

PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE: THE POWER TO END POVERTY

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DETERMINED TO END POVERTY

Our world is one of unprecedented technological advances and vast resources. Yet, in this global environment, extraordinary prosperity and power sits right alongside extreme poverty and lack of opportunity for people to control their own lives. Throughout the world we can see communities in which women and men struggle for food, education and access to the medicines and technology that their neighbours take for granted.

It does not have to be like this.

Christian Aid believes that human action is responsible for the underlying causes of poverty and that we – the wealthiest generations in human history – have the greatest opportunity to overcome it. Indeed, since 1950, thanks to the actions of millions of people intent on creating change, child mortality has more than halved, the number of children getting primary education globally has grown to just under 90 per cent and life expectancy in developing countries has risen by, on average, 20 years.

For when people work together, the world can be changed.

This document is Christian Aid's strategy for building the power of us all to eradicate poverty.

Central to our Christian faith is our belief that all people are created in the image of God, with inherent dignity and infinite worth



Christian Aid/Sarah Filbey

Unequal distribution of power and wealth prevents the world's riches from being protected and shared, and enables the gross injustice of poverty to continue. This image shows women at a literacy class in Rajasthan. The class is run by Christian Aid partner Ekal Nari Sangathan, which helps single women in India – often widows – to secure their rights. Women are often left out of formal education during childhood due to custom, culture and poverty

REBALANCING POWER

We seek thriving communities, sharing fairly in resources and influencing the decisions that affect their lives

Christian Aid has been working in the flood-prone Lower Lempa region of El Salvador since it responded to the emergency caused by Hurricane Mitch in 1998. Through its subsequent disaster risk reduction programme with partner Acudesbal, the community has become very well organised. In 2011 the floods were extreme, but thanks to early warning systems, improved communication and shelters, the number of deaths was low. Concepción Moratalla, shown here, spent 12 days in one of the shelters alongside vulnerable members of her community



What would it take to create change and end the immorality of continuing poverty?

Christian Aid's analysis of poverty is that at its root is lack of power: the power, for example, to have your say and be heard, or to know your rights and demand them; the power to have access to essential services or to share fairly in the world's resources or to live in the security not only of surviving, but also of thriving.

Rooted in our belief in a creative and loving God, Christian Aid is clear that poverty can be eradicated through the empowerment of individuals and communities. To realise this ambition, Christian Aid has identified three goals – three essential shifts in power.

- Power for people to be resilient in the face of threats and disasters, to seize opportunities, to live with dignity and to thrive.
- Power for people to ensure that the world's resources are fairly and sustainably shared with everyone.
- Power for people to share in the vital decisions of life and take a full part in society and the economy.

Christian Aid is clear that achievement of these goals is vital if poverty is to be eradicated – and that Christian Aid's strengths, experience and understanding of poverty place us in a strong position to address these issues. But not on our own.

We need the economic, political and social will to support shifts in power. To create that will requires a force for change – a force that is achievable through partnership

PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE

When we all come together as we did, with support from Jesse Jackson, to lobby Parliament in 2010, we become active partners in a global movement for change. Working in partnership, Christian Aid believes it is possible to end poverty in the 21st century



All of Christian Aid's work is based on trusting and effective relationships. We work in partnership with others as part of a global movement committed to ending poverty and social injustice. They include:

- **Churches and faith groups** around the world, including our 41 sponsoring churches, interfaith networks, and the ACT Alliance, which includes 125 churches and related organisations.
- Hundreds of **local organisations**, rooted in the communities with whom they work, with a deep understanding of what is required to lift those women, men and children out of poverty. And other NGOs and research institutions that share our values and inform our work.
- Local and national **governments around the world** – engaging regularly on policy and advocacy issues, and delivering large, government-funded programmes in India, Sierra Leone and the DRC, with DFID and other donors. Globally we work with partners to promote democratic, accountable governance at all levels.
- **Business and the private sector** – from multinational to village level – supporting pro-poor business practices, and harnessing the power of the market to bring about transformational change through enterprise-based development.
- **Individuals** in Britain and Ireland, and around the world, working to create change for those living in poverty.

GIVE, ACT, PRAY

Poverty has been eroded when people have fought together for justice: rich and poor, women and men, global north and south, people of all faiths and none

Christian Aid's partnership with its supporters is essential. The acts of supporters in giving, praying and taking action are at the heart of the work we do. We know that when we act as good neighbours, the world changes. Christian Aid Week, for example, brings together over 100,000 tireless volunteers for one aim. In 2011, it raised over £12 million; focused more than 10,000 churches in prayer and fundraising; and engaged hundreds of thousands of people as the story spread of how poverty must and can be defeated.

As members of civil society, our supporters have the ability to mobilise and influence their communities, campaign and build political pressure for change in government, the private sector, and other institutions.

And it is through such influence, en masse, that together we can end poverty – if we seek change where it can make the most difference, swiftly, effectively and sustainably.

Christian Aid is committed to growing and deepening a web of energetic, mutually respectful relationships between individuals, communities and countries; between civil society, business, government, charities and churches, between people of all faiths and none, in order to evolve and strengthen a movement for change.

Such a vast and necessary force for good, which will improve the lives and opportunities of billions of people, can be set in train by each and every one of us.

● **We can use our power to rouse the conscience of politicians by campaigning on issues such as tax justice and climate change.**

● **As consumers and active citizens we can change the policies of business, large and small, through initiatives such as the Trace the Tax campaign.**

● **In our churches and communities, we can raise awareness, give, act and pray in support of Christian Aid.**

HOW WE CAN SHIFT POWER

To achieve essential shifts in power, Christian Aid has identified five areas on which to focus its work – areas in which our skills and experience will enable us to make the greatest impact. They follow overleaf:

Darlington

Dr Peter Murray has been taking part in Christian Aid Week, as a collector and as an organiser, since he was a student. He took part in our fundraising walk in Sinai in 2006 and has helped to organise the Bede's Way walk. In addition, Peter is a volunteer speaker for Christian Aid. His involvement, and his knowledge of our climate change and tax justice campaigns, enable him to speak about many aspects of our work – and are invaluable in helping us build commitment from other supporters



FOCUS ①

POWER TO CHANGE INSTITUTIONS

We want to see all people having the power to influence institutions – so that the decisions affecting their lives are made responsibly and fairly

In 2007, the Bajarangpura community of the Sahariya tribe marched with 25,000 other excluded people to hold the Indian government to account on its promise to listen to dalit and adivasi people's claims to land rights. The march was organised by Christian Aid partner Ekta Parishad, and one of the results was that the Bajarangpura villagers, among an estimated 10,000 adivasis, won rights to the land on which they live. A second march, expected to number four times as many marchers as before, is planned for October 2012 and some of the Bajarangpura villagers will walk again, in solidarity with others who have yet to win rights to their land.

① We all play a part in institutions – as members, for example, of a church or a business. Through our networks of friends and colleagues we can call for changes in these institutions, to reform systems that work against people living in poverty.



As members of civil society, we can use our influence over government and other institutions. We can participate in popular campaigns such as those for tax justice or action on climate change, to demand accountability and sustainability.

FOCUS ②

THE RIGHT TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

We want to see all people able to fulfill their right to access the services essential for them to have a healthy and secure life

Rogers Ochieng Otieno is a volunteer community health worker with Christian Aid partner Anglican Development Services, which runs the Rural Transport Network in Nyanza Province, Kenya, with Virgin Unite. Rogers is one of 12 volunteer motorbike riders who provide access to health education and support. As well as educating families on malaria prevention, Rogers also supports people living with HIV. He helps people to collect their essential medicines each month, provides food to ensure that people living with HIV eat a balanced diet and helps to fight HIV stigma within the community. By the end of 2010, a total of 8,510 households had been visited by Rogers and the other volunteers.



Through targeted campaigns we can urge governments and businesses globally to ensure that medicines and other essential goods and services are affordable.



Together we can influence faith leaders to take more enlightened approaches in controversial areas; in particular stigma, discrimination and gender.



We can join together to campaign and advocate, pray and raise money, to ensure that poor communities gain access to equitable, high-quality essential services.

FOCUS 3

FAIR SHARES IN A CONSTRAINED WORLD

We want to see all people able to have a fair and sustainable share of the world's resources



Twenty-two communities in Nicaragua have been supported by Christian Aid partner Sopexcca to set up coffee cooperatives and a processing plant for the coffee they grow. The result for these cooperatives is far greater power to negotiate a good price for their

beans and to plough additional money back into their communities. They are now exploring the possibility of also growing cocoa, which is more resilient to floods and a warmer climate. With an eye on the future, younger members of the communities are planting trees to help protect the environment, and the skills they have been taught for running the cooperatives will help them when they take over from older generations.

○ We can use our influence as voters, consumers, activists, business people and professionals, to promote national and international policies and regulations that promote fair market access and participation by people living in poverty.

○ We can continue to challenge unsustainable consumption patterns and build support for fair and green alternatives.

○ We can donate and collect donations to support Christian Aid's emergency work, helping to save lives and rebuild communities after earthquakes, floods, famine and other disasters.

FOCUS 4

EQUALITY FOR ALL

We want to see a more inclusive world where identity – gender, ethnicity, caste, religion, class, sexual orientation – is no longer a barrier to equal treatment

Nozeni Izatullah was 15 when she was held captive by her boyfriend's family for more than 50 days, during which time she was raped and abused. She escaped by climbing out of a window, but was arrested and sentenced to five years in Maimana prison, in northern Afghanistan, for the 'moral' crime of running away with her boyfriend. Christian Aid partner AWEC helped Nozeni in prison, by teaching her embroidery and literacy. They provided her with skills to enable her to earn a living when released. In 2011 AWEC also began providing legal support to the women in the prison, which enabled Nozeni to apply for a presidential pardon. This led to an early release, halfway through her sentence.

○ We can hold governments and institutions in the global north and south to account on their record of implementing policies and laws that combat inequality and discrimination, and promote inclusion.



FOCUS ⑤

TACKLING VIOLENCE AND BUILDING PEACE

We want to see vulnerable people protected from violence and living in peace

Major Janvier Bulambo was one of 492 high-ranking Congolese soldiers to receive civilian rights training organised by Christian Aid partner CBCA. He now spreads understanding of the need for army discipline, zero tolerance of rape, and the role the Congolese army (FARDC) can play in bringing peace to the eastern DRC. Since a reconciliation ceremony that took place in the village of Kibati, soldiers and civilians have even begun singing together in the church choir, a step towards improved relationships.

⑤ We can be part of social movements for change that challenge attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that perpetuate violence.

⑤ We can build pressure for those responsible for violence and conflict to be held to account, and for governments to prioritise peaceful alternatives.



⑤ We can be vigilant consumers, recognising the impact of the market on conflict, particularly over natural resources.

⑤ We can be inspired to pray for peace and justice.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO MAKE

Through partnership we can maximise our power to achieve these changes:

- Women and girls are achieving greater social, political and economic equality, and Christian Aid is placing gender and exclusion at the centre of its analysis and work.
- Everyone is inspired and supported to play their part in ending poverty.
- Poor and marginalised people have gained greater voice in decision-making at all levels.
- Governments are responding to the voices of poor and marginalised people in their decision-making and allocation of resources.
- Poor and marginalised women and men can access essential goods, benefits and services, and can successfully manage risks and threats.
- Business and market activity and regulation are more fair and inclusive, and provide sustainable benefits for poor communities.
- Churches and faith groups are increasingly playing a distinctive role in securing the rights of poor and marginalised women and men.

These changes will represent radical progress towards Christian Aid's vision of ending poverty worldwide – and we will judge our success against them.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of dignity, freedom and hope, of power over their own lives.

Christian Aid has a vision – an end to poverty – and we believe that vision can become a reality.

If you would like to find out more about how you can join us in partnership, please:

- call 020 7523 2225 to join our mailing list, or set up a regular gift
- sign up to receive emails at christianaid.org.uk/getinvolved
- get in touch with your local Christian Aid office: christianaid.org.uk/aboutus/contact
- find out more on YouTube: youtube.com/user>thisischristianaid
- sign up for a challenge: christianaid.org.uk/getinvolved/events
- join us on Facebook: facebook.com/christianaid
- follow us on Twitter: @christian_aid

You can read Christian Aid's full strategy document *Partnership for Change: the power to end poverty* by going to: christianaid.org.uk/resources/corporate_reports/2012-plus-strategy.aspx

Front cover image: Bearing Witness in Manchester, on the eve of the Conservative party conference 2011. Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tearfund led an inspiring day of campaigning and worship on the issues of climate change and global poverty

Photo: Christian Aid/M Gonzalez-Noda

Christian Aid is a member of the

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