

AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2011 – 2013

(Approved 8 October 2010)

CONTENTS

Section	Page
MANDATE, VISION & MISSION	2
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	3
PROGRAM PRINCIPLES	4
STRATEGIC GOAL 1 & RELATED OBJECTIVES	9
STRATEGIC GOAL 2	11
STRATEGIC GOAL 3 & RELATED OBJECTIVES	11
STRATEGIC GOAL 4 & RELATED OBJECTIVES	13
IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING	16

Australian Lutheran World Service

Australian Lutheran World Service is the overseas aid and resettlement agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia. It operates under a constitution approved by the General Synod of the LCA, and is consistent with the objects of the LCA Constitution.

1 MANDATE/COMMISSION

A teacher asked: what is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus answered “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: “Love your neighbour as you love yourself” (Matt 22: 36-40).

2 VISION

We see a more just world...a world that upholds the cause of the oppressed, the widows and the fatherless; gives food to the hungry; sets prisoners free; gives sight to the blind; and lifts up those who have fallen down (based on Psalm 146).

3 MISSION

Our ALWS mission is to reach out in love... for justice. We seek to bring people together in partnership to ensure the voices of the poor are heard, and God’s gift of grace is shared in our serving. We strive for life-changing programs that restore human dignity, alleviate poverty and build just and sustainable communities.

4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We serve with unconditional love

We serve people in need, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, gender, belief or political conviction.

1 John 4: 19; 1 John 3: 17; Matt 25: 35-46

We respect and uphold people's dignity

We uphold human value and dignity which have their basis in God's act of creation where he made all people in his image, and in the redemptive love that is won through Jesus Christ.

We respect people's right to determine the extent of their participation in the decisions and actions that affect their lives, even as we commit to supporting men and women shape their own futures and the communities in which they live.

Gen 1:27; Gen 9:6; 2Cor 5:17-19

We value and work for justice

We express our solidarity with people who are poor and marginalised through advocacy for justice - speaking out with courage, consistent with the church's prophetic vocation.

Isaiah 1; 17; 58:6

We work in partnership

We recognise the giftedness in all and the power of partnership, and so seek alliances within the Lutheran family, ecumenically, with people of other faiths and others of good will in wider society who share a commitment to alleviating poverty and promoting justice.

Our partnerships are marked by mutual respect, interdependence, and listening to and learning from each other so both those served and those serving are transformed.

Romans 14:19; Ephesians 4:16

We make good use of God's gifts

We are called to faithfully and responsibly use the resources entrusted to our ministry of service. We will be transparent and accountable to those we seek to assist and to those from whom we accept resources, assessing how our efforts impact people's lives.

Matt 25:14-23

5 PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

5.1 PRIORITY GROUPS

ALWS will focus on programs that have the capacity to assist disadvantaged and vulnerable households and communities, with specific regard to women, children, those affected by HIV & AIDS, people with disabilities, as well as those who are refugees or displaced because of man-made or natural disasters. (Deuteronomy 10: 17-19)

5.2 GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

ALWS will prioritise countries in Asia/Pacific and sub-Saharan Africa where:

- High vulnerability to disaster is evident and significant concentrations of poverty and disadvantage are found.
- There is a demonstrated capacity to respond to the identified need.
- Collaboration and coordination with partners will facilitate programmatic objectives.

5.3 MODES OF OPERATION

ALWS will implement its program in ways that are most appropriate to the operational context:

Through an operational partner that has relevant capacity

Our primary operational partner is the Lutheran World Federation's Department for World Service, because we share common values and approaches, are committed to working together in partnership, and because they have operational capacity in over 30 countries around the world.

ALWS will continue to work multi-laterally through Action by Churches Together Alliance (ACT) in emergency response and to foster ecumenical collaboration in development work as it reflects our commitment to working together in partnership, and because World Service is the largest operational partner in the ACT Network.

ALWS will work with other partners, primarily church-related, where we share common values, approaches and commitment to poverty alleviation and justice, and where there is in the identified partners a demonstrated capacity, or willingness to develop the capacity, to achieve development outcomes in a spirit of partnership.

Accompaniment

ALWS will support and accompany localised World Service programs and, where appropriate, local development institutions until there is a mutually agreed

withdrawal based on objectives being achieved and sustained, because this is consistent with our partnership principles.

Facilitative Institution Building

ALWS will second or place full-time staff to its partners, at their invitation, to facilitate the capacity building of their diaconal institutions to contribute to development in their context.

Consultancy

ALWS will respond to requests from its partners for specific consultancy services for a short to medium period of time to support development-related capacity building or implementation of ALWS-funded activities.

Collaborative Partnerships

ALWS will enter into joint programming, where it will enhance the achievement of our strategic objectives, at national, regional or global level involving, but not exclusively, LCA's Board for Mission, Lutheran Education Australia and Lutheran Community Care, as well as Australian church aid and development agencies.

5.4 STRATEGIC APPROACHES

Integrated, Empowerment & Rights-Based

The persistence of extensive poverty in many parts of the world where over 1 billion people barely exist on less than one dollar a day, the increasingly complex nature of the international environment, including a more hostile context within which communities and humanitarian actors must live and work, and lessons learned over 60 years of practical experience have all served to shape our assessment of the nature and causes of poverty and how they should be addressed. The ALWS philosophy and subsequent approaches are based on the understanding that:

- Poverty is multi-dimensional. It is caused by a complex set of inter-related factors and therefore requires an integrated and coordinated response. ALWS prioritises programs that are multi-sectoral, or are evolving towards that approach. ALWS will implement a broad-based program incorporating relief, rehabilitation, development and institutional strengthening for development because it reflects the reality that these processes are not a linear progression but occur concurrently, complementarily and in response to changes in the operational context.
- The complex context and our respect for the people we seek to serve challenges us to ensure the activities we support are based on sound analysis, a proper understanding of the development context, and are people-centred.

- It is recognised that tackling poverty through real development will take time and therefore requires long term commitments to our partners and the communities with whom they work and we engage.
- Poverty is more than inadequate income or underachievement in key human development indicators. It is also a lack of a voice, power and representation, which requires an empowerment-based approach that is grounded in a human rights framework.

The concept of empowerment is consistent with our biblical understanding of creation that every human being is created in the image of God, with inherent capacities and abilities that were designed to be developed and used to their full potential. Furthermore, informed by an understanding that God created all people equally in his image, empowerment seeks to address power imbalances that oppress the poor and privilege the powerful.

An emphasis on human rights in the context of development helps focus attention on the injustice and inequality that drives poverty and exclusion, and reducing the risk that the poor are seen as needy objects of charity.

- Rights can only be fully realised within a just and peaceful society. At the same time, peace is threatened when people's rights are disregarded and denied. For Christians, reconciliation is God's merciful gift grounded in the message that God has reconciled the world to Jesus Christ. This gift is a promise for a broken world, and our service to the world seeks to witness to this promise through action that promotes peace and reconciliation. It is essential that people and communities are supported and encouraged to seek justice, work for reconciliation and build peace. Through this, respect for neighbour is upheld and communities work together for the common good.
- Poverty is gender-biased. Over 70% of the people living on less than USD1 a day are women, which compels an analysis of gender roles within communities and the development of strategies to bring about greater equality in an appropriate and sensitive manner.
- Sustained poverty reduction can only be achieved by responsible management of the environment and natural resources. ALWS-supported programs must consider the environment by improving and protecting natural environments, and ensuring programs are planned to have no negative consequences on the environment.
- Climate change is a significant risk to the well-being of millions of people, especially communities and societies reliant on agricultural production and living in areas vulnerable to climate-related events. This global issue must be addressed through mitigation, adaptation and risk reduction efforts, adopting rights-based approaches.
- There is a clear correlation between poverty and marginalisation, and people's vulnerability to man-made or natural disasters. This reality informs an approach that doesn't rely on a sectoral approach, but integrates relief, rehabilitation, development and disaster preparedness.
- Poverty is entrenched in inequitable socio-economic structures and systems – from the household through to the international level – which challenges us, as articulated in further detail below, to engage in advocacy work for, by and

with poor communities at all levels, and in alliances with other actors and networks.

- Development is a process intended to improve and transform the lives of those living in poverty and suffering injustice. From a Christian point of view, this is a reminder of God's constant renewal of creation. As people of God, we see transformation as God's gracious gift, which works towards the realisation of the full potential of his creation, including all people.
- Development cannot be given: it must be a participatory process, controlled, produced and owned locally by partners and communities. People and local groups must be actively involved in all aspects of development and equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that broaden their options, increase their self-confidence and empowers them to take control of their lives.
- Development is a process that requires professionalism. This necessitates a relationship of shared learning in which ALWS seeks to provide support which builds the capacity of partners to implement programs that meet globally accepted standards. In the same way, our partners share their wisdom and skills with ALWS enabling us to maintain high professional standards, as well.

In all of above the aim is always to conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with our principles and ensure our programs are implemented with integrity.

Advocacy & Justice¹

Justice is that process in which God, because of his righteousness and empathetic love works at all levels in the world to overcome evil or wrong, deliver those suffering under these conditions and establish a right order where peace prevails.

Wherever people are enslaved by poverty, disenfranchised by those in power or dehumanised by fellow human beings, God calls the community of the faithful to respond in love. God is with the poor in their struggle to take hold of the freedom, dignity and rights which are theirs as human beings made in the image of God. And so God constantly calls on the community of the faithful to join in the continuing battle against all the forces in our society which lead to poverty, oppression and dehumanisation.

As Luther bluntly puts it:

“In this connection (upholding the honour of God's name) we must offer resistance to all wrong, wherever truth or righteousness are violated and abused. We dare make no distinctions of persons, as do some who fight most actively and busily against the wrong which is done to the rich, the mighty, or their own friends, but who are quite quiet and patient when wrong is done to the poor, or to those of low estate, or to their own enemy.” (Luther's Works).

In Jesus' ministry, those who are outcasts, sick, poor and disenfranchised experienced new life. Those who are in Christ are called to join the poor in their

struggle against the forces that oppress them. Striving for justice is a natural response to God's act of justification and is part of the Christian's vocation.

In order for the church to represent Christ effectively to the poor the church needs to learn to identify with the poor, listen to the poor, and join in the struggle with the poor. To do this the church must repent of un-Christ-like attitudes toward the poor and instead seek them out, stand with them and learn to share their suffering.

ALWS approach is to work within this theological understanding of the prophetic role of the church in fighting for justice. This will include raising awareness within the LCA and its associated communities about justice issues, challenging people about their attitudes, encouraging people to protest against exploitation and gross inequality and calling on the community to practice justice. In this regard it may also involve critical evaluation of policies and programs, and the exposure of oppressive and unfair structures. This will not just involve denunciation and criticism, but also the articulation of a positive and constructive message: not through promotion of a particular political or social philosophy, but based on theological principles and, where possible, well researched and developed policy positions. And, most importantly, we will strive to ensure that our work in this area is not based on our own opinions, but rooted in the reality of people living in poverty, and that we privilege and lift up the voices of the poor and help them to speak for themselves.

1. This section draws significantly on the LCA's Commission on Social and Bioethical Questions 1992 "Poverty" Statement

6. STRATEGIC GOAL 1

An increased number of people live in more just and sustainable communities where the rights of those who are disadvantaged, marginalised and vulnerable are respected and upheld.

ALWS will focus on the following objectives to achieve this goal:

6.1 OBJECTIVE 1

- a) **A greater number of empowered communities and poor households equipped to manage their own development**
- b) **An increased number of people who are disadvantaged and marginalised know of and advocate for the full exercise of their rights**
- c) **An increased number of the poorest people in communities are exercising their right to an adequate standard of living by achieving sustainable livelihoods**

Strategies

1. Support a selected number of World Service development programs that effectively addresses poverty and vulnerability through integrated empowerment and rights-based approaches
2. Collaborate with Australian, faith-based agencies in programming-related activities in countries where ALWS and the agencies have a mutual interest
3. Collaborate with Australian, faith-based agencies in advocacy initiatives that will support the efforts of people to enjoy the full exercise of their rights.
4. Engage with AusAID, either individually or with others, to influence policy outcomes and contribute to good development practice that will be in the best interests of the poor and effective poverty alleviation.
5. Consider opportunities to cooperate with the LWF's Office for International Affairs and Human Rights and Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance in addressing advocacy-related issues relevant to our Strategic Goal

6.2 OBJECTIVE 2

A greater proportion of people who have been affected by emergencies establish a strong basis for the longer term achievement of sustainable livelihoods in just and less vulnerable communities.

Strategies

1. Support a selected number of ACT/World Service refugee, returnee and resettlement programs that enable uprooted people to re-establish their lives.

2. Explore opportunities to collaborate with Australian, faith-based agencies in joint programming in countries where ALWS and the agencies have a mutual interest.

6.3 OBJECTIVE 3

People and communities affected by emergencies receive life-sustaining care, which is appropriate to establishing the basis for recovery.

Strategies

1. Support a selected number of ACT emergency responses, assessed on a case-by-case basis and guided by our programming priorities.
2. Participate actively in the ACT Alliance, especially through the ACT Australia New Zealand Forum to explore opportunities and collaborate in disaster-related programming in the Asia/Pacific region.
3. Collaborate with other church-based Australian agencies in disaster-related programming.

6.4 OBJECTIVE 4

An increased number of diaconal or development institutions with enhanced capacity to contribute to development

Strategies

1. Support the ELC-PNG, primarily through the Church Partnership Program, to increase its institutional capacity to serve people and contribute to a just and sustainable society in PNG
2. Assist the Lutheran Indonesian churches and civil society organisations to enhance their capacity to serve people and contribute to just and sustainable communities.
3. Work closely with the LCA's Board for Mission, Lutheran Education Australia and other relevant arms of the church to maximise the effectiveness of our engagement in PNG, Indonesia and any other country where there is a mutual interest
4. Where appropriate, provide accompaniment support to local development institutions in communities that have graduated from partner programs

6.5 OBJECTIVE 5

ALWS is providing leadership in the Asia/Pacific region in cooperation with World Service, other Lutheran partners and the ACT Alliance.

Strategies

1. Support and assist develop greater collaboration between Lutheran-related diaconal and development institutions in the Asia/Pacific region, primarily through the Asia Zone Environment and Emergency Cooperation Network mechanism.
2. Provide strategic input and support to LWF/World Service engagement in the Asia/Pacific Region, including identification of new programming opportunities.
3. Provide strategic input and support to the ACT Alliance, especially within the Asia/Pacific region
4. Offer, or source, specialised expertise in areas identified by our partners to assist them deliver effective and good practice programs.

7 STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Provide support to and nurture people who've recently arrived in Australia under the government's humanitarian program.

7.1 OBJECTIVE 1

New arrivals are established in their homes and adjusted to and engaged with their local communities

Strategies

1. Assist uprooted people resettle in Australia through small loans, working in cooperation with Lutheran congregations and Lutheran Community Care/SA
2. Continue to build partnerships within the LCA between ALWS, LCC, LEA, LLL and relevant District and congregations to offer relevant and timely assistance to people resettling in Australia under the Humanitarian program.

8 STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Increase the number of people within the LCA and its associated communities following Jesus' command and loving example to serve people who are poor and marginalised.

8.1 OBJECTIVE 1

Consistent with our Biblical foundations work for increased awareness and understanding of poverty and justice issues that leads to a desire to respond with action.

Strategies

1. Inspire and equip Lutheran schools, in cooperation with Lutheran Education Australia, to develop and implement strategies that result in poverty and justice issues becoming embedded in schools, so that understanding and practical response emerge as an active and natural expression of schools' Gospel-centred values and practice.
2. Offer students in Lutheran schools exciting and relevant opportunities to learn about and respond to issues of poverty and justice.
3. Offer LCA members, and the extended Lutheran community, exciting and relevant opportunities to learn about and respond to issues of poverty and justice.
4. Recognise the desire of some LCA members for hands-on service opportunities, and develop partnerships and methods that can achieve this with a clear benefit to the people served.
5. Identify and offer opportunities, where possible, for tertiary students undertaking development studies to get practical experience in the development field through ALWS.
6. Work alongside leaders within the LCA and its various arms to support their awareness and understanding of poverty and justice issues.
7. Explore opportunities to support leaders and entities within the LCA when they deal with practical poverty and justice issues within their particular area of service.

8.2 OBJECTIVE 2

Increased effective advocacy by ALWS, in partnership with the LCA, its members and community, on poverty and justice issues.

Strategies

1. Develop within LCA, its members and community a deeper understanding of how Christians are called to speak out on behalf of people who are poor and marginalised where they cannot speak for themselves.
2. Advocate on poverty and justice issues within our ALWS mandate, with a particular focus on the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons both in Australia and globally where ALWS has an interest.
3. When requested, support the LCA to speak out on poverty and justice issues.
4. Welcome and recognise that new arrivals to Australia under the humanitarian program have a unique perspective and contribution to make to discussion of issues of poverty and justice, and offer support that their voice is heard by our members and the wider community.

9 STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Build a strong organisation that will support and sustain its program goals and objectives

9.1 OBJECTIVE 1

Enhanced relationships and greater collaboration with key partners

Strategies

1. Continued high level linkages with World Service through governance structure, global forums and regional networks/consultations
2. Enhance our engagement in Action by Churches Together Alliance (ACT), including participation in Regional Forums (including the ACT ANZ Forum) Working Groups and Committees, where appropriate
3. Maintain membership of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
4. Actively engage with other church agencies in Australia to promote collaboration and cooperation
5. Maintain membership of Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and increase engagement in its work.
6. Identify opportunities to engage with AusAID on aid policy and practice
7. Participate actively in the PNG Churches Partnership Program (CPP)
8. Continue to develop strong relationships with the LCA, especially Board for Mission, for the sake of an effective, holistic ministry
9. Enhance relationships with our field-based program partners through increased ALWS staff support
10. Ensure open and transparent partnerships through defined partnership agreements that reflect ALWS' principles and values (which are consistent with ACFID's Code of Conduct)

9.2 OBJECTIVE 2

Ensure strong governance

Strategies

1. Regularly review structure and processes to enhance strategic focus
2. Enhance individual capacity of Board members so they can carry out their fiduciary duties as Directors and support management achieve ALWS' strategic goals.
3. Seek the views of outside experts to inform decision-making, as appropriate

9.3 OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure strong management and accountable, transparent systems

Strategies

1. Review and appropriately resource the organisation for growth and to support achievement of the strategic goals
2. Enhance the competence and skills of management and staff
3. Improve management systems to provide timely, accurate and relevant information for decision-making and accountability to stakeholders
4. Enhance, both internally and with partners, the capacity to manage risk and ensure financial accountability and transparency
5. Continue to improve systems to maintain compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct

9.4 OBJECTIVE 4

Enhance systems that can monitor and report on the impact and quality of the work that we do

Strategies

1. Strengthen planning, monitoring and evaluation processes and documentation of impact
2. Improve program design and implementation, including cross-cutting issues, through an enhanced application of the findings and lessons learned from monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.
3. Adopt accepted accountability standards that reflect our commitment to prioritising the people we serve
4. Explore opportunities to collaborate with other Australian faith-based agencies to improve program quality, such as through peer reviews and opportunities to share learning
5. Develop a process that reflects on the distinctiveness of faith-based agencies in development and humanitarian work, which can help inform dialogue with our partners and within the wider aid sector.

9.5 OBJECTIVE 5

Mobilise the partnership resources required to implement our Strategic goals and objectives

Strategies

1. Continue to develop awareness about ALWS so that we become the natural aid agency for Lutherans, and the broader Lutheran-linked community.

2. Seek to grow the financial resources committed by Lutherans and the Lutheran-linked community to the work of ALWS.
3. Continue to develop awareness of and contributions to the LLL-ALWS Support Fund.
4. Continue AusAID funding through the ANCP and CPP where it supports our Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives.
6. Consider new funding opportunities in collaboration with other Australian church-based agencies.

10 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE PLAN

The ALWS strategic plan is implemented by management and monitored by the ALWS Board at its scheduled meetings twice a year. Reporting to the Board is against the Strategic Goals and Objectives. The Administration Committee of the Board attends to urgent issues between meetings of the full Board.

A Mid-Term Evaluation of the Strategic Plan will be undertaken in March 2012.