



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

World Service

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FOR HOPE AND A FUTURE

The Lutheran World Federation

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*World Service Global Strategy
2025-2031 (abridged)*

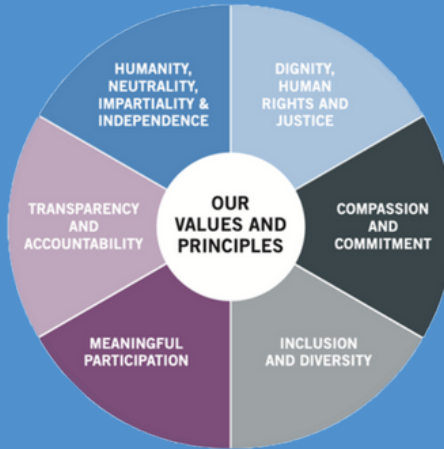
INTRODUCTION

This 2025-2031 Global Strategy reaffirms the commitment of the Lutheran World Federation World Service (LWF World Service) to advancing human rights worldwide. It outlines a decisive path for a robust, inclusive, and responsive approach in an increasingly complex and fractured global landscape.

Despite the challenges, we have seen change for the better. We continue to believe that more can be done and that there is hope for the future.



VALUES AND PRINCIPLES



World Service is dedicated to challenging and addressing the causes and effects of human suffering and poverty, linking local responses to national and international advocacy. In doing this we work towards a world where people live in just societies, in peace and dignity, united in diversity, where they are able to meet their basic needs, achieve their full potential, and claim their universal rights.

World Service shares the values of the Lutheran World Federation, as articulated in the Strategy. Additionally, humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence the work of World Service. These values and principles, and the Human Rights-Based Approach (RBA), form the foundation for the work we do.

The Human Rights-Based Approach (RBA)

This approach puts people at the center, affirming that each individual is precious - a belief in common with the faith in which the LWF is rooted. It emphasized the dignity of each person and is an essential feature of all out programming and humanitarian response. it also draws on the prophetic call to justice in our own an in other faith communities. Advocacy thus forms an integral part of World Service programming and is part and parcel of LWF's holistic mission

WHERE AND HOW WE WORK



Our operations across five regions – Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean – are coordinated from Geneva, Switzerland. We collaborate widely through strategic partnerships, networks and consortia, to ensure impactful, inclusive, and effective programs that reach the most vulnerable.

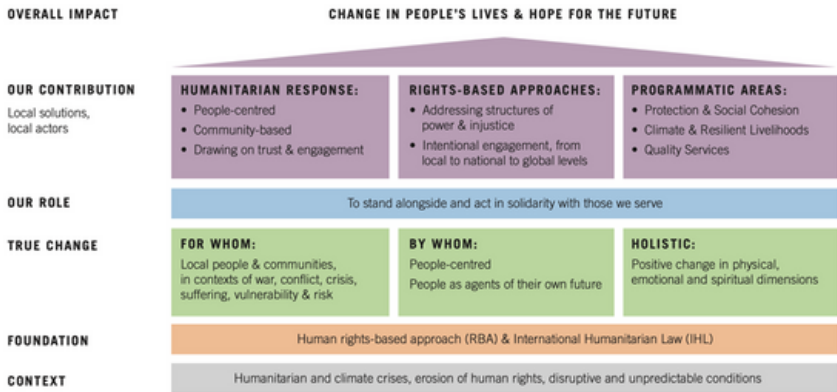


We work with local communities to ensure our programs are appropriate; civil society to ensure effective change extends to more people; LWF member churches to reach out and show compassion to those in need; and governments, intergovernmental bodies and other duty bearers as key instruments of change. We work through and learn from ecumenical and interfaith communities; collaborate with related organizations and philanthropists who provide valuable funding and/or technical expertise; international institutions and UN agencies to enable us to have a deeper and broader impact; and regional and global networks to ensure the voice of the local communities are heard at the highest levels. Over this strategic period, we will expand our work with local partners, sharing expertise to ensure that while local people and actors are in the driving seat, we work jointly to meet the standards of quality, accountability, and delivery required by the international humanitarian community.

LOCALISATION

LWF World Service is accountable to 150 local member churches across 99 countries, predominantly in the Global South. Our approach blends local rootedness with global action, a hallmark of our work. We engage with diverse local entities, from community-based groups and locally registered NGOs to national actors. Depending on the context, we may directly implement initiatives with community representatives or collaborate with local NGOs and partners. Our goal in each situation is to create an enabling environment, strengthen partner capacities, and promote civil society, including faith-based actors.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



To achieve change in an unjust and unequal world, people and communities need allies to stand and act alongside them in solidarity to secure their rights. We choose to do this and work for people-centred change by engaging and supporting women, men, girls and boys in the communities we serve as the key agents of their own future, promoting their dignity, rights, creativity, and resilience.

Our Theory of Change is grounded in the human rights-based approach that underpins and complements our humanitarian response efforts, in alignment with International Humanitarian Law. This alignment reinforces our commitment to upholding and advocating for rights and legal protections, especially in war and conflict situations.

Given the diverse contexts in which we operate, our response needs to be resilient and flexible. We take a broad sectoral approach, adaptable to changing circumstances, built around local solutions and actors to enable long-term change.

We focus on people-centred, community-based, and rights-based humanitarian responses, built on relationships of trust and engagement. By combining the rights-based approach and the principle of localisation, our distinctive 'local to global to local' (L2G2L) strategy leverages our role as an international actor. This ensures that commitments and promises result in concrete change for the people in the places where we work.

We address major challenges through work in these three areas:

- **protection and social cohesion,**
- **climate and resilient livelihoods, and**
- **quality services.**

LWF World Service has a wealth of experience and a proven track record of successful work in these areas, which intentionally overlap to create synergies.

Engagement and advocacy – local to global to local

Our approach spans local to global scales, intentionally engaging individuals, communities, and institutions. Through our 'local to global to local' (L2G2L) advocacy approach, we address power structures and injustices, amplify local voices globally, and return with actionable outcomes. We work with individuals to increase their skills and gain confidence to voice concerns and advocate for their rights. We enhance community capacity to monitor and hold duty bearers accountable, and engage with local authorities to meet their obligations and fulfil the rights of the people they serve, crucial for sustainable change.

PROGRAMMATIC FRAMEWORK



At the centre of our programmatic work is recognition and support for the rights and dignity of every individual, as set out in the diagram. We work with diverse groups of individuals to reinforce their skills and confidence to voice their concerns and advocate for their rights.

We work with individuals and communities affected by war, conflict, or natural disasters, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host communities. Our efforts also extend to communities at risk. Our programming is gender-responsive and inclusive, prioritising key groups such as women, girls, and youth, while increasingly emphasising key vulnerable and marginalised groups such as people with disabilities, those with special education needs, the extremely poor, and those in need of social protection.

This work aims not only to improve living conditions and livelihoods, but also to help develop the capacity to monitor and hold duty bearers accountable.

A distinctive aspect of the work we do is engaging with duty bearers, such as local authorities, to ensure they uphold the rights of all those they are meant to serve, including disadvantaged people. We support capacity building to enable duty bearers to uphold these rights.

We also work with other institutions where we advocate for structural change and address the power structures and injustices that perpetuate crises and undermine the people we serve.

The programmatic framework guides the work we do across emergency, recovery, and longer-term resilience phases, adapting with changing conditions and intersecting where these phases may overlap in the same country.

Promoting access to quality services underpins environments that foster resilient livelihoods; likewise, protection and social cohesion are preconditions for building climate-resilient livelihoods. Synergies across the different programmatic areas thus allow World Service Country Programs to implement comprehensive humanitarian programming dedicated to driving momentum for longer-term change.

Programmatic Area: Protection and Social Cohesion

For us, protection goes beyond typical humanitarian responses, to include protection of the human rights and dignity of people and communities, rooted in International Humanitarian Law, particularly in situations of war and conflict.

Our approach to social cohesion reflects a holistic approach to peacebuilding, going beyond the absence of war or conflict. It embodies peace at community level through fair, just, harmonious and healthy relationships. This fosters thriving communities and serves as a basis for wider peace processes.

Programmatic Area: Climate & Resilient Livelihoods

LWF World Service engages with individuals and communities to encourage resilience and economic self-reliance. We are intensifying efforts to address impacts in the context of the global climate emergency, particularly among those worst affected by climate-induced displacement and migration. We also work with rights holders and duty bearers for an environment that supports resilient and sustainable livelihoods.

Programmatic Area: Quality Services

World Service works to ensure equitable access to essential services, such as water, sanitation, shelter, food, energy, health care and education, at an appropriate level of 'quality'. This access is a right that must be claimed by all, including those displaced because of violence, conflict, or natural disasters.

During crises, World Service will provide life-saving humanitarian assistance and meet basic needs through coordinated emergency responses, but for no longer than necessary, aiming to transfer responsibility to local authorities and other duty bearers as soon as possible.

In working with displaced people and host communities, we are increasingly focusing on strengthening integrated service provision at the community level

Strategic focus

The World Service is committed to effective and efficient resource use, emphasizing good governance, accountability, quality, and responsibility. Risk management and risk sharing with partners are becoming increasingly important in our work.

With the rise of digitalization and generative artificial intelligence, including in the Global South, LWF World Service is actively seeking innovative solutions and transformative changes. Our programming will more intentionally integrate the use of digital tools and processes to the benefit of the people we work with, while addressing associated risks.

The global climate emergency heightens the need to strengthen our climate-responsive programming and integrate green solutions into our organisational practices.

We are investing in staff development and duty of care, as well as increasing our visibility within the sector and our positioning on key issues and themes. Sharing insights gained from our work on the ground through our networks, partnerships, and the international community helps to promote the interests of those we serve.

CONCLUSION

As we launch our 2025–2031 strategy, we invite you to be a part of this vital journey. Whether you are a partner organisation, member church, donor or advocate, your active involvement is crucial. Together, we can tackle the root causes of human suffering and poverty, and work to ensure that everyone can live in peace and dignity. Join us in our mission to empower communities and transform lives. At LWF World Service we believe that together we can do more. Stand with us for Hope and a Future.



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