries
Africa	33
Asia	25
LAC	25
Europe	11
Total amount:	EUR 3.2 million.

Young Reformers share their journey of faith

The year 2015 marked two years since the Global Young Reformers' Network was started to mobilize youth in the member churches to contribute to the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. LWF Youth developed regional plans further. Online working together and collaboration among members increased, and the so-called "Living Reformation projects" kicked off at the historic gathering in Luther's city Wittenberg, Germany.

Regional meetings and building networks

For the first time, young Reformers in all LWF regions met in the same year. They shared about the contexts in which their churches witness and identified common opportunities and major challenges. Young people are concerned about renewal of Lutheran identity and shrinking membership in



Young Reformers (left) Patricia Sophie Böckmann, France, and Karin Rubenson, Sweden, lead a group discussion on climate justice during the European regional meeting in Trondheim, Norway. Photo: LWF/R. Rodrick Beiler

some of the churches. Many of them live in countries that are experiencing youth unemployment, climate change, migration and xenophobia.

Regional meetings outcomes

- The Asian Lutheran Youth Network was established with a

comprehensive strategy and work plan for 2015-2018.

- The African Lutheran Youth Network on ecological justice, which had been established in 2014, met for the second time, reviewed its strategy and developed a work plan for 2015-2016.



Youth led the closing worship of the international Global Young Reformers' Network workshop in Wittenberg, Germany.
Photo: LWF/Marko Schoeneberg

- The Latin American and Caribbean Youth network held its third meeting and reviewed its structure and themes. On 11 November all young people in the LWF member churches joined in prayer for youth in Guyana to support the struggles of young people in the country.

The Young Reformers made specific contributions to the regional church leadership conferences. They led an intergenerational dialogue on climate justice with European church leaders in Norway. They shared about youth concern for Lutheran identity with Asian church leaders in Taiwan, and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro to raise awareness on global warming and climate change among the African church leaders in Tanzania.

Workshop Wittenberg

The international workshop in August 2015 brought together 140 young adults from more than 80 LWF member churches in 60 countries. It is historic that such a high number of LWF member churches were rep-

resented in a global Lutheran youth gathering.

They met under the theme “Freed by God’s love to change the world.” It was an open space to look together at the roots of Lutheran Reformation from an international perspective and to discover the different processes of ongoing reformation of the church today.

The two-week program provided an interactive platform to share and learn in the global communion. Participants worked on regionally selected themes such as Lutheran identity, discipleship, youth participation, climate justice, renewal

of the mission of the church and its sustainability.

Each day was dedicated to a specific theme on “Being Lutheran” and what this means from theological, ecumenical, political and diaconal perspectives.

Participants shared insights about the impact of rising religious fundamentalism; the relevance of God in the lives of young adults; and Christian witness in the midst of competing claims of religious equality. They also discussed why people are attracted to the prosperity gospel and what Lutheran churches could



From left: Young Reformers Jacob Rempel (Canada), Carolina Huth (Argentina) and Nicole Newman (USA), at the July 2015 youth gathering of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in Detroit. Photo: Private

do to accommodate young people's needs.

Innovative and inclusive conferencing

The close cooperation with the host Evangelical Church in Central Germany included joint program planning, fund-raising, communication, and coordinating visits to local congregations. This allowed young Lutherans from around the world to see and learn first-hand about the oldest church of the Reformation.

A participatory approach enhanced qualitative youth participation through:

- Entirely youth-led planning and implementation;
- Ensuring 80% of the speakers and workshop presenters were below 30 years;
- Young Reformers leading many workshops, developing liturgy and composing a song;

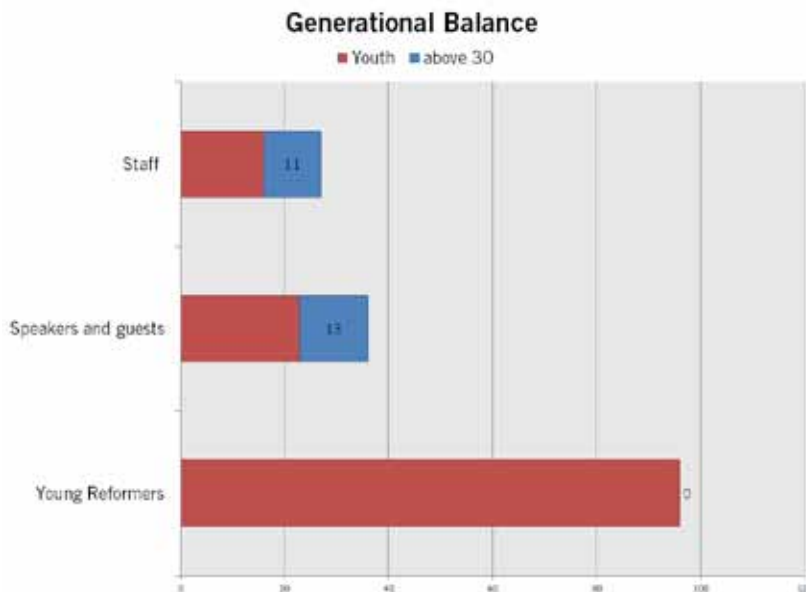
- LWF member church exhibition presented by the Young Reformers;
- Growing ownership through volunteer support from participants, such as interpretation, blog writing, minute taking, photography and videos, and technical expertise.

The workshop included a dedicated safe “Young Reformers’ space” where delegates could pose challenging questions from their church contexts and hear feedback from the global communion.

Young Reformers decided to “walk the talk” and implemented **ecological criteria** during the meeting as support for LWF’s climate justice engagement.

Living Reformation projects

The young adults responded to LWF’s invitation to all member churches to share their ideas on new approaches of being church in ongoing Reformation. At Workshop Wittenberg, all delegates were trained on how to



develop a project. The 60 “Living Reformation Projects” they subsequently submitted will be implemented in their churches in 2016.

Ongoing collaboration is critical for a global network. The young people also formed 13 cross-regional project teams to work together under common themes. The project outcomes and recommendations will be presented at the LWF Twelfth Assembly in 2017.

Climate justice advocacy

LWF Youth coordinated and supported the LWF delegation to the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, France. The delegates from the seven LWF regions led the “Fast for the Climate Campaign” and lobbied together with other faith-based and civil society organizations for a fair, just and far-reaching agreement to reduce global warming and protect the world’s most vulnerable populations.



Photo: LWF/M. Renaux

“We are a communion of churches in ongoing reformation and in our journey young generations are the integral part of our communion that gives new inspiration and creativity.” (LWF Vice-President Eun-hae Kwon, right, seen here with Malaysian Young Reformer Sumita Chin Siew Fern)

From Workshop Wittenberg ...



Photo: LWF/JC Valeriano



Photo: GYRN



Photo: GYRN

“As I looked at the myriad of diverse cultures gathered in one place, I could not resist the sense that this was a taste of heaven. Indeed, this was and will be an enduring testimony to the value of communion, which is rooted in what it means to be human.”
(Darius Lee, Singapore)

“I had always thought that politics is of the kingdom of the world, and that we are not of the world. Before coming here, I referred to politics as “dirty business”. But as we together discovered the root of politics in the Bible, I now understand that Jesus Christ wants us to be his ambassadors, even in politics. (Nickson Makama Ibrahim, Nigeria”

“We have gone from being strangers to sharing our personal faith journeys, discussing what it means for us to be young adult Lutherans, and sharing the burdens our communities face back home.”
(Christine Shander, USA)

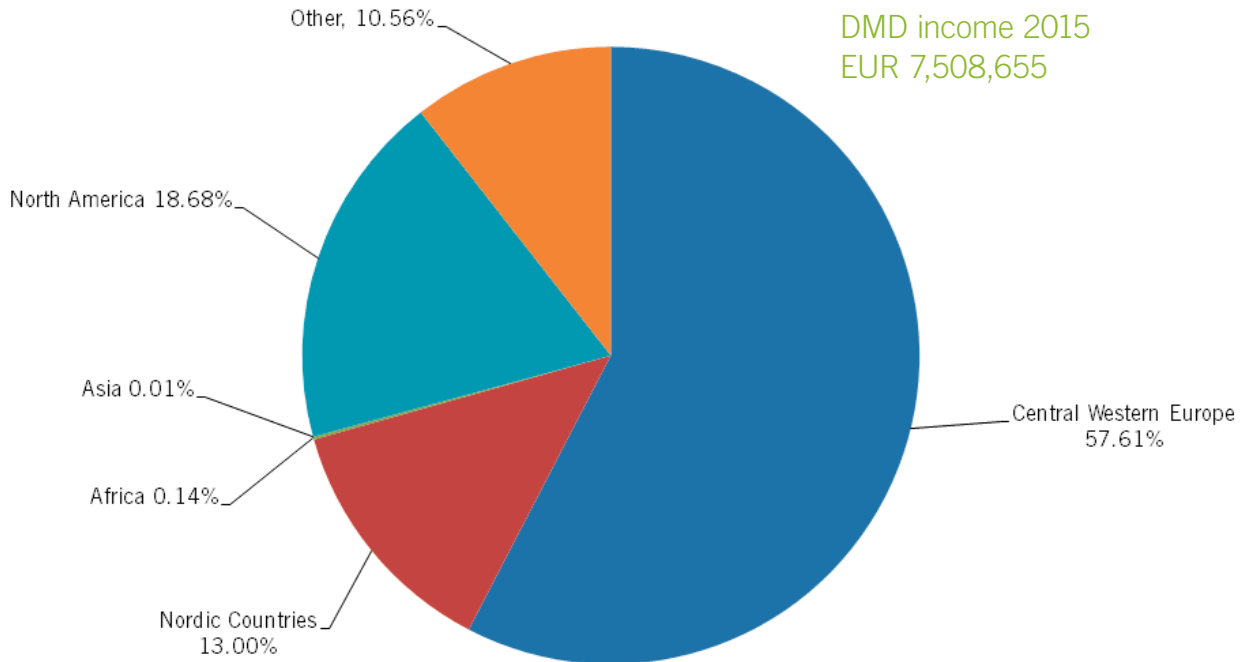
Financial overview

Mission and Development has two main sources of income: LWF member churches and related organizations, and membership fees. The member church and related organizations' contributions largely come from Germany, North America and the Nordic countries.

We also receive small but regular support from mission organizations in the Netherlands. In 2015, we accessed funding for advocacy on HIV and AIDS from the Amsterdam (Netherlands)-based Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund.

2015 sources of income

For the year ending 31 December 2015, DMD received a total amount of EUR 7,508,655 from member churches and related organizations (EUR 6.8 million) and other sources (EUR 706,562).



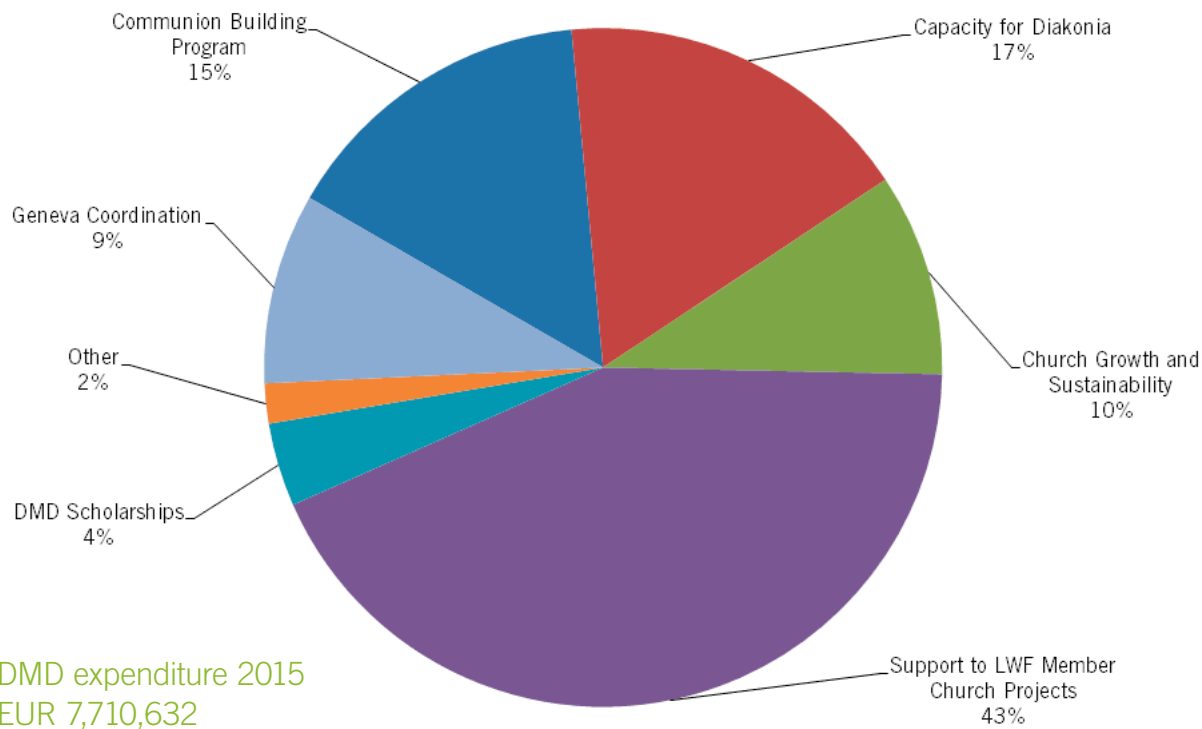
How we used the funds

The 2015 total expenditure was EUR 7.7 million, an increase of 1.7 percent compared to 2014. The gain was mainly due to the foreign exchange

rate fluctuation between the Swiss franc and the Euro.

We appreciate and acknowledge the support that we receive from member churches and related

organizations. This is significant to the work of both DMD and the LWF member churches.



Organization

Committee for Mission and Development

Members

Bishop Niels Henrik Arendt (†), Chairperson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

Ms Colleen Elizabeth Cunningham, Moravian Church in South Africa

Ms Daniëlle Dokman, Chairperson of Subcommittee for Mission and Development, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname

Bishop Jaharianson Saragih, Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (Indonesia)

Ms Eva Bithi Kisku, Bangladesh Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church

Bishop Dr Alex G. Malasusa, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

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Ms Magnea Sverrisdottir, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland

Pröbstin Astrid Kleist, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany

Ms Christina Soren, Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church (India)

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Rev. Dr Malpica-Padilla, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Ms Anastasiya Piddubska, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (Ukraine)

Bishop Dr Matti T. A. Repo, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Ms Johanna van der Sluis-Reuvers, Protestant Church in the Netherlands

Mr J. Joseph Villalon, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



DMD Staff, April 2016 (left to right): Ilona Dorji, Rev. Dr Philip Lok, Caroline Bader, Simangaliso Hove, Rev. Dr Patricia Cuyatti, Julia Brümmer, Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki, Nadia Fetouni-Kharoua, Rev. Dr Elieshi Mungure, Rev. Dr Ireneusz Lukas, Monika Rawcliffe; (seated) Margarita Thilby, Abebe Yohannes Saketa, Susan Werkhoven. Photo: LWF/S. Gallay

DMD says goodbye and thank you for dedicated service

Ms Silvia Raulo (2013-2015)

Rev. Silvio Schneider (January-November 2015)

Rev. Dr Eva-Sybille Vogel-Mfato (2005-2015)



Partners

We appreciate and acknowledge the support of our funding partners



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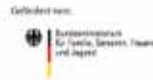


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Workshop Wittenberg was supported by



Proclamation, diakonia and advocacy for justice



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