

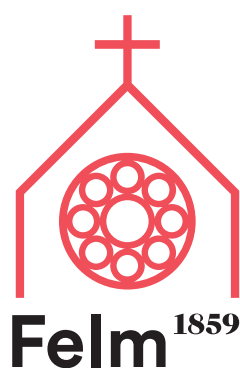
# Church Cooperation – A Joint Message of Hope

CHURCH COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2017–2022



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CHURCH COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2017–2022





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Helsinki Bofori Oy, Helsinki 2018

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# Introduction

Dear Colleague,

In a small town in the 1980s, the decision to expand the training programme for kindergarten teachers from two to three years caused a commotion. Many people felt that such a lengthy period of theoretical training would reduce the natural and warm way of the students to be with children. There was also a fear that less time would be spent on playing. In the town where the school was located, the Principal had to defend the Ministry's decision in an article to the local newspaper. In his article the Principal made the following point: 'Their lap is just as warm, even when they know more.'

This document is Felm's *Church Cooperation Programme 2017–2022*. It answers the questions of what we do and how we do it to ensure that our Church Cooperation is in line with the Strategy and strategic goals of Felm. The question of why we do this work is primarily answered in Felm's Theological Charter. This Programme guides our Church Cooperation efforts on a global level. It sets the contents of the work out, and it depicts which challenges we face, which principles our work rests on and how we measure the quality and results of our work. It states the focus areas of our work and where we allocate our resources. The Programme also shows how we monitor and control the risks involved in the work. The Programme serves as a tool for Felm employees, but it also informs our supporters and partners about the focal points and ways of implementation of Church Cooperation globally.

Felm has opted for adopting the results-based management approach (RBM) during the strategic period of 2017–2022. Focusing on the results of our activities prompts new working methods within Felm's Church Cooperation. RBM guides the way how we plan and monitor our activities systematically. We also apply it to present the results and impact of our efforts. It is a tool which allows us to see our work from a new perspective. It also enables us to serve our supporters better and to better report to them how their support brings hope and positive change into people's lives.

The new management approach brings with it a new terminology to describe our work: in addition to the language of theology and the Church, we also speak the language of project management. For many people involved in Church Cooperation, this may mean seeing things from a new angle. Still, focusing on results does not change the essence of Church Cooperation but acts as its tool to add to the professionalism of missionary work. Through results-based management approach Church Cooperation becomes visible in a new way. In other words it means that we have access to a theoretical framework to describe what holistic mission is in practice today. The results-based approach offers us a set of measures to ensure the quality of the work we do in a responsible manner.

Whenever a new, theoretical framework meets familiar practices, occasional worries about the essence of the work spring up. Is our lap still as warm as it used to? Do we lose something important if we use the language of a new frame of reference? Is results-based approach compatible with the spiritual dimension of Church Cooperation? We believe it is. We believe that increasing the level of theoretical knowledge does not replace motivation, commitment or love for people or Creation. Professionalism means taking conscious steps towards our goals. It is manifested through our ability to talk about our work using the terminology of the method we have chosen. We do believe that the deepest source of all change is God and it is God who is in charge of His mission. We cannot grasp all the changes He brings about by theoretical means. Still, we are partakers in His mission and bear witness to what we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:20)

Pia Kummel-Myrskog

Director, Church Cooperation



Felm aims to strengthen human dignity and justice in the world. For nearly 160 years the Christian message of hope, faith and love for neighbour has been the corner stone for our work. Felm works in 30 countries, with over 100 partner churches and partner organizations. We support permanent change in developing and fragile countries, where each voice will be heard. We work on the grassroots together with local people, building fruitful partnerships with local communities. Felm is an internationally active organisation that works under the Finnish Lutheran Church. Felm is one of the largest civil society organisations in Finland involved in international cooperation. Felm is a partner organisation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Picture: Namibia/Juri Veikkola

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# Church Cooperation – A Joint Message of Hope in the World



# Church Cooperation – A Joint Message of Hope in the World

Felm, its partners abroad and in Finland together with all the churches and church organisations constitute God's worldwide Church. Our joint mission is to bear witness to God's love in the world. Together, we look for answers to the question of how we can bear common witness in today's world. As equal partners, we discuss visions and goals. We plan and commit to the work that is generated by our joint witness. Together, we share with the world how that world is changed through the work we do.

## Who are the 'We' of Church Cooperation?

In short, through *We*, the speaker expresses a sense of belonging to a group. *We* is a Pronoun, a grammatical term which replaces a Noun. Its meaning can only be defined by the context in which it is used. *We* can signal a permanent commonality, such as the membership of a family or of an ethnic group, or the citizenship of a given country. *We* can also refer to a group of people who share a common but brief experience, i.e. the travellers along the same road or witnesses of an accident. The speaker is part of the experience, willingly or unwillingly. The usage of *we* has multiple interpretations. At its best, *we* creates a sense of belonging. *We* can also be an instrument of power and control.

Partnership and collaboration are the basic tenets of Church Cooperation. Church Cooperation crosses religious, ethnic, linguistic and social boundaries. Its foundation and purpose is to work with people from different groups and bring them to work together. In this Programme, we use *we* as the principal subject. At its narrowest, this *we* refers to Felm employees. It may represent the Church Cooperation team who is responsible for writing this Programme. In some contexts, *we* includes the people involved in the activities in a given country or area. At its broadest, *we* encompasses Felm network with its international partners and the global Church. By using the pronoun *we*, we invite the readers to think about which group of people are involved at any given time and whether or not they want to be part of that group. *We* is both active and inclusive.



In diakonia everyone has the right to receive church's help. Everyone also have the right to help.  
Picture: Ethiopia/ Jouko Marttinen

The aim of our work is to reduce 'otherness'. Our joint witness means sharing the Good News and empowering Christians to act openly and without prejudice. This witness through our work results in dismantling the walls between ourselves and others. Different groups of people, including those who are marginalised and vulnerable, are an integral and equal part of congregations, communities and society. We help those who are marginalised to stand up and change the world themselves. We strengthen the cohesion inside the Church and contribute to its openness.

Church Cooperation aims at strengthening hope. Its core mission is to call people and communities to (share) faith and new life in Christ. Church Cooperation is guided by the vision that the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ will be realised all over the world as joy, peace and justice. Our work reflects Christian values through words, attitudes and ways of working.



Improving livelihoods serves the whole family and community. Picture: Botswana/Juri Veikkola

The nature of Church Cooperation is holistic and outward-looking; it is open, outreaching and renewable. It is based on the word of God and the sacraments of the Church. The Church's message of hope, faith and love of neighbour has been the cornerstone of our work for 160 years. We strive to make a positive and permanent change in the countries we operate in.

Felm is an internationally active organisation that works under the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. As one of the largest Finnish civil society organisations working in global development, we are a key partner organisation for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. We are active in 30 countries and work with more than a hundred partner churches and organisations.





Local people fishing with canoes sculpted by hand in the Okavango Delta, Botswana.  
Picture: Botswana/Juri Veikkola

## 2

# Church Cooperation Programme – From Strategy to Implementation

# Church Cooperation Programme – From Strategy to Implementation

The Church Cooperation Programme is part of Felm's Strategy for 2017–2022, which is realised through four programmes: Church Cooperation Programme, Development Cooperation Programme, Advocacy Programme and Peace and Reconciliation Programme. The programmes complement each other and contribute to the common goals of Felm. Together, the four programmes form Felm's holistic mission.

The Church Cooperation Programme is intended as a tool to guide employees of Felm in building partnerships and in planning, monitoring and evaluating our work. The Programme also tells our partners on which areas and people groups Felm wants to focus, and which principles are followed in all cooperation supported by Felm. This programme is also a source of information to our supporters and all others who are interested in the contents, implementation and monitoring of Felm's Church Cooperation.



One of the most significant aims of Church Cooperation Programme is to strengthen the rights and well-being of the most marginalised children.

Picture: Bolivia/Ari Vitikainen

## Themes of Hope

Felm's Strategy 2017–2022 is built on Hope. We bring Hope through the message of God's love, the equality of human beings, justice and peace. We sum our work up in Felm's strategy through four Themes of Hope: *We bear witness to God's boundary-crossing love; We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalised; We work for a more just world; We build peace and reconciliation.* We set out to realise the Themes of Hope through 12 goals of International Cooperation. These goals, or programme outcomes, bring into the foreground 12 groups of people, for whom and with whom we want to share the message of hope. These 12 groups of people who represent discriminated people groups and those who defend the rights of the discriminated are the heart of Felm's strategy. The 12 programme outcomes describe the positive change we wish to induce in the lives of the beneficiaries within each goal (Appendix 6).

Church Cooperation strengthens hope through all the four Themes of Hope. We work among and with all the 12 groups of people.

The Church Cooperation Programme aims to realise all dimensions of Felm's holistic mission. This work comprises sharing of the Good News, strengthening churches, defending the dignity and human rights of discriminated people, advocating for the discriminated in society, and working for peace and reconciliation. Our work is preventive, based on timely intervention and provides after-treatment.

The Church Cooperation Programme is the largest of Felm programmes, as it works to realise all 12 strategic goals of Felm's International Cooperation (IC-1-12). We have selected the following programme outcomes as focus areas of the programme:

- Those who have not yet heard the Gospel have been touched by God's all-encompassing love. (IC-1)
- Congregations serve as an open community and cross all boundaries as part of the global church. (IC-2)
- Children and youth at risk of marginalization learn life skills needed for a responsible adulthood. (IC-7)
- Partner churches and organisations operate professionally and in accordance with good governance. (IC-10)

Compared to the previous Church Cooperation Programme the most significant changes are the strengthening of the human rights based approach (HRBA) and the results-based project management (RBM). The human rights based approach is particularly visible in diakonia where the focus from fighting poverty has shifted on to empowering individuals and communities and to fighting inequality (see 3.2, Diakonia). The dimensions of the Programme, the distribution of resources to focus areas, and other principles behind choices within the Programme are available in Chapter 7.



## We strengthen the human rights based approach and apply Results-Based Management during this programme period.

As for the structure of this programme, we start with looking at the participatory process and background analysis which lie behind the strategic choices of this Programme. There is also a short introduction of the policy papers of Felm's Strategy 2017–2022 and the cross-cutting themes of Church Cooperation. Strategic policies and cross-cutting themes are integrated in all the work within Church Cooperation.

In Chapter 3, we present the key values and principles of the Programme. Felm's work is mostly realised with and through our partners, and therefore, Chapter 4 is dedicated to partnership specifying its principles and aims. We will also share how we administer our work and how the results-based management is visible and impacts all implementation (Chapter 5).

In Chapter 6, we specify how Church Cooperation works towards realising each of our four Themes of Hope in the countries in which we are active. Finally, we will describe the monitoring and evaluation structures and methods we use, our communication plan, and how we implement the programme in the operations in various areas.

## 2.1 Strategic Planning Process and Tools of Planning

A successful programme planning requires a solid background analysis and a common understanding of what direction the work should take in the future. Because of this, a large group of partners and Felm employees from overseas and Finland were called to participate in the strategic planning. The participants have shared their views in oral consultations, in workshops and through written enquiries. The preparation process of the strategy started in the spring of 2014.

One part of the planning process for Strategy 2017–2022 was a large-scale **background analysis of our operational environment**. The analysis focused on the future of Christianity, the development of human rights, economic justice, and peace and reconciliation on a global level. The analysis looked at the current situation, future trends and challenges of each theme with a view to the work supported by Felm. On the basis of the analysis, Felm employees from various departments prepared four policy papers of the four Themes of Hope. These policy papers guide Felm's work both at home and abroad.

Four Themes of Hope were further divided into 12 programme outcomes for the International Cooperation (Appendix 6). Each outcome points out to a people group in focus and states the strategic result for the given people group at the end of the strategic period. In the preparation of Church Cooperation Programme, the 12 outcomes were further divided into smaller subcategories, so called immediate outcomes, and into activities these immediate outcomes entail. Together, these different levels make up the implementation strategies for each programme outcome (Appendix 5).

### **Results of Enquiry – Felm’s added value is found in Partnerships, Community Development and Expertise**

Planning of the 2017–2022 Strategy began in 2014, when a large-scale consultation with our foreign partners was held in Finland. Through this consultation, **Felm’s partners were able to share their views** on where Felm should be active and which future themes and groups of people we should work with.

**The views of our partners** were also mapped through a written enquiry. The enquiry confirmed that most of our international church partners continue to find Felm’s financial and technical support, the employees we send and the training we offer to be the most important forms of cooperation. The most important themes in our work proved to be people, communities and development. The replies also highlighted children, psychological support and training along with human rights. An enquiry with the same questions was also sent to parishes in Finland.

**Felm staff overseas and in Finland** also assessed Felm’s operations and shared their views on future areas of focus. Employees stated that they believe Felm’s future success will be built on Christian values, expertise, trustworthiness, long-term commitment and partnership. Our employees working in Finland or abroad also took part in processing the material which had been compiled through various sources at Felm’s internal consultation for International Co-operation.

The process of mapping the programme outcomes (ICs) onto project level activities was guided by the question what results we aim to have reached by 2022. Our operational methods were reviewed, some old methods were discarded and replaced by new ones. In this review and elimination process, we placed emphasis on specific needs which sprang from the background analysis, and on Felm’s expertise and the potential added value of its work. We formulated indicators for each programme outcome to enhance monitoring of results. In addition to measures to monitor work content and the achievement of goals, the Programme planning also entailed defining criteria to limit the extent of the cooperation.

- **Regional SWOT analyses**, which map the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, were used to formulate our goals. Regional background analyses were completed in the spring of 2016. On the basis of these analyses, regional teams drew up regional plans in the autumn of that year.

- We have selected **indicators** to monitor results of each programme outcome for International Cooperation. For each outcome we have also outlined **programme-level assumptions and risks**, which we follow up. Risk management entails preventive measures throughout the Programme period. Basic assumptions describe background factors which we consider prevalent in the operational environment. The assumptions guide our decisions on activities which we believe will lead to the hoped result.

## 2.2 Policy Papers

The Themes of Hope in our Strategy 2017–2022 are based on background analyses and theological reflections on the world situation and on the Christian response to that. These reflections have been formulated in Felm's Theological Charter *Elämään ja oikeudenmukaisuuteen. Suomen Lähetysseuran toiminnan teologinen perusta ja yhteistyön periaatteet* (For Life and Justice. The Theological Basis and Principles of Cooperation of the Felm). Policy papers, which explain the four Themes of Hope and guide all work on the Programme level, are: Guidelines of Christian Witness, Human Rights Policy, Peace and Reconciliation Policy and Economic Justice Policy of Felm. In addition to these policies, there are our earlier policy papers on HIV and AIDS Work and Food Security. The Theological Charter is available in Finnish on Felm's website at:

[http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/teologiset\\_periaatteet](http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/teologiset_periaatteet)

The policy papers are available at: <http://suomenlahetysseura.fi/linjaukset>.

## 2.3 Cross-cutting Themes

Similarly to the theological and strategic policies, cross-cutting themes concern all of Felm's International Cooperation. They are taken into account at the organisation and programme levels, in regional planning and in various stages of project work. We use appropriate planning tools to integrate them in all projects. We monitor their integration in International Cooperation through Felm's own electronic monitoring system, through reports from our partners, in our evaluations and in our balance score card.

The cross-cutting themes of Felm's Church Cooperation are:

- Conflict Sensitivity
- Environment and Climate Change
- Gender Justice

### 2.3.1 Conflict Sensitivity

Conflicts in Felm's operational environment are ethnic, religious or regional tensions which are violent or have a significant threat of violence. Conflict sensitivity is an approach which aims to strengthen aspects that increase stability in a region while endeavouring to lessen the potentially negative and conflict-increasing factors of the work. It aims to ensure that in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our activities we take into account the possible effect of our work on the conflict dynamics of a given situation.

Training women, and strengthening their possibilities and rights are ways to make a positive impact on the well-being of the whole community and society. Picture: Senegal/ Jarmo Kulonen



Conflict sensitivity does not concern work in conflict areas only, but as a cross-cutting theme, it is part of all planning and implementation of our work. Conflict analysis, which is an essential element of the project planning process in conflict-prone areas, is done in cooperation with our partners and included in the analysis of the operational environment. This analysis provides the basis for a conflict-sensitive approach, which is then applied in the planning of the project.

Project management tools that strengthen conflict sensitivity help raise the widest possible awareness of the political, religious, social and cultural tensions which shape the dynamics of a conflict-prone environment. Firstly, a conflict-sensitive way of working entails an ability to understand the political and cultural background factors at play in the operational environment. Secondly, it includes an assessment of the impact of our work in the area. Conflict sensitivity contains the ability to plan and implement projects in a way that does not increase tensions between groups in an area, but instead strengthens stability and positive development.



We evaluate our work and update the conflict analysis as part of the normal project management cycle. In a conflict sensitive approach, it is essential to adapt our activities to rapid changes in project context and wider society.

Conflict sensitivity in the planning of operations helps to ensure the quality, efficacy and sustainability of our projects. If conflict sensitivity is not sufficiently taken into account, the planned results of a project may not materialise. Professional planning and implementation of operations is conflict sensitive.

**Conflict sensitivity does not apply to conflict areas only, but as a cross-cutting theme, it is considered in all planning and implementation of our work**

**The following questions are key to planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation:**

- How does the context of the region impact our plans?
- How does our work and how do our regional interest groups impact conflicts in the area?
- How do we ensure that our work does not feed conflicts in the area?
- How do our activities contribute to stability in the area?

### **2.3.2 Environment and Climate Change**

The environment is a concept that refers not only to the soil, waterways and atmosphere, but to all interactions between man and nature. The environment is of vital importance to humanity, as it provides us with the necessities of life: water, nourishment, oxygen and energy.

Climate change is the worst environmental threat of our era and is caused by the increase of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. We can prepare for climate change in a variety of ways.

Adaptation is the term used for the ways we prepare for the impact of climate change. Mitigation is used when we talk about the things we can do to avoid and decrease the creation of greenhouse gases and the speeding up of climate change. By environmental sensitivity we



”Human beings must respect all Creation and accept it as a God’s gift – No created thing exists only for itself, but to build up the lives and well-being of other created beings. God uses His created reality when He works in conformity to His essence as the donor of good.”

Picture: Ethiopia/Jouko Marttinen

refer to working in a manner that considers the environmental impact of what we do and where we prevent a negative impact on the environment in the various stages of our operations.

The poorest people suffer most from negative environmental impact. Climate change takes the form of various natural disasters, along with a scarcity of water and arable land. The number of climate refugees in the world is increasing. Climate change threatens food security and causes increased global inequality.

At all stages of the Felm’s work, sensitivity to the environment and to climate change is essential. Ignoring the environment and climate change can cause a situation where planned results cannot be achieved. Another possible risk is weak sustainability of the results. Taking the environment and climate change into account in our work also prevents any possible negative impact on the environment from our operations. Ignoring the environment endangers human rights and can, at its worst, accelerate climate change. Sensitivity to the environment and climate change is part of the implementation of Agenda 30.

**Climate change threatens food security and causes increased global inequality. It hits the poor the hardest.**

**Key questions for the Church Cooperation Programme:**

1. How does our work impact climate change?
2. How can we in practice decrease the negative effects of our project work on the environment?
3. How can we decrease the greenhouse gas emissions caused by our work?
4. How can we make our operations less vulnerable to climate change?
5. How can we take the environment into account in Felm's support operations and in our own processes?
6. How can we encourage our partners to consider the impact of their actions on the environment?



As a result of Syrian conflict the majority of children cannot go to school at all or they cannot attend school classes because of the weak security situation. Felm is one of the founders and partners of the Christian satellite television channel SAT7 which operates in the Middle East. SAT7 brings elementary school to the homes and refugee camps in the Middle East via satellite television. SAT7 Academy broadcasts lessons 24/7 to North Africa and Middle East. The contents of the lessons follow the official curriculums of Syria and Lebanon, including Maths, First Language, English, Science, History and Geography. SAT7 Academy makes it possible to continue the elementary school also during the conflict. Many children suffering from the conflict dream of going back to school. SAT7 Academy responds to that dream. Education is the way to the peaceful future. The picture depicts Rita El Mounayer, the founder of SAT7 Academy channel with children. Picture SAT7





Church Cooperation strengthens the identity, rights and life opportunities of the indigenous people. In Bolivia we work with Aymara, Quechua, Guarani and Lecos groups.

Picture: Bolivia/Ari Vitikainen

### 2.3.3 Gender Justice

One key cross-cutting theme of Felm's Church Cooperation is gender justice. Our work to further gender justice is based on The Lutheran World Federation Gender Justice Policy to which we are committed. The document is available online at <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-lwf-gender-justice-policy>.

As a cross-cutting theme, gender justice must be considered in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of all our work. The theme is also integrated in the guiding principles of our work, and manifests itself for instance in the gender distribution of children receiving support for primary education or the selection of people receiving scholarships.

When we speak about gender, we refer to the wider meaning of the term, which in addition to biological characteristics also includes the concept of social gender. Social gender refers for example to socially constructed gender roles and gender behaviour. Ultimately, our understanding of the meaning of gender is associated with a holistic view which sees people as created beings consisting of body, mind and soul.

We understand gender justice to mean that the opportunities in life are shared equally between men and women and between girls and boys. Gender equality is about protecting and



furthering the human dignity of both males and females. In practice, justice is expressed as equality between the sexes and a balance of power. It is also expressed in the removal of structures that perpetuate privilege and oppression.

Preferential treatment of one gender above another creates unjust structures and discriminatory practices. The empowerment of one gender at the expense of the other should not be done as that results in discrimination against the opposite gender. And strengthening gender equality should not contribute to undermining good governance.

**In Church Cooperation the cause of gender equality is promoted through:**

- gender quotas being part of the implementation of projects
- education and awareness raising
- making gender equality part of the strategy and of regional and project plans
- observing gender equality in the monitoring of our work
- concrete tools (gender analysis, impact assessment)

**Key questions for the Church Cooperation Programme:**

- How does our work impact gender equality?
- How can we decrease the negative impact caused by inequality in our work?
- How can we strengthen the effect of our actions that contribute to increased equality?
- How can we prevent risk factors that are part of the work that strengthens gender equality?
- How can we take gender justice into account in Felm's support operations and processes?
- How can we encourage our partners to take gender justice issues into account in their work and decision-making?

## 2.4 Sustainable Development Goals in Church Cooperation

On September 25th 2015, the UN member states adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years.

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The goals recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

According to these goals all countries are expected to follow international agreements and promote human rights. There is also a strong encouragement for governments to act more closely with civil society actors.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships have been recognised as an important component of strategies that seek to mobilise all stakeholders around the new agenda. Different stakeholders such as NGO's are expected to contribute to the realization of the new agenda.

Felm's Church Cooperation is strongly related to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### UN Sustainable Development Goals:

1.	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2.	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3.	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4.	Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning
5.	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6.	Ensure access to water and sanitation for all
7.	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8.	Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
9.	Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10.	Reduce inequality within and among countries
11.	Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12.	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13.	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14.	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources
15.	Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss
16.	Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies
17.	Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Goals with blue highlights are directly related to Felm's church cooperation.

SDGs 1, 3-5, 10, 16 and 17 relate to our work as we promote the human rights of the marginalised, improve their social status and offer opportunities for education and work. The UN goals and our work also have a common point of reference in good governance and accountability.

We focus on improving the sources of livelihood and the opportunities in life of the marginalised. We recognise that in order to eradicate poverty it is vital to strengthen mental and not just economical capacity. Such holistic approach is an essential part of our work to pursue SDG 1.

Our partners carry out diaconal work which strengthens the wellbeing and health of the most marginalised people in their communities. This work is connected to SDG 3.

Felm's work with children is focused on supporting basic education and improving the quality of teaching. The work strengthens lifelong learning and increases opportunities for children who are at risk of marginalisation. This work is in line with the objective of SDG 4.

Sustainable Development Goal 5 has a particularly strong connection with our Church Cooperation is since we promote gender justice in all our work.

We aim to strengthen the most marginalised people in the society. We work together with our local partners to engage in advocacy so that the human rights of the most discriminated people in society will be observed. Our work also strengthens economic justice in different countries of operation. All this addresses the objective of SDG 10.

We operate in different conflict and post-conflict areas such as Colombia, Middle-East, Pakistan and Myanmar. We work with parties of conflict to strengthen trust and the will to peace between them in addition to the observance of human rights. We build interaction between different groups across ethnic or religious boundaries. Women's involvement in peace-making and preservation of peace is one of our core priorities. We provide mental health support and security to the victims of the conflict and especially strengthen the rights of children during the conflict. We create conditions for a peaceful future by enabling children's basic education in spite of the conflict. Peace education is one of our most important ways of working with children and young people in conflict countries.

Through our advocacy work we strive to strengthen the principles of good governance in the activities of our partners and stakeholders and to oblige different institutions to act responsibly. Strengthening good governance structures is part of our every activity. We also strengthen anti-corruption activities.

Felm's work with peace and good governance relates strongly with SDG 16.

We integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into our global operations. In addition to this we participate in cooperation networks in order to strengthen our goals together with our partners. We promote interaction between different actors. This activity strengthens the objective of SDG 17.





Throughout Felm's history children have been at the heart of our work.  
Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

3

# Values and Ethical Principles of Church Cooperation



# Values and Ethical Principles of Church Cooperation

Felm's work has based on Christian values ever since its foundation. All we do is an expression of how we view holistic Christian witness. Despite the change of the vocabulary we use, the essence of Felm's mission remains unchanged. There are four core values in Felm's Strategy 2017–2022: love of neighbour, partnership, responsibility and justice.

When translated into the terminology of human rights based work, Christian love of neighbour is expressed in defence of human dignity and human rights. In Church Cooperation, we protect the dignity of each human being through the principles of sharing the Good News, diakonia, non-discrimination and child protection. Partnership, responsibility and justice guide all our work. Our cooperation and methods are based on respect for the community and Creation. Holistic approach and participatory methods ensure that we do not forget the nature and the context of Church Cooperation when planning collaborative efforts. Sustainability and quality relate to responsibility of actions.

**Felm's Strategy 2017–2022 has four core values: love of neighbour, partnership, responsibility and justice.**

Felm has drawn up Ethical Guidelines for its International Cooperation. These guidelines are available in Finnish only at [http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/Is\\_fi/?\\_\\_EVIA\\_WYSIWYG\\_FILE=27683](http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/Is_fi/?__EVIA_WYSIWYG_FILE=27683). We are committed to working ethically and professionally in accordance with the principles and values expressed in the strategies, principles and guidelines of Felm, The Lutheran World Federation, ACT Alliance and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

## 3.1 Sharing the Good News

The Gospel *calls* people and communities to become disciples and begin a new life in Christ. However, the one who shares the Good News can only *offer* this opportunity. Only the Spirit of God can create new life and cause a person to be reborn. The Church's task is to keep the Good News available and within reach. In the Recommendations for Conduct regarding Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World, the World Council of Churches states that for Christians 'it is a privilege and joy to give an accounting for the hope that is within them and to do so with gentleness and respect'.

The ethics of the Church does not allow any physical, mental, spiritual, financial or other violence or power when sharing the Good News. Christian witness is an encounter within which we share our faith and our common humanity. This sharing must be both convincing and humble. Other people always have the right to say 'No' to the message and help being offered. Their answer, it being positive or negative, must always be respected. In congregations, all people are received without discrimination.



Hope is to see a silver lining even on the darkest cloud.  
Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

## 3.2 Diakonia

Diakonia has been an integral part of Felm since Felm was founded. Accompaniment, service and empowering people to become a part of society and of the community is a vital part of the work. Felm's diakonia work is influenced by the caritative and parish-centered attitudes prevalent in the parishes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. According to this understanding, diakonia forms one of the basic tenets of what the Church does: each parish works 'to realise love for our neighbours'. Diakonia helps where 'the need is greatest and where other help does not reach'. Many of our partners do not use the term *diakonia*, but prefer to call this part of their work the social work of the Church.

According to the modern view of the concept of diakonia, it is both a work of faith (consequential) and a sharing of the Good News and giving witness of God's love through deeds (constitutive). The diaconal service is bound to the message of Christ. Deeds speak of God's love when the parish community and individuals open their church to everybody, give support to anyone who needs it, walk with people and prevent discrimination. In addition, prophetic diakonia defends human dignity and the human rights of those who are marginalised, it supports peace and makes the world a more just place. Use of the word *diakonia* is increasing worldwide, as is witnessed in documents published by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

**What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and  
what no human mind has conceived – the things  
God has prepared for those who love him.**

**1 Cor. 2:9**

Diakonia aims to strengthen justice between people. Justice and equality are different from the point of view of their conceptual extension and scope. Distinct from the normal understanding of equality, the aim of diakonia work is not just to strengthen all people equally, but to strengthen each person from their own starting point. This means that the rights of all people involved in our activities are eventually fulfilled equally. In diakonia, strengthening justice may mean more efforts for some people than others for the justice to prevail.

The Church's diakonia work is holistic, which means that all people are accepted and valuable as both givers and receivers of help. The boundaries between people are broken down so that everybody becomes a part of 'Us' or 'We', while 'they', people outside our group, do not exist any longer. The message of Christianity is that all people share the same human dignity, and therefore, diakonia cannot be conditional. No one needs to change or do anything to earn a place among those embraced by diakonia work.

### 3.3 Holistic mission

Felm's Theological Charter defines holistic mission to encompass all Creation. As part of Creation, humankind is an entity that contains the dimensions of the body, mind and soul. The holistic viewpoint takes human life in its full extent in which the material and the spiritual are not distinct from each other. In addition to church tradition, such a holistic approach prevails in cultural models of thought that embrace a holistic worldview, or in other words, life is understood as an integral whole of all its dimensions.

Different cultural worldviews result in different attitudes to the mission of the churches. On one hand, the Western worldview which is basically dualistic, often approaches development issues through the physical reality without considering people's religious realities. On the other hand, the Church's mission may be seen as spiritual work only, which overlooks the value of Creation and ignores the material and physical needs of people. Felm understands the Church's mission as holistic. It entails sharing the Gospel, prophetic preaching and acts of love.

The operational environments of Felm's Church Cooperation overseas are often meeting points for holistic and rational thinking. In project cooperation this entails a dialogic learning process, where the traditional spiritual witness can be strengthened through systematic project management and human rights based approach. In this process, our partners can contribute their own holistic way of thinking to the Finnish congregational context. Religious literacy and an ability to enter into a dialogue on spiritual matters are traditionally strong areas of Felm's Church Cooperation.

In our work, we see people in their fullness as individuals created by God, whole beings made up of the body, mind and soul. In our work, we respond to both the spiritual and physical needs of communities. Along with the spiritual work, the health, physical shelter and security of individuals are dimensions of our holistic work. In a holistic mission, each person is regarded as an integral, inseparable part of Creation.

## Psychosocial support to help communities in crisis

Psychosocial support is one type of psychological support which Felm offers to strengthen individuals and communities in crisis situations. Psychosocial support is intended to prevent and alleviate the consequences of sudden, unexpected and serious traumatic events. In psychosocial support, it is essential to understand the individual and the collective nature of traumatic events. The interpretation of traumatic events is a social process. The events are interpreted and given meaning in and through the social context in which people have experienced the trauma. Psychosocial support is key in all the work we do, because a significant number of the marginalised beneficiaries of our activities have a background of traumatic experiences due to natural disasters, close relationships and/or conflicts. Our psychosocial work does not include the most severe psychological disturbances. In severe cases, we work responsibly with local professionals of psychology and psychiatry.

## 3.4 Non-discrimination and Good Governance

Felm's Church Cooperation is committed to the principles of non-discrimination and *good governance*. By good governance we refer to the operational structures, attitudes and models in decision-making, which are transparent and participatory in the organisation. In accordance to good governance, we respond to needs in an equitable and timely manner. Good governance means respecting the rule of law and ethical principles. Felm's active stand in promoting good governance is shown in our anti-corruption guidelines and our project management manual. Felm also strives to strengthen sound administrative structures of local churches through capacity-building and awareness raising of the consequences of weak and bad governance. Reinforcing good governance is the best way to prevent corruption.



Cambodia is one of our focus countries in this programme period. Together with our partners we strengthen the possibilities of local communities. Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen





Work among men is one of our ways to strengthen women's rights and the well-being of families. Picture: Venezuela/Jouko Marttinen

Felm does not accept any form of corruption in its operations. We respond to each case in accordance with our Anti-Corruption Policy and Procedures document, which is available in English at [https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls\\_fi/?\\_\\_EVIA\\_WYSIWYG\\_FILE=45536](https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_fi/?__EVIA_WYSIWYG_FILE=45536). Felm uses an electronic anti-corruption reporting system known as Felm Against Corruption, available at: [https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls\\_fi/sivut/suomen\\_lahetysseura/felm\\_against\\_corruption/](https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_fi/sivut/suomen_lahetysseura/felm_against_corruption/). The link on Felm's external website serves project beneficiaries, partners, Felm staff, financiers and other possible interest groups.

By non-discrimination we mean that all people are welcome to join our work and activities, regardless of their social, cultural or religious background, class, ethnic origins, sexual orientation, way or philosophy of life, political views, gender or age. We engage in positive discrimination by ensuring that marginalised groups are represented as beneficiaries and participants in the planning of projects for their communities (see Chapter 3.6).

In this Programme period we pay particular attention to the equal rights of women and girls in all our work (see Chapter 2.3). We emphasise non-discrimination and good governance in the recruitment of our project staff. As a minimum requirement, a recruitment must be open and the terms of employment must abide by the local legislation with a view to levels of pay and other statutory conditions of the local labour law. In terms of benefits and other employment standards, we also follow the guidelines for Felm project staff.

### 3.5 Child Protection

Generally, Felm's Church Cooperation is bound by the international ethical guidelines and Felm's own guidelines mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. In our work with children we are also committed to several other guidelines with special emphasis on children. These are the ethical guidelines of Finnish organisations who sponsor children, the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and Felm's own child protection guidelines.

In accordance with Felm's child protection guidelines Felm and its partners commit to respecting children's rights and work to prevent any violation of those rights in all their work which involves children. We accept no activities which may harm children mentally or physically. We do not place children in situations where the child's best interests are not safeguarded. We take appropriate action on any abuse or suspected abuse of children. In the reporting of such cases, we may utilise our electronic reporting mechanism: [https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls\\_fi/sivut/suomen\\_lahetysseura/felm\\_against\\_corruption/](https://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_fi/sivut/suomen_lahetysseura/felm_against_corruption/).

The Ethical Guidelines of Finnish Child Sponsor Organisations are available in Finnish on Felm's external website at: [http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls\\_fi/sivut/lahjoita/ryhdy\\_kummiksi/eettiset\\_ohjeet/](http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_fi/sivut/lahjoita/ryhdy_kummiksi/eettiset_ohjeet/)



Safe and loving family is one of the most important things for a child's well-being and healthy development. Therefore, we take the family into account in our children's projects. Picture: Nepal/ Kirsti Kirjavainen

### 3.6 Participatory Methods

We use participatory methods in the planning and implementation of all our work. This means, in brief, that project planning process entails listening to beneficiaries, stakeholders and other people who will be influenced by the project, so that they can participate in the decision-making affecting their environment and life. We also place special emphasis



on the participation of various parties when evaluating the results of a project, or when making assessments of development needs and risks. In Church Cooperation projects we pay particular attention to the most discriminated groups.

Participatory methods strengthen the local ownership of our cooperation. We hear different people groups when doing the background analysis for the observance of the *Do No Harm* principle. The *Do No Harm* principle refers to methods and measures to ensure that a project has no negative impact on its beneficiaries, other groups of people or on the environment. Applying participatory methods, a conflict sensitive approach and the principle of *Do No Harm*, we ensure that we are aware of the impact of our work and can prevent negative effects.

### 3.7 Sustainability and Quality

Church Cooperation applies a contextual approach. This means that when we develop our local cooperation with a partner, we take partner's local context as the starting point. We pay attention to societal, cultural, social and religious settings and their conventions in the planning of our cooperation. We also consider the resources available to our partner.

In our work we strive for sustainable results and changes in individuals, families, congregations, communities and societies. The results are sustainable when our partners' financial, cultural and social situation is sufficient to operate independently, maintain the quality of the activities and attain positive results even after the external funding has come to an end. In addition, sustainable cooperation does not endanger future political, social or cultural operating conditions nor does it cause ecological harm.

We pay attention to enducing visible sustainable change at different levels of our partner organisation as well as in society outside the organisation. When the primary beneficiary of a project is an organisation's management or mid-management level, such as a diocesan or country office, we take extra care in planning the project in a way that the positive impact at the upper levels also reaches down to the local and individual levels.

Most Church Cooperation projects are grassroots operations, and during their planning we focus on the intended impact on the society. At best, active involvement with our partners in national, regional and global networks strengthens the impact and sustainability of our cooperation. We carry out regular wide-ranging evaluations on long-term sustainability of our projects.

The quality of our operations relies on genuine and good partnerships. By 'quality of operations' we mean projects that are planned with sufficient administrative and thematic expertise. Quality projects are purpose-driven, efficiently run, they achieve the intended results and they are sustainable. The quality of jointly implemented activities is based on good planning and assessment of potential changes and risks in the operational environment and project implementation.

We strive to use our resources efficiently. In other words, we intend the recourses we allocate to provide the greatest possible results. We regularly evaluate the efficiency of our



Child sponsorship gives the children and young people at risk of marginalisation access to education. Picture: Columbia/Kirsi Elo

operations and structures. We develop our operational procedures to make them as efficient and purpose-focused as possible.

We follow the political, societal, social and economic developments in our countries of operation and monitor changes that have major impact on their environment and culture. A wide knowledge of our operational environments enhances our flexibility to better respond to challenges in the project context with our partners.

We regularly review the internal and external risks of our operations and, when necessary, we make appropriate adjustments to our work based on the risk assessment. We monitor project-specific risks as well as programme-level risks. We also operate in high-risk areas where many other organisations have stopped their activities. These areas challenge us to review our operations rapidly and to improve our risk preparedness. As an organisation whose vision is based on Christian values, we consider it our privilege to work with people who have little other assistance, and continue to do so despite the high risks.



### 3.8 Self-reliance

The duration of project cooperation varies. The cooperation can span several project periods or be focused on a specific short-term need that springs from the operational environment. However, projects are always temporary in nature. At the planning stage, we estimate the likely termination date of the cooperation.

A major part of our project cooperation is long-term and aims at contributing to the partner's capacity towards self-reliance. We assess different aspects of the partner's capacity through project monitoring and evaluations. External evaluations are conducted jointly with our local partner according to the terms of reference which states the selected methodology, participants, source material and other relevant aspects of the evaluation. The final evaluation report is reviewed together with the partner. In practice, the recommendations are implemented either through a new project plan or they serve as guidelines for the partner to develop their independent work.

When the partner and Felm have jointly made a positive assessment of the partner's capacity to operate independently, we start preparing for the last project period. The last project plan of the cooperation contains measures to ensure the sustainability of the project activities after Felm's project support has ended. During the last project period Felm and the partner outline jointly a phasing out plan. In short, a phasing out plan is a tool for terminating project coordination and for developing forms of cooperation without Felm's financial involvement. When formulating and implementing a phasing out plan, we make use of the recommendations from earlier evaluations of our project cooperation.



Together we can do anything. Picture: Ethiopia/Juri Veikkola

# 4

## Partnership

# Partnership

An evident strength of Felm's Church Cooperation are the long-term partnerships which Felm has established both inside and outside of Finland. Partnerships are built on a common vision which the partners want to promote together. To affirm their commitment to the cooperation, the partners sign an agreement which states the principles, contents, goals and other conditions of their partnership.

Partnership is a two-way collaboration. It radiates outwards, towards the people who are strengthened and enriched by the cooperation. It also entails the dimension between the partners, which is built upon interaction, shared resources and interests in developing cooperation, relevant knowledge and skills.

## 4.1 Principles of Cooperation

Partnership is cooperation between two or more equal and independent actors. Felm's Church Cooperation overseas refers to work which is carried out by our partner in their own local environment after it has been jointly planned by Felm and the partner. The partnership is built on a common ground in Felm's strategy and the partner's strategy so as to realise shared goals. We base our partnership also on shared commitment to the values and principles of Felm's Church Cooperation (see Chapter 3), and on mutual respect and appreciation.

We cooperate with parties who are officially acknowledged actors, and who respect the legislation of each country of operation. In regions and countries where human rights and freedom of religion and belief are not fully observed, the operations are planned in the way that they do not endanger the safety of our partners nor curtail their freedom to operate (see the *Do-No-Harm* principle in Chapter 3.6).

## 4.2 Cooperation Aims and Agreements

We sign a partnership agreement for 3–6 years with all our Church Cooperation partners. The agreement states the aims and principles of the cooperation. Once the initial goals are set, we agree on checkpoints to evaluate if the goals have been met. If the results have not been achieved, we decide which adjustments are needed. For each cooperation project, we draw up a separate project agreement (Terms of Funding).

Felm cooperates with churches and organisations whose capacity and the level of self-reliance vary a lot. In particular, Felm partners with those who represent minorities or discriminated groups in their respective societies. Those partners' local connections, special skills or their unique position within a given community bring a particular added value in the cooperation.

Developing cooperation and favourable conditions for joint work is a key part of our partnerships. We acknowledge the needs for capacity building in the partnership agreement and plan projects accordingly. Building the self-reliance of our partners is an important principle and





Boys, not only girls, get support so that all lesser-off children can have access to high-quality education. In our work with young people we strengthen boys' awareness of women's rights and an equal relationship between men and women. Picture: Cambodia/Kirsi Elo

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goal in all Church Cooperation. If this goal has not been reached yet, we jointly look for ways to strengthen the professional capacity and self-reliance of the partner. At its best, partnership is cooperation that enables all parties to identify and make use of their own strengths. One of its greatest achievements is to gain the experience and knowledge that our joint efforts have succeeded in building our partner's self-reliance. It is also a sign that our cooperation has achieved its goal.

Our partnerships vary in terms of length, the goals we set and the resources we allocate. When there is no provable added value of Felm's economic support any longer, we agree on a gradual phase-out of financial and staff support and decide on how to continue cooperation in other forms. We draw up a phasing out plan to ensure sustainable results and the self-reliance of our partner (see Chapter 3.8).

After Felm's financial support has come to an end, the partnership continues through sharing expertise and information, and through cooperation in joint networks. We encourage partners who are operationally and financially self-reliant to engage actively in North-South or South-South cooperation. Wide cooperation and networking enable capacity building across partnerships and regional boundaries. We participate in strengthening the capacity and independence of our partners also through helping them build strong networks.

**Partnership for me is 'Soul to Soul talk', i.e. feeling the joys and pains together, enabling each other to grow, and to be a source of blessings together for our neighbours. (Bishop Humphrey Peters, The Diocese of Peshawar, Pakistan)**



## 4.3 International Partnerships

Our partners include global networks, churches and organisations. Felm has a cooperation agreement with The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). We have been a specialist mission and development cooperation organisation within the World Council of Churches (WCC) since 2013. In practical terms, we are mostly involved through networks or churches that are closely aligned with these church federations. We also cooperate with the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to churches, we partner with a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) whose capacities and expertise vary while their values, goals and methods align with the principles of Felm and Felm Church Cooperation.

We also implement Church Cooperation projects together with organisations that represent other religions. All organisations whose capacity and skills correspond to our partnership criteria are treated as equals when we select partners. We collaborate with organisations that represent other religions, particularly in our peace building and reconciliation work and when we want to ensure a wide base for successful advocacy work. The various religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds of our partners create opportunities for impactful work and shared learning experiences.



Safe and balanced childhood often equals a carefree and joyful life.  
Picture: Nepal/Kirsti Kirjavainen



Going to school is a dream of many children. It is good fun to learn new things.

Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

## 4.4 Partnerships in Finland

Felm partners in Finland with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), its parishes and other member communities and organisations. These partnerships are fundamental to our Church Cooperation work.

Felm is a mission organisation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. Felm and ELCF have signed a charter for the 2013–2018 period about Church's missionary work. Felm is committed to the Church's joint Strategy of Mission and reports to the ELCF Office for Global Mission on changes in its relationship to international actors in the field of mission and ecumenism. All the parishes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland are community members of Felm and take part in the organisation's decision-making process through the Annual General Meeting. Almost all parishes have a Cooperation Agreement with Felm.

In addition to the parishes and congregations, Felm's member organisations support projects financially and, when applicable, offer their expertise for projects. We are involved in domestic and international missionary and NGO networks. We participate, among other organisations, in the work of Finnish Ecumenical Council, the Church's Committee for Global Mission and the Finnish Missionary Council.

## 4.5 Partnership Choices

During the 2017–2022 Programme period Felm cooperates with fewer partners than previously. Focusing on fewer partners enables us to utilise our financial and staff resources more efficiently. The tighter focus also helps to build up the quality and efficacy of our work

To ensure impartiality and transparency of all cooperation, we have developed a set of criteria for the partnerships (see Appendix 3). In addition to transparency, these partnership criteria enhance fairness and a systematic approach to the choice of partners.

In the selection and assessment of our partners we emphasise common values and a partner's determination to implement the projects with a view to achieving the intended results efficiently and to a high quality. In practice, this means that a partner should have a proven drive to develop the quality of its operations, its operational self-reliance and its administration. We value an interest in advocacy work. We see as an added value the partner's ability to analyse the political situation, power structures and stakeholders of the operational environment and assess their relevance to the partner's own field. An ability to cooperate with other actors in the region is also considered a strength.

We assess the potential for a partnership before the cooperation begins, and evaluate it during the cooperation to ensure that the cooperation is in line with the regional goals of Felm's holistic mission and Church Cooperation. Regional goals and indicators are defined by the regional teams and recorded in the strategic plan of the region. The evaluation of the cooperation and a partner's thematic, professional, financial or theological capacity are parts of the regular project cycle. When we plan future cooperation or projects to build the capacity of a partner, we make use of the project and partnership evaluations as planning tools.





Our work among men strengthens gender justice. It also builds up the balance in the family and in society in addition to adding to opportunities for change.

Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

5

# Results-Based Project Management



# Results-Based Project Management

During this Programme period, we want to ensure that the planning and implementation of our operations are of better quality and efficacy than ever before. To reach this goal, we adopt Results-Based Management (RBM) during this strategy period. Results-Based Management is a management strategy within which all the operations and actors work towards reaching the intended results of a project or programme.

Another novelty at Felm in the 2017–2022 Programme period is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). BSC is a tool to develop Felm's own operations systematically and to improve the structures with the aid of a results-based approach. The Balanced Scorecard applies throughout the organisation to set measures to reach the intended results from the department level down to unit level, and finally to the regional level activities.

## 5.1 Results-Based Project Management in International Cooperation

Results-Based Project Management is one form of the capacity building of our partners. Felm's Church Cooperation partners take charge of the results-based planning, monitoring and evaluation of their projects. If needed, a Felm employee gives support to the partner in project management. Project management training is offered to our partners annually in different countries of operation. Training on-site is supplemented by course components taught online or through electronic connections if possible. Due to staff changes at Felm and in partner organisations, it is necessary to offer project management training continuously.

**During this programme period, we ensure that the planning and implementation of our operations are of better quality and efficacy than ever before by adopting Results-Based Management.**

Results-Based Management typically relies on baseline analysis in all planning, or in other words, the evidence-based background analysis reflects the starting situation of beneficiaries of the project. It entails continual assessment of the relevance of operations, and it emphasises the local ownership of the operations and realistic targets within a predetermined time frame. Background analysis helps us to enhance our focus on the discriminated and the most vulnerable people groups, and to plan activities which are relevant and empower these groups as well as as possible.

Results-Based Management improves operational transparency and systematic presentation of the results. It also builds up the management of the information related to all activities. Results-Based Management strengthens information-based decision-making on different levels of management at Felm and in the partner organisation and makes the operational structures more efficient.

The results-based project planning entails defining a result which we wish to have reached by the end of the project period, and determining the activities to produce these results as realistically as possible. In Results-Based Management (RBM), project monitoring and evaluation is continuous. Within RBM, the results are monitored at all levels of the results chain to ensure that each selected activity produces the intended results. The monitoring uses project indicators as tools, which show to what extent a project has reached its intended results. The defined result, or project outcome, indicates the change which project activities have induced e.g. in the region or in the lives of the beneficiaries.

The activities must be relevant and lead towards the intended goals. If necessary, the activities and the implementing strategy of the project can be revised in the middle of the project cycle to better achieve the intended results. The need for revision may rise e.g. from changes in the operational environment or from other risk factors which have emerged during the project implementation.



We work in different operational environments: from distant rural villages to big cities.  
Picture: Thailand/Ari Vitikainen





A significant part of our work is focused on empowering the minorities. In northern Thailand we work among the Akha and the Lua people, and in the valley of River Nujiang in China, we work among the Lisu. Ethnic minorities are often among the most marginalised in the society. Lack of documentation, the right to basic services is often denied. Picture: China/Elina Veikkola

Results-Based Management offers a strong system for monitoring and evaluation. The system enables us to give our supporters more concrete data about the results of our work and to improve the strategic management of the cooperation on the regional level.

When a partnership is based on mutual trust, it is possible to discuss also the challenges, risks and negative impacts of a project and find solutions together to improve the work. Partners monitor their activities as part of their own project management to meet their needs. The results of the monitoring process provide the tools to direct operations in an optimal way.

The purpose of the project indicators is to provide data for project monitoring. Firstly, the indicators give data to verify that the project activities run according to plan. Secondly, the retrieved data also acts as the project's alarm system which is designed to alert if one or more activities need to be amended. Thirdly, the data also gives indications how to focus the activities to better meet the needs which have been detected in the course of the project. Most quantifiable indicators tell us **what** has happened. In addition, we need quality indicators to find out **why** change has occurred in community or in the life of an individual.

**Results-Based Management enables us to give our supporters concrete data about the results of our work and to improve the strategic management of the cooperation on the regional level.**

In addition to indicators, the monitoring utilises other kinds of data retrieval, such as questionnaires, interviews, databases and observation. Regular project monitoring on-site along with partners' narrative, financial and audit reports are all monitoring tools.

In summary, the Results-Based Management helps to plan Church Cooperation and to measure its quantitative and qualitative results. Results concerning spiritual growth or experience cannot be adequately measured through Results-Based Management.

**For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Rom. 12: 4–5)**



"Hope is the music we can hear, faith is the dance" (Rita El Mounayer/SAT 7).

Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen



## 5.2 Felm's Results-Based Management in Church Cooperation

We apply results-based project management to the planning, monitoring and evaluation of all Felm-funded international cooperation. In addition, we introduce in this programme period the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) system in support of Felm's internal results-based and target-oriented management approach. In Church Cooperation we use BSC as a tool to identify and implement internal development goals and related activities as a part of the BSC of Felm's entire International Cooperation. We set some of the goals for the whole strategic period while some measures are planned on an annual basis. Annual activities are recorded in the Church Cooperation annual cycle. We monitor project activities and their results annually and report the results to the leadership of the organisation.

During this strategy and programme period, we focus on factors which are essential to increasing efficiency in Church Cooperation. One focal element relates to setting goals for employees. We start by applying the project model to developing job descriptions. We make regular updates on the job descriptions of overseas staff during every home leave. These measures ensure that a job description responds to the goals of the day and to the partners' needs for strengthening self-reliance in the projects in which the employees work.



We strengthen our partners' role in society and advocacy work so that we could hear the voices of those who are otherwise not heard. Picture: Hong Kong/Juri Veikkola



Children are the new generation, which is responsible for building future societies. By strengthening children and their talents we can play a role in what tomorrow is going to be for all of us. Picture: Cambodia/ Ari Vitikainen

There is an increasing tendency to assign staff to expert roles. With this strategy, we aim to bring the special expertise of a Felm co-worker to the partner's disposal and to contribute in this way to the partner's capacity building. We also aim at developing working patterns which allow our staff to use their expertise widely within the country of operation and across the regions.

We employ staff with administrative and management expertise to take charge of Felm's regional cooperation and its development. They work as regional directors and managers and contribute to building the professionalism on project management in the region, and to developing thematic expertise globally. When we recruit people with expertise for any position in Finland or overseas, we also consider candidates who do not speak Finnish. Consequently, we need to produce Felm internal guidelines and relevant material in English in the future.

**Our partnerships are built on the theology that in God's eyes all people are equal and accepted for who they are. Church Cooperation fosters cooperation which highlights the richness of thought and theology of different groups of people.**

To improve the efficiency of our operations and the relevance of various processes, we draw charts to show Felm's internal processes. Process Charts improve the transparency of the processes, and guide our staff to manage their work in operational processes and procedures. The charts also help our partners to understand how different Felm processes work.

We strengthen the thematic development of our work globally by annual thematic evaluations. These evaluations give insight to reinforcing the global implementation of our operations, e.g. in children's projects. We write a separate management response with an action plan to ensure that the recommendations of the evaluation are put into practice within a given time frame. The activities which result from the management response are integrated into the regional plan.

We set up electronic databases which strengthen the thematic development of our operations. The databases allow global sharing of information about development issues in general and more specifically about the themes which are related to the strategic goals of Felm's international cooperation. The databases can be used to share observations of *best practice*, which is based on common experiences of our network of partners. Joint databases are also part of the development of Felm's *knowledge management*.

During the 2017–2022 Programme period we strengthen interdepartmental cooperation within Felm. We implement an electronic project data management system and reporting portal which is used throughout the organisation. This system improves internal information sharing within Felm. In addition, we collaborate more closely with the Department of Communication and Fundraising by providing more in-house expertise regarding Felm's international cooperation.

We plan to update the Church Cooperation manual for project management (Successful Project Management = the Manual) approximately halfway through the programme period. In updating the Manual we pay attention to the feedback about the observed weaknesses of the project management guidelines and possible new needs. We also verify that technical instructions are available to facilitate the implementation of programme foci, policy papers and cross-cutting themes into project planning and management. The update of the Manual is based on an interim programme evaluation and its recommendations.





We strengthen the opportunities of life for the youth in Bolivia.  
Picture: Ari Vitikainen

6

# Hope for the Marginalised – Themes of Hope in Church Cooperation

## Hope for the Marginalised – Themes of Hope in Church Cooperation



Christian Hope is trust in God's care and love for all human beings despite oppression, distress and grief in the world. God can create something new amid despair. People who have Hope see the future as something positive.

Tanzania is one of our oldest countries of operation where our work does not only focus on fighting poverty but also on building an economically just society. Church has an important role in social issues.

Picture: Tanzania/ Janne Hassinen

People who are discriminated or live in difficult conditions need Hope. Christian Hope is trust in God's care and love for all human beings despite oppression, distress and grief in the world. God can create something new amid despair. People who have Hope see the future as something positive. They are able to love and behave responsibly. They believe in their ability to overcome hardship and to make a difference in their life situation.

The Themes of Hope in Felm's international cooperation are made visible through sharing the Good News, empowering the marginalised, defending justice and building peace and reconciliation. We foster all four Themes of Hope in Church Cooperation.

## 6.1 We Witness to God's Boundary-Crossing Love

The first of the Themes of Hope – *We bear witness to God's boundary-crossing love* – is founded on the fundamental Christian belief that God loves His Creation and God's love has no boundaries but belongs to us all. In Church Cooperation 2017–2022 we and our partners cross geographical, cultural and social boundaries to bear witness to God's love in word and deed. This witness is directed to those outside the Christian message as well as to those who are already involved in congregational activities.

### **6.1.1 Sharing the Good News: Those who have not yet heard the Gospel have been touched by God's all-encompassing love**

*Sharing the Good News* (IC-1) encompasses work that bears witness to God's salvation for humanity and all Creation, particularly where Christ is not yet known. People outside the Christian message may have been left outside the Church or may represent groups who are discriminated within their own community. We cross boundaries between ethnic groups. We can also share the message of love and forgiveness to those who have hatred and bitterness in their heart. Strengthening the message of reconciliation belongs to both peace-building and inter-faith work.

In the 2017–2022 Programme period we work to achieve two sub-goals: the Good News has reached new groups of people, and the Church has induced spiritual growth.

#### **The Good News has reached new groups of people**

Sharing the Good News requires of us sound knowledge of the Christian message and staff with a variety of skills. Therefore, we support theological institutions and provide scholarships for theological studies to build the theological capacity of our partners. Felm supports degree studies in Theology in institutions which have an accreditation by an officially sanctioned body, or have started the accreditation process for their degree programme. Bible schools that train volunteers and lay workers for congregations do not need official accreditation to be eligible for support.

We support Lutheran theological training which builds openness to ecumenical cooperation with and among the discriminated. We strengthen the ability of our partner churches to share the Good News by providing scholarships for theological studies and for the training of lay people and evangelists. We focus in particular on enabling women and girls to pursue a career in the Church. We approve scholarships for secondary and higher degree studies, provided that the education is motivated by a determination to strengthen the capacity and project management skills of our partner. The partner organisation commits to employ the sponsored student after their graduation.

The Good News reaches minority peoples through Bible translation and language development. Bible translation lays the foundation for church work since it selects or creates expressions for Christian concepts in a minority language. Language development usually entails producing literacy material and primers in addition to other materials for church and personal use in the language user's first language.





Different forms of media are an efficient way of sharing the Good News to wide audiences. In Church Cooperation, we support the production of radio, television and satellite broadcasts. Digital media changes the world alongside the traditional forms of media. We develop ways of using social media to share the Good News, to defend the rights of the discriminated people and to share the results of our work. We support the production of audio and video materials in support of the language development and sharing of the Good News.

On well justified grounds, we may support our partners' building projects. Construction or project investments must be in line with the overall goals of the cooperation and bring significant added value which is in proportion to the overall funding. The investments must also contribute to our partners' self-reliance or they cover the renovation of facilities which are essential to the operations of the partner organisation. Discussion on partner's self-funding and responsibility to maintain the property after the completion of the building project is an essential part of the project planning from the initial stages onward.

### **The Church has induced spiritual growth**

Deepening the spiritual life precedes and lays the foundations for sharing the Good News. It is also a result of hearing the Good News. The Church invites people to join through its

worship and other church services. In addition to the salaried Church staff, lay workers and a large number of volunteers accompany the newcomers in their spiritual walk and bear responsibility over the spiritual growth in the congregation.

Bible teaching and Bible study groups lay the foundation for faith. Music ministry, clubs, camps and Sunday school reach young people and children in particular. We encourage our partners to invite children and young people to participate in church activities and become involved in developing child-friendly methods as initiated by the World Council of Churches through the *Churches' Commitments to Children*.

#### **Basic Assumptions**

- Reaching out is integrated in the nature and identity of the Church.
- People find new hope and meaning in their life when the Church's message of God's love reaches them.
- Theological training strengthens the contextual Bible interpretation of the Church and supports the Church mission to share and teach the Good News.
- Sharing of the Good News and the invitation to join a congregation may serve as occasions to decrease the fear of otherness between people groups and to uplift the human dignity of the discriminated.

### **6.1.2 Congregations Serve as an Open Community and Cross All the Boundaries as Part of the Global Church**

Felm is an organisation that works with and through discriminated people groups. An 'open' congregation refers to a Christian community which welcomes people from all walks of life and groups. Open community accepts all comers as equal human beings created by God, and invites them to join the community, either as permanent members or as random visitors. Diakonia, which springs from the essence of the Church, is one of the core concepts of Church Cooperation and a key approach to supporting openness in congregations.

In many societies, the churches and their congregations are among the first to accept people who face discrimination, and to meet them as equals. For marginalised people, acceptance can be a significant starting point for developing a sense of self-worth. When we work to strengthen an open congregation we strive for a wide-ranging change which starts as a commitment of a congregation to non-discrimination and gradually spreads on to the wider community and society. Advocacy is one of the key methods to bring non-discrimination and openness from congregations down to the rest of society.

#### **Awareness of discrimination has strengthened in congregations**

To help the members of a congregation to function as an open community, we reinforce theological knowledge of the essence of diakonia, we increase diakonia formation within our

projects and strengthen diakonia work in the congregation. We offer congregants diakonia training classes and a variety of thematic training. We discuss with our partners the meaning of an Open Church and the need for attitude training. The discussions also include the role of Church workers in setting an example of non-discrimination. Through family support we strengthen equality, respect and mutual recognition within families.

Diakonia formation prevents violent expressions of opinion, hopelessness and despair. It reduces the fear of otherness and stigmatisation both inside and outside of the congregation. Education and training play a key role in providing the congregation with the skills to practice diakonia. Sermons and other teaching activities are important tools in a congregation. Wide-reaching attitude training and teaching about love for our neighbour help to build an open and accessible community. Removing boundaries and helping others is the responsibility of all the members of a congregation. Diakonal lifestyle of a congregation cannot be removed and the responsibility to help the other cannot be shifted outside the congregation. An open congregation abides by the principles of good governance and strives to improve justice and participation between its members.

In our partnerships, we emphasise the theology that in God's eyes all people are equal and accepted for who they are. Church Cooperation promotes cooperation which brings into focus the richness of thought and theology of different groups of people. Cooperation widens the views of the partners and interpretations of their faith.



We strengthen the church which is open for everyone. Taking children and young people into account in church activities together with child-friendly approaches are principles of an open church.  
Picture: Senegal/Jarmo Kulonen



## Discriminated people groups participate in the congregation

Congregational diakonia projects enhance a holistic approach which takes all dimensions of a person into account. The holistic thinking together with inclusion becomes evident in our projects when the congregation welcomes different groups of people into their activities. The recruitment of employees is open to all groups of people, and the selection is based on the principles of good governance. People who have been discriminated against are actively involved as volunteers and are empowered by the involvement. We implement projects which take people with different needs into account in congregational life and in planning its premises. Factors to consider in such projects are, among other things, safety, child friendliness and accessibility.

In a multilingual environment, openness of a congregation entails drawing up a language strategy for the Church. The language strategy enables the people from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds to participate in Sunday service and other church activities in their own language. Language development in its different forms strengthens the right of the different language groups to their own language.

### Basic Assumptions

- There are Biblical foundations for inclusion and non-discrimination, which means it is easy for the congregants and Church workers to accept the goal of openness as a focus area for their own organisation.
- The Sunday Service is an important way to increase openness among the members of the congregation.
- Wide theological training and Bible teaching prevent the exclusive models of operation and Bible interpretations from taking root in congregations.
- Learning and understanding the message of the Bible increases the sense of responsibility, tolerance and justice within congregations.
- The members of the congregation become more open and motivated to include the discriminated groups into church activities when they see a positive example of the Church leadership and their awareness has increased.
- The linguistic, attitudinal and physical accessibility of the church increases the engagement of the discriminated in the congregational activities.
- Involvement of the discriminated people groups reduces the fear of otherness and increases tolerance.
- When the Mission grows from the margins, the Church is renewed.
- Ensuring the basic activities of the Church makes it possible for the congregation to take an active step towards openness and invite various other groups to join.

## United Nations, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

### Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

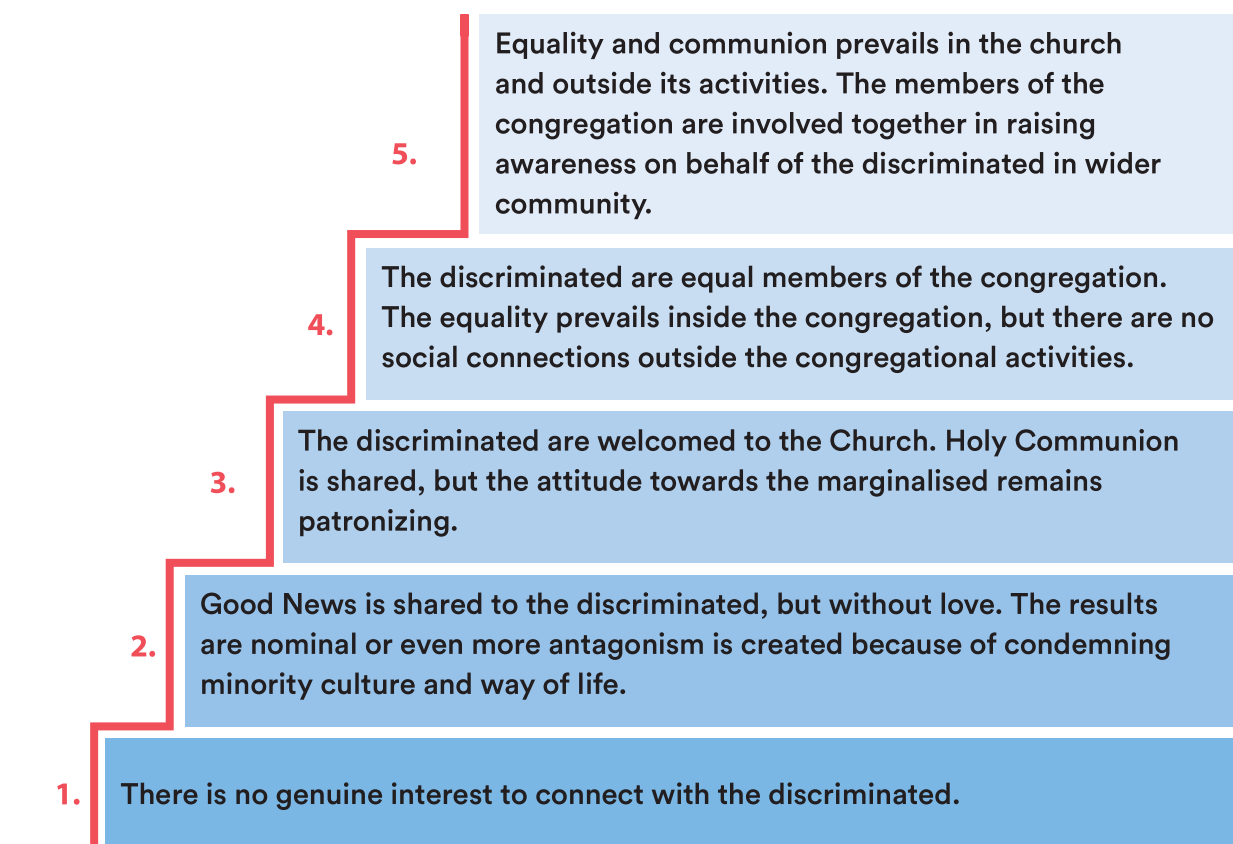
### Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations

## Towards an Open Church – Five Steps of Inclusion





Climatic change in recent decades has reduced wheat and maize yields globally. In January 2016 the temperature record broke in Botswana for 72 years. Thermometer reached 54 degrees. Extreme weather phenomena cause fluctuations of agricultural production, for example by reducing crops, weakening the quality of the products and hampering harvesting. Environment and preventing climate change is one of our cross-cutting themes. Picture: Botswana/Juri Veikkola

## 6.2 We Defend the Dignity and Human Rights of the Marginalised<sup>1</sup>

The second Theme of Hope, *We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalised*, brings into the focus of Felm's international cooperation the people who lack the means and the capacity to help themselves. These people have little possibilities to make decisions about their own personal development, to increase their personal welfare, or participate and make a difference in society. Among the five marginalised groups in Felm's strategy, Church Cooperation Programme for 2017–2022 focuses in particular on children and youth at the risk of marginalisation. Working for the rights and position of the four other groups within this Theme of Hope is also included in the programme.

### From beneficiaries to active helpers

Church diakonia is open to all groups of people. However, Felm's Theological Charter puts a special emphasis on the discriminated as those with whom and for whom Felm wants to work. In Church Cooperation, work for the marginalised included advocacy with partner organisations and at various levels of society in addition to supporting them directly.

<sup>1</sup> In Felm's language, the term marginalised includes the notion of 'being discriminated'



**Discrimination refers to any situation where societal functions, structures and attitudes perpetuate discrimination and prevent the discriminated person from playing an active part in society.**

**Discrimination** is generally understood to refer to any situation where societal functions, structures and attitudes perpetuate discrimination and prevent full and active participation of the discriminated person in society. Non-discrimination is the goal of Church Cooperation both inside and outside the Church. During this programme period we support congregations to share the Good News to all (IC-1). We encourage the members of congregations to be open and make room in the community for all, particularly for the discriminated (IC-2).

Discrimination undermines the achievements of development and contributes to inequality. It can be active or passive, attitudinal or structural. The motives behind discrimination are various, but they are often related to the distribution of resources and power.

Discrimination can be reduced by increasing awareness about the causes of discrimination, building bridges between groups of people and strengthening the human rights of the individuals. Eradication of discrimination demands a change in discriminatory structures and attitudes. Our cooperation with our partners invites the partners to work to improve the situation of the discriminated in their communities.

We do advocacy work among those who have power, the duty bearers. We build their awareness of their own responsibility to protect the human rights of all members of society, both in legislation and in the actual implementation of the laws. At the same time, we empower the beneficiaries, the rights holders, to claim their rights and to become involved in society.

A great challenge in eradicating discrimination is the fact that the discriminated have often resigned themselves to their lot. They see discrimination as their destiny or as something befitting their value. Therefore, working with people who experience discrimination requires sensitivity. It must provide holistic support which builds their self-image and self-worth, and helps them to see themselves as precious creations of God and valuable members of society. The eradication of discrimination requires active advocacy, practical measures and empowerment of the marginalised to claim their rights. Building dialogue between those who are discriminated and those who discriminate is crucial (see Chapter 3.4).

We work to influence all parties in conflict and support peacebuilders. We help those who work in the administration of a partner organisation to perform their duties with professionalism, non-discrimination and following the principles of good governance (see Chapter 3.4).

### ***6.2.1 Women and Girls Facing Gender Discrimination Identify and Grasp New Opportunities***

Women are key agents of change. They make an enormous contribution to the well-being of societies and families. In many communities, women care for the weaker members of the community, such as children and old people. Globally, the position of women and girls

is still weak, and efforts are needed to strengthen gender justice in families and in society at large. Violence against women in its multiple forms remains a problem in all the countries Felm operates.

Our aim is to strengthen justice and non-discrimination within families, communities and society. This includes strengthening the rights and opportunities for women and girls. We take women and girls into account in the planning of all our work (see Chapter 2.3.3). In addition, we support separate projects to empower women and girls.

### **Communities are aware of the rights of women and girls**

Raising awareness among women, girls and the wider community is a prerequisite for improving the position of women. Apart from women themselves, men and families hold the key to changing power structures that discriminate against women. Because of this, we increase activities among men and boys to better influence their attitudes, and in this way, contribute to the treatment of women as equals. In youth work, we aim to widen young people's understanding of an equal relationship between a man and a woman.

In many communities, there are still cultural practices that threaten the mental and physical wellbeing of women. Some of these practices cause unreasonable pain. We work in cooperation with various key people within a community, as well as parents, families and schools. Among other things, we aim to reduce the number of child marriages and female genital mutilations.



Family work builds up gender justice. Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen



“Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts; consider well the highway, the road by which you went.” (Jeremiah 31:21) Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

### **Women and girls are comprehensively empowered**

A comprehensive empowerment of women entails mental, physical, spiritual, financial, social and educational dimensions. We work to improve the position and status of women and girls from individual to societal levels.

A significant part of our global cooperation focuses on protection of various groups. We offer protection and help to women and girls who have been subjected to violence and abuse. We offer support for comprehensive empowerment after crisis and for building a new and balanced life. This requires both mental and physical healing. We offer women psychosocial support through peer groups and functional groups. Joint free time activities improve women's quality of life and strengthen their social networking. The support from a social network and from the family has a strong positive impact on recovery.

We strengthen the opportunities for women to earn their livelihood. On one hand, having a source of income helps women to recover after a crisis. On the other hand, providing a possibility to earn one's living is a part of a wider empowerment process of women and girls and builds their independence.

In many countries, the sexual and reproductive health of women is poor. Complications before or after childbirth endanger the life of many women. The right of women to self-determination when it comes to family planning or to owning one's own body is poorly realised. As many countries guarantee basic healthcare for everybody, there are few healthcare projects within Felm's Church Cooperation. However, we can still implement health projects in



countries where the position of women is weak and where sexual and reproductive health-care services are scarce. If public healthcare services are not available to everybody, we promote non-discrimination against women and equal access to services.

### **The independence of women and girls is strengthened through education**

In building gender justice and equality, education for women and girls is one of the key factors. Educated women are more aware of their rights, they are more independent, have a greater sense of self-worth and generally lead a more independent life financially than uneducated women. Also, an educated woman or girl is often less vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Education builds self-esteem and self-respect. Educated women are usually more likely to educate their own children and be less vulnerable to various forms of abuse. Women whose income levels have risen thanks to education can also afford to pay school fees for their own children.

We support the education of women and girls with scholarships and through Child Sponsorship Programme. In child sponsorship we target an even gender ratio in primary education, i.e. a half of the children who receive support are girls. If a female student has children, we also consider meeting the need for her child or children to attend day care or school during her studies. We offer courses to strengthen the livelihood of women. We reinforce equality of all members of the family through our family work.

We strengthen the personnel policy of all our partner churches, so that more women can participate in decision-making in their congregations, and work in a variety of roles within the Church.

#### **Basic Assumptions**

- Through raising awareness of women's rights among women, girls and the community, we promote the observation of those rights in daily life and in the attitudes of the community.
- Men and key people in communities have a crucial role in inducing change towards equal status of women and girls in society.
- Strengthening human dignity is a prerequisite for a person to claiming their own rights and availing themselves of the opportunities that life offers.
- Strengthening women's education and livelihood builds gender justice in society, and the independence of women and their right to self-determination.
- Women have the courage and open-mindedness to change the traditions of their community to strengthen the position of women.
- Women exert a wide influence on the wellbeing of their entire family and on improving the general knowledge in society.

## Further Reading

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, Articles 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27.  
<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Article 16

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

### Article 17

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

### Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

### Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

**Article 26**

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

**Article 27**

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.



Child protection and promoting children's rights are key to our work with children. A child has the right to safe life and environment. Mental wellbeing of a child is crucial. We apply different psychosocial support models to our work with children.  
Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen



### 6.2.2 Persons with Disabilities Become Self-reliant and Live in an Accessible Environment as Part of Society

Felm has adopted UN definition of disability given in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*: ‘People with disabilities are people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.’

In many communities, people with disabilities are isolated outside the communal life. Ignorance and false beliefs add to the prejudices that people with disabilities often experience. Human dignity is largely measured in relation to the work people do and to an individual’s productivity. The ability of people with disabilities to work is not always acknowledged, nor is there a willingness to apply their skills to the work at hand. Often, people with disabilities are not considered to be valuable contributing members of a community.

The parents of a child with a disability are often ignorant of how to care for a disabled child. Many parents feel ashamed of their child’s disability, due to false beliefs and stigmatisation. Far too often, a child with disabilities is misunderstood to be God’s punishment for sins. For this reason, an important part of the awareness raising about people with disabilities entails deepening theological understanding of disability.

The human rights of people with disabilities are observed less than those of other members of society. Public services which take into consideration the needs of the people with disabilities are often inexistant, or the services are only available in the bigger cities or centres



Our work with people with disabilities in Church Cooperation focuses mainly on children. We contribute to the comprehensive wellbeing and development of a child through our work among children with disabilities and their families. We strengthen the understanding that every individual is valuable in their own right. Picture: Ethiopia (School for the deaf in Dessie)/Päivi Anttila



Hosaina School for the Deaf, founded in 1981, offers education from pre-school level up to the 10th grade. There are approximately 210 students from all parts of Ethiopia in the school. School offers dormitory, food and healthcare for the students. Picture: Ethiopia/Juri Veikkola

**A person living with a handicap is God's image and perfect creation.**

with growing population. The indispensable services include special equipment and special education schools. Access to services is made more difficult by physical barriers, and by the lack of appropriate equipment and assistance. Also, some buildings and public transport are not wholly accessible. Root causes for inadequate basic services are often fear, prejudice and a lack of resources which rises from the absence of political will to provide them.

The background analysis done to provide a basis for Felm's strategic planning showed that people with disabilities are, almost without exception, the most marginalised in Felm's countries of operation. Furthermore, the number of people with disabilities is likely to rise in the future. Disabilities increase with conflict, a lack of maternity care, bad nutrition, environmental pollution and other health related risks.

Advocacy in society is needed to guarantee the human rights of the people with disabilities. We take the people with disabilities into account in all project planning in order to strengthen non-discrimination of the people with disabilities. We also implement specific projects with and for people with disabilities.

### **There are fewer physical and mental barriers in the life of people with disabilities**

Many prejudices concerning disabilities are caused by a lack of information. We raise awareness about disabilities and about the rights of people with disabilities in communities and congregations. Through our family work we strive to strengthen the ability of parents and

communities to respond to the needs of people with disabilities and to give them support. We support churches to consider people with disabilities in their teaching and diakonia projects (see Chapter 6.1.2).

Felm considers the question of disabilities and special needs in all its project planning work. Physical access is of primary importance when planning churches, schools and other facilities. We develop methods to increase participation of people with disabilities and remove the sense of shame sometimes associated with disability. We strengthen the expertise and professional capacity of our partners' staff to work with and for people with disabilities. We support staff training courses in special education, sign language, children's rights, child protection and special issues related to disabilities.

### **People with disabilities are comprehensively empowered**

We want to increase the understanding that people with disabilities are individuals with special needs and talents. Each one of them is a valuable member of and participant in their family, congregation, community and society at large. In our cooperation with partners, we strive to ensure that people with disabilities have a say in decision-making which has an impact on their lives. Their point of view is of particular importance when planning accessible premises and activities.

We strengthen the Church's ability to ensure that people with disabilities can take part in activities and decision-making in their Church. Psychosocial support can build the self-esteem of people with disabilities and help those around them in providing support. One way of finding the people with disabilities and inviting them to join in activities of the congregation is outreach diakonia. Outreach diakonia can also help to link people to public services. We also support physiological rehabilitation in areas where public services do not consider the needs of people with disabilities.

### **Education and access to livelihood among people with disabilities is strengthened**

We pay special attention to the inclusion of people with disabilities in projects that support education. Among other things, we support the bilingual education of people who are hard of hearing, as well as special education in elementary and vocational schools. We also strengthen inclusive education, which makes it possible for people with disabilities to study with other children. Child Sponsorship Programme and the projects funded with the Children's Bank may contain training components which are aimed at the professional development of special education institutions, such as teaching methods for inclusive and special education.

Many families with limited resources make decisions regarding their children's education on a financial basis. In families with several children the education of a disabled child is often seen as the last priority. We encourage our partners to include people with disabilities when they select scholarship students and pupils to receive child sponsorship, and when they plan their own staff policies. We can also implement separate projects which include vocational studies and technical courses for livelihood to enable people with disabilities to lead an



independent life in community. People with disabilities who are involved as beneficiaries of a project or as active members in an activity, may also receive support for healthcare or the purchase of special equipment.

### Basic Assumptions

- Raising awareness of disabilities in local community, and among teachers and parents reduces stigma towards disability and increases the inclusion of people with disabilities as active members of the community.
- Support for the mental, spiritual and physical health of people with disabilities helps strengthen human dignity and sustain the basic conditions for the people to take active part in society.
- Parents' preparedness to care for a child with disabilities, and the pedagogical knowledge of teachers give solid grounds for the people with disabilities to grow and receive education in the optimal way for each individual.
- Education and support for livelihood increases the self-determination of people with disabilities and their equal opportunities in society.
- People with disabilities are capable of advocating for their own rights in society

### Further reading

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, Articles 2, 3, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27.  
<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

## Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

## Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

## Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.



Teaching sign language as a part of inclusive education is one of the most important ways to strengthen deaf children's schooling and life. Picture: Nepal/Kirsti Kirjavainen

2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

#### **Article 26**

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

#### **Article 27**

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

### ***6.2.3 Minorities Live in Accordance with their Cultural Identity and Lifestyle in Interaction with and as Part of Society.***

There is no single, internationally accepted, definition of the concept of minorities. Usually, the term is used to refer to a group of people that has numerically fewer people than the group that is in power. It is linguistically, religiously, culturally and ethnically distinct or has other distinct characteristics. In Felm's Church Cooperation, we use the term broadly to refer to discriminated groups of people who boast having one or more of the above distinct features. Reasons for marginalisation or discrimination can also be socio-cultural or related to economic and political migration. Marginalised minorities in our Church Cooperation include indigenous peoples, linguistic and ethnic minorities, people who are subject to caste discrimination or are considered alien, such as refugees, migrants and migrant workers.

It is common to all discriminated minority groups that their rights are not observed as well as those of the ruling group. The rights of many indigenous peoples are trampled on, internationally and nationally, as is the case of indigenous land rights. The right of ethnic and linguistic minorities to use their own language is not realised in education nor in public services. Many international and national poverty indicators show that members of indigenous or minority people groups are almost always worse off than the majority population.

Inadequate observation or total denial of rights makes it more difficult for the minorities to earn their livelihood, to practice their faith, own land or have a permanent home. Access to various basic services offered by the State is denied because of a lack of a permanent





A traditional Ethiopian house is built of reed and clay. Reed-house villages outside the urban area, along the motorways, are a common sight in Ethiopia. Picture: Ethiopia/Juri Veikkola

address or the required personal documents. Being undocumented and unregistered can also be explained by insufficient access to information, language skills, illiteracy or poverty. Corruption can make it more difficult to obtain the documents which are required to access basic services.

Often, minorities live in geographically distant or hard-to-reach areas where development is impeded by difficult environmental circumstances and inadequate or even non-existent infrastructure. Such geographical circumstances cause economic and social disparity, which decreases the possibilities for minority groups to education and social mobility. In many countries, legislation guarantees access to basic services and roads for all groups of people, but in practice this is not always the case.

Poor, uneducated and marginalised members of minority groups are particularly vulnerable to various forms of abuse and exploitation. The migration which is work-induced or caused by political conflicts or natural disasters, has increased the number of migrant population and refugees who live as minorities all over the world. The position of such minorities can remain inferior for years after migration, and their contact with the surrounding society limited. A lack of uniform rights combined with various forms of discrimination can strengthen internal interaction within a minority group, while at the same time the group becomes mentally, physically and socially isolated from the wider society. Unjust practices and a lack of integration can easily cause disagreements between different groups to escalate into a conflict.

## Minorities have stronger self-esteem and a sense of identity

Our work aims to strengthen self-esteem within minority groups, both as individuals and as proud representatives of their own group. In activities that contribute to a positive identity for the minority group it is vitally important to focus on the factors that the group itself considers to be essential. From the point of view of the group's sense of identity, key factors are usually its socio-cultural traditions, its faith and its language. Also, the identity of minority groups is significantly defined by their experience of discrimination and their relation to other groups in the area, especially the majority population.

A formally recognised language and its use outside the family circle supports minority identities along with their position and rights within society. Felm supports the right of linguistic minorities to use and develop their own language. Use of the first language in pre-schools and literacy strengthens the linguistic competence and school performance of minority individuals. Religious literature in minority languages and a translation of the Bible create a basis for the religious expression and congregational life that spring from the minority culture.

Strengthening the cultural heritage of minority groups requires safeguarding and providing room for their cultural traditions both within their own community but also as part of society at large. Felm supports the opportunities of minority groups to use their cultural traditions, for example in handcrafts, to add to their basic livelihood. Developing local church music is strongly associated with cultural exchange and advocacy for cultural diversity, which Felm's Church Cooperation has promoted both in Finland and internationally. Ethnic music traditions have enriched Finnish parish life and culture.

## Increased awareness and interaction between various groups in society

Peaceful and inclusive coexistence between different groups relies on knowledge and understanding of customs and cultures of the surrounding peoples and groups. Raised awareness reduces the fear of otherness and increases tolerance. Therefore, we work to widen the knowledge which minorities have about other groups and religions within society. In our project planning, we foster models that support minority rights and participation.

We encourage dialogue and interaction between various groups. Interaction and inclusion of the whole community in projects reduce tensions between groups and prevent the escalation of conflicts. We create connections between the members of minority and majority groups.

We increase awareness of human rights among minorities and the majority population. Because minorities are more at risk of exploitation and abuse than other groups, our work with minorities also includes protection. In moments of crisis, we offer psychological support and protection as well as legal assistance. We assist minorities to avail themselves of the services on offer in society and support their efforts to increase services in their own areas. We take part in small-scale projects that improve infrastructure.

Some cultural and religious practices, or traditions may be in conflict with the integrity of each human being or the principles of non-discrimination. Minority awareness of human rights opens up the possibility of having an impact on cultural practices that cause





"Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me." (Matthew 18:4-5) Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

unreasonable pain and/or endanger a person's wellbeing. It also enables the creation of alternative cultural forms that do not cause harm.

### **Education and work increase possibilities for minorities**

The level of education among minorities is often lower than in other people groups. In peripheral regions where minorities live, elementary education is not always available. The language used in schools is in most cases the official or majority language of a country. This weakens the chances for academic success among linguistic and ethnic minorities, which in turn leads to people dropping out of school. Low levels of education make it difficult for them to get employment and increases their vulnerability. When traditional livelihoods are under threat, the need for education grows.

We particularly support educational opportunities for children of minority groups. To safeguard successful studies for members of linguistic and ethnic minorities, we implement projects where preschool tuition is offered in minority languages. A proportion of the children included in Felm's sponsorship programmes must represent minority groups.

Integration of refugee and migrant children in local school systems is important for building the future, as it contributes to inclusion and peace in the society at large. Extra tuition helps children adapt to the local school system where they live.

Vocational training and literacy classes for adults help migrants and other minorities to find employment and support their livelihood. Through projects that increase self-determination and independence we help people in minority groups to find new sources of income when their traditional livelihoods are being eroded.

We develop the administration of our partners so that the special needs of minority groups are considered in both planning and staff selection. We do advocacy work to strengthen the first language education of linguistic minorities. We look for ways to strengthen the position of religious minority groups to participate in societal decision-making on an equal footing.



### Basic Assumptions

- Increased awareness among various groups and key people in society reduces the fear of otherness, increases tolerance and enables acceptance of equal rights for minority groups.
- Activities that bring together various groups build favourable conditions for coexistence and peace and reduces the fear of otherness.
- Raising awareness among minority groups of their own rights strengthens their confidence to claim those rights.
- Legal assistance may initiate observation of various rights.
- Support for developing livelihoods can strengthen the wellbeing and position of minority groups in society.
- Even small improvements in infrastructure can provide better access to services and strengthen equality in society.
- Support for education strengthens equality in society.
- Education of children of minority groups in their first language improves their learning ability.
- Strengthening the identity of minority groups helps to sustain their human dignity.
- Human dignity is a prerequisite for a person to actively claim their rights and avail themselves of the opportunities that life offers.

### Further Reading

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, Articles 2, 6, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27.  
<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty

### Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

### Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

**Article 17**

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

**Article 18**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

**Article 21**

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

**Article 22**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

**Article 23**

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
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**Article 25**

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

**Article 27**

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

(The right to language was not mentioned until the 1992 *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*.)



The elderly are a discriminated group of people in many regions. Many elderly live in the countryside, beyond the access of basic public services. In many countries, the social welfare system does not ensure the preconditions for a dignified life. Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

#### ***6.2.4 The Exploited Recover and Are Empowered to Make Decisions about Their Own Lives as Part of Society.***

Exploited and abused people have experienced financial, physical or sexual abuse or other exploitation. Church Cooperation with the exploited and abused focuses on supporting the recovery of child labourers, slaves, victims of human trafficking and of other types of abuse, and elderly people who have been abandoned.

Exploitation and abuse are usually related to situations where first, a person's possibility, and then their ability to make decisions is removed. The person is not free to leave the damaging situation. Under coercion and threat, they are made to do things they would not normally do. Exploitation often includes physical and mental violence or the threat of it.

To eradicate abuse and exploitation, its root causes must be known. Often, it is the marginalised who are exposed to abuse and exploitation. Exploitation implies an unequal power-relation: a person in power uses their position to gain benefit or promote their own interest at the cost of someone who is subordinate. The gain can be material or non-material. Abuse and exploitation are violations of the victim's human rights.



When a person is being exploited or abused, it can be difficult for them to get away from the situation without help from the outside. Once out of such a damaging situation, the person will need a lot of support until they are physically and mentally empowered enough to ensure their own future well-being. If the conditions for building a new future are inadequate, the person may be forced to return to the same abusive or exploitative situation. Family support and a strong social network are of crucial importance when an abused and exploited person strives to build themselves a new future.

Awareness of the possible channels which lead to exploitation or abuse is often low. In many countries, it is customary for people to leave the countryside to find work in towns and cities in the hope of earning a decent living. People may also move to a neighbouring country or even further away. Often, information about the experiences of those who end up being exploited never reaches those who stayed at home. In particular young people are at risk of being sexually exploited. Abuse and exploitation is often made possible by the lure of unofficial jobs and deals, as well as by private companies who act as intermediaries to supply foreign workers.

Abuse and exploitation are often hidden within the structures of society. Knowledge of exploitation is often kept secret from the community and the general public. Exposing exploitation can create risks, both for the exploiter and their victim. In many countries, the authorities and decision-makers are either active or passive parties to exploitation, or sometimes they prefer to close their eyes to it. Exploitation is rife because of corruption, lack of resources or the will to intervene because of, for example, the fear of political consequences. In such cases, societies have difficulties in developing structures to protect the individual.

Exploitation and abuse cause great harm to their victims. Mental symptoms can vary individually depending on the type and length of the exploitation, and the time span of their appearance is unpredictable. Abuse can cause trauma and trauma-related symptoms, such as anxiety and depression. Victims often suffer from low self-esteem and self-confidence, they have problems trusting people and lack confidence in life and in daily situations. They may also suffer from various kinds of stress-related symptoms. At worst, a victim may be completely unable to build a new future.

### **Outreach diakonia reaches more people outside regular activities**

Many victims of abuse and exploitation are unable to seek help for fear or some other reason. During this Programme period we put a strong emphasis on outreach diakonia. In addition to providing activities to those who have experienced abuse and exploitation, we go and look for people in the places where abuse and exploitation takes place. Our work reaches out not only to the people who have been abused, but also to those who are abusers and exploiters.

We work with abused and exploited people to raise awareness of their rights and give them information about various sources of help. We strengthen our connections to local organisations who can provide assistance. We support the victims in their choices, and improve their chances to step out from a damaging situation.

## Exploited and abused people take charge of their life

A core part of our work with people who have been abused and exploited is protection. We strive to make it possible for them to lead a balanced and rich life. We offer them mental and spiritual support, protection, and guidance in building an independent life and livelihood. We assist in legal and official matters, and provide experts from various fields to help.

We strive to empower the abused and exploited to resume their position as full and active members of society after the crisis. In addition to shelter, we offer them temporary material support to guarantee that the basic conditions for a safe life are available. We work with families to ensure that those who have suffered abuse and exploitation, have a strong safety net even after Felm's support has ended. We give support to victims to ensure they can sustain their new, well-balanced life. We also offer psychosocial support to help in the processing of difficult experiences. For people in need of serious trauma treatment, we work in cooperation with local professionals.

We do preventive work so that the members of communities were not exposed to exploitation and abuse. We raise communities' awareness to become better equipped to assess the risk of exploitation and abuse. We have use of mass media in awareness raising and in advocacy work.



A reasonable amount of household chores belongs to the normal daily life of many children. When work deprives the child of their childhood, of schooling, of healthy physical and social growth, or when the work puts the child in danger or harmful situations, we call it the exploitation of child labour. Picture: Tanzania/Ritva Niemi

## Basic Assumptions

- Raising awareness of the rights and building the self-esteem of the people who have been abused or exploited increase their confidence to be active members of society and claim their rights.
- Raising community members' awareness of the situation of the abused and the exploited reduces stigma and increases active involvement in promoting the rights of the abused and exploited.
- Increased awareness of the possible risks of exploitation and abuse prevents abuse.
- Legal assistance is often a prerequisite for putting an end to exploitation and abuse, and for the healing to begin.
- Support for earning one's livelihood is an important factor in building a balanced and independent life and in counteracting the risk to return to the abusive situation.
- Mental and spiritual support together with aid to maintain good physical health, are essential to healing and to claiming future opportunities.
- Outreach diakonia is a core method to reach those victims of abuse and exploitation who are in the most difficult situations.
- Lasting recovery requires the support of a strong social network.
- When an abused and exploited person has serious symptoms of trauma, Felm's cooperation network must guide them towards getting professional help.
- The healing of people who have experienced exploitation and abuse requires long-term and diverse support.
- For the exploited and abused people to claim their rights, it is essential that they have knowledge about the services available.

## Further Reading

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, Articles 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 24, 25.



## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

### Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

### Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

### Article 11

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

### Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

### Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.



The aim of Church Cooperation is to bring joy and hope. Child's happiness and active behaviour are indications of the child's well-being. Picture: Nepal/Kirsti Kirjavainen

### **6.2.5 Children and Young People at the Risk of Marginalisation Learn Life Skills Needed for a Responsible Adulthood**

In the New Testament, Jesus takes the side of the oppressed against injustice. He gives children his special attention. He allows the children to come to him, blesses them and asks those around him to do the same. Working with children and young people is one of the focus areas of Felm's Church Cooperation. Children and young people are an important part of society. They are the foundation for the future and for society, but tragically often their existence and their voices are not given the attention they deserve.

The definition of childhood and youth vary from culture to culture. In accordance with the United Nations *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, Felm considers everyone under 18 years of age to be a child. In many countries in which we operate, childhood ends in an early marriage. Who is considered a young person depends on the age structure of the community, the responsibilities and role in the community, culture and customs, and the family situation of the person concerned. In Felm's Church Cooperation the upper limit for a young person is the age of 35.

The special position and rights of a child have also been noted in international humanitarian agreements and ethical guidelines. The UN *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* is the basis for the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which obliges signatory countries to provide a safe environment for children to grow up in and to have their human dignity respected. Although many countries have ratified the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, in a number of countries the implementation of the *Convention* is significantly inadequate.

**The following rights from the UN *Declaration* are key to Felm's Church Cooperation Programme**

- Ensuring a family or other safe environment to grow up is one part of child protection.
- A child has the right to physical and mental integrity.
- The rights to education, rest and play are essential to healthy and balanced growth.
- The community has a responsibility to ensure that a child's right to be heard is observed in matters which concern the child, and to raise the child to be a responsible member of society.

A child is dependent on the care of their parents and, in the absence of the parents, on some other responsible adult or community. The financial situation of the parents and their position in society, lack of documentation, nationality, and religious, social and cultural background all have an impact on a child's chances to develop and to gain a position in society.

To this day, many communities do not recognise the need for child protection. They are not aware of the mental factors which constitute a healthy environment for a child to grow up in. Often, a child is not seen as a valuable individual and member of the community. Unrest and conflicts increase violations of children's rights and abuse of children. Violations of the rights of children increase the risk of conflict and accentuate the vicious cycle of conflict.

In the past few years, there has been positive development in the global education of children. Today, more children than ever have access to primary education, as is their right, but differences in the quality of education cause inequalities. Among the groups of people with whom Felm works, many parents cannot afford to pay school fees. Also, children's chances of finishing school are often impaired by the lack of education in their mother tongue, long distances to schools, conflicts, paid employment or excessive amount of household chores.

The risk of marginalisation of children may be due to difficulties continuing their education after elementary school to secondary education because of poor school performance and lack of family support. Motivation for education is often low in communities where unemployment is high and education has no noticeable effect on finding a job. Unemployment inevitably weakens basic income, which in turn brings about a wide range of negative consequences: Many young people move from the countryside to cities or abroad which increases their risk of becoming exploited. Finding a spouse and setting up a home without work and money is difficult or even impossible. Idleness and lack of hope increase the risk of substance abuse, violent behaviour and recruitment by extremist movements especially among young men.

Children are vulnerable and easily exposed to sexual abuse and incest. Talking about abuse is still a taboo in many countries, which prevents intervention in abuse cases and subsequent enforcement of legal punishment. Children may be exposed to sexual abuse in any situation



of their daily life. Church and congregations have the responsibility to protect children's rights in society, in their communities and in their own activities. All projects which involve children adhere to Felm's child protection guidelines.

Many children who suffer from post-traumatic stress caused by a violent conflict, have little confidence in their future. Trauma symptoms may spring from general insecurity and violence, but also from the behaviour and trauma symptoms of the people in their immediate environment. If a child adopts the traumatic behaviour of their environment, we talk about inherited trauma. At worst, the trauma symptoms paralyse children's ability to act and evolve. Parents have a key role in supporting a child towards a well-balanced life.

We implement Church Cooperation projects with children and young people in all the countries where we operate. Mostly we focus on securing children's access to basic education and on ensuring the quality of that education. We take the role and position of children into account in all Church Cooperation and plan all the work in accordance with Felm's child protection guidelines. We aim at removing obstacles to the comprehensive development, protection and observance of the rights of children and young people on individual and community levels. We work to increase society's responsibility for improving the lot of children.

### **Education gives children a chance to make a better life**

Church Cooperation reaches children and young people who are the most at risk of marginalisation in any society. We strengthen the chances and the right of these children and youth to education. We support elementary, secondary and higher education, and vocational training. In addition to school-related fees, Felm's child sponsorship covers healthcare and the cost of other activities which improve general well-being of the students. We also support non-formal methods of schooling which use different forms of media to provide refugee children with an education. Extra tuition and volunteer activities in support of children's learning contribute to the integration of refugee children into local school systems and surrounding society.

We strengthen the professionalism of schools and teachers in relation to child development, psychosocial support, child protection and pedagogical methods. We support parents' awareness of the importance of education, and the cooperation between school and home.

In addition to elementary education, we help to build children's abilities and life skills, such as social skills, sense of responsibility, life control and self-knowledge. Activities that develop life skills range from clubs and camps to hobbies, peer support groups and Church work with children, such as Sunday school, confirmation classes and Christian education. They may also include sex education, career guidance and day care. Through all these activities we aim to help children become active and responsible members of their community and society.

We provide peace education in countries where children are living amid ethnic, religious or political conflict. Peace education offers methods for non-violent problem solving and provides tools to identify violence in one's own life sphere. Peace education is usually part of the education projects in schools, congregations (for adults too), youth work and leisure activities. Through peace education we strive to prevent a vulnerable young person from getting involved in violent extremist movements.

## **Awareness of children's rights has grown stronger among children, young people and the local community, and destructive practices have been abandoned**

We work with the local community, society and congregation to increase their awareness of children's rights and to support their ability to develop child and youth work. We strengthen an understanding that children are an active and valuable part of their life. We promote child protection through educating children, local actors and our partners' employees. We encourage our partners to take children into account within the structures of their own organisation and to draw up partner-specific child protection guidelines. We also involve local decision-makers and other key people in order to build a wide ownership and base to child protection in society. We maintain a culture-sensitive approach to child protection, but do not compromise on Felm's child protection guidelines.

We work with our partners, communities and societies to increase their awareness of any violations of children's rights and to recognise structures in society that are harmful to children. We strengthen the ability of children themselves to identify any actions that violate their rights in their life or environment. Education is key in our child protection operations.

## **Children have a sound sense of self-esteem, are emotionally well-balanced and physically healthy**

We see each child as a member of their family and the wider community. Hence, we apply community-based methods to improve the well-being of children. We direct our focus on improving the well-being of the entire family and on strengthening parenting skills. The activities support families mentally and spiritually. They can also build families' possibilities to earn their livelihood.

We offer various forms of mental help and psychosocial support for children. We improve the professional capacity of those who work with parents and children to provide mental support to children in the best possible manner. We create prospects of hope in the lives of children, showing them that they have multiple ways to develop themselves. In cases of severe trauma, we use our existing networks to put children in touch with professional services. We support the healing and well-being of children at every stage of our activities.

We implement projects that strengthen the position of children in crisis situations. This crisis assistance can be directed at helping either the child or the entire family. Projects can provide not only shelter and protection, but also mental, spiritual, legal and other professional help that will help to protect the child. Family work and psychosocial support can be helpful in crises and in crisis prevention. We work together with local organisations, authorities, schools and parents to find the best way to help individual children and contribute to building a better future for them. Our aim is for both the child and their family to continue living a well-balanced life together after the crisis.

We strive to reduce child abuse of any kind, both through preventive work and in response to a need. Child protection training is key to eradicating mental, physical and sexual violence towards children. Abuse and violations of the rights of children can have a destructive and life-long physical, mental, emotional and social impact on children and their communities. Child protection training is also provided for children, to strengthen their understanding of their rights and their role as active defenders of their own rights

## Basic Assumptions

- Awareness of child protection and children's rights among children, parents and people who work with children, strengthens the well-being of children and increases the observation of children's rights.
- Children and young people themselves can defend their rights and participate in civil society.
- The attitudes of the community and family towards children affect children's self-confidence, self-esteem and well-being.
- A child's upbringing and protection are primarily the parents' responsibility.
- Increasing awareness of harmful traditions or practices in raising children, makes it possible to replace those ways with new, non-harmful methods.
- Bad practice in childrearing is in part caused by a lack of information and skills.
- Support for the mental, spiritual and physical health of a child is a prerequisite for a well-balanced childhood and for child's future development.
- Education is a key factor in minimising a child's risk of marginalisation and in building an equal society.
- It is in the best interests of a child that their family is doing well as a whole and that the child can live with their family.
- Safeguarding the interests of a child is of foremost importance in all activities and decisions.
- Improving the educational and employment opportunities for young people prevents violent radicalisation, marginalisation and social problems and their engagement with gangs.
- Developing life and social skills as well as problem-solving capabilities creates a strong basis for responsible adulthood.
- Strengthening the rights and life opportunities for children contributes to the building of a stronger community and society.





Arts and sports are used as forms of psychosocial support in our children's projects. Art is also one way of expressing one's cultural identity. Picture: Bolivia/Ari Vitikainen

### 6.3 We Work for a More Just World

The third of the Themes of Hope, *We work for a more just world*, encompasses the work we do with our partners to build economic and social justice. This work is directed at groups of people who have the power and opportunity to promote practices which support the rights of individuals or communities who are marginalised or discriminated against. Felm's work focuses on strengthening our partner's advocacy skills and on doing advocacy in selected focus areas. Key target groups for our joint advocacy efforts are religious leaders, civil society, political leaders and people who wield financial influence.

Work for justice and equality combines advocacy with strengthening good governance. In our Church Cooperation Programme, we focus in particular on building the administrative capacity of our partner churches and organisations. Capacity building is one of the four focus areas of the programme period. We add components of advocacy work into our projects and implement separate advocacy projects. We primarily focus on advocacy that aims to strengthen and/or promote the rights of women and children, peace, the right to education in the mother tongue, the rights of ethnic and religious groups, good governance and freedom of religion and belief.

### 6.3.1 Advocacy

Social disparity between various groups of people, regions and states continues to grow. Neither natural nor economic resources are evenly distributed. Despite the progress made in many sectors, poverty, malnutrition and exploitation have still not been eradicated. The global problem is no longer primarily poverty, but greed and discrimination. The Bible's cross-cutting message is one of justice and unselfishness, which puts building global justice at the heart of the Christian faith. Advocacy to defend our partners' rights is an integral part of Felm's work throughout its history.

**Advocacy is a method used to change structures that cause and maintain poverty and inequality. It impacts the making and implementation of decisions that influence those structures.**

Felm defines their advocacy work as follows: 'Advocacy is a method used to change structures that cause and maintain poverty and inequality as well as to have an impact on the making and implementation of decisions that influence those structures.'

The abuse of power often prevents justice. Taking advantage of one's position may spring from personal plight and greed. It may also arise from social pressure, which induces a person to take part in activities that do not respect human rights or observe the principles of good governance. Abuse is possible and continues wherever the justice system is weak and abuse goes unpunished. Women, children, people with disabilities and members of various minority communities are those who suffer most from bad governance.

Within Church Cooperation, advocacy is implemented together with the Felm unit for Peace Building and Advocacy whenever the programme themes and regions overlap. Felm's Church Cooperation also provides materials and information for domestic advocacy work. The unit for Peace Building and Advocacy supports the advocacy work of Church Cooperation by offering training and mentoring both to partners and to Felm staff members.

#### Churches do advocacy in society

Many partners of Felm's Church Cooperation operate in fragile countries or areas where the economic resources are scarce. Our partners' position in society may be weak or marginalised. At the same time, many churches may be strongly influential in their own society. In Church Cooperation, advocacy is targeted at supporting our partner churches and organisations to claim their position as full members of the society and contribute to resolving unfairness within it. Advocacy is a long-term process. It begins with a passive identification of discriminated groups and evils in society, and progresses to active work to address those evils.

Project cooperation with partners is one way for Church Cooperation to do national level advocacy. Advocacy is more than service provision or moral leadership. We encourage our partners to widen their traditional spiritual and diakonia work to include advocacy in society. If we

initiate services to benefit the marginalised, the final joint goal is to have the state integrate the services into public service system and ensure the citizens rights within its borders. Church's diakonia may temporarily cover for or complement the services that the State is responsible for providing to the most marginalised and vulnerable. Successful advocacy can dismantle discriminating structures in society which improves the position of vulnerable people, and consequently the services provided by our partners are no longer needed.

### Opportunities for doing advocacy have improved

Our partners bear the responsibility for advocacy. Felm takes part in advocacy by strengthening the capacity of our partners. This can entail training, improving analytical skills, discussing the possibilities of advocacy, providing technical support in the planning of advocacy work, and strengthening our partner's local networks. We do not regard activities which focus on the partner nor cooperation which induces change in local attitudes or customs as advocacy, but as awareness raising. Advocacy always has the leaders of a society as its target group. It operates at the societal level, and aims at producing changes in legislation or in the practical implementation of an existing law. It may also target at changing the structures of society to prepare a favourable environment for reaching the goals of advocacy.



Felm's work aims for change, where beneficiaries become active defenders of their own rights, partners become advocates for the marginalised, and societies become more just. Picture: Senegal/Jarmo Kulonen



We also operate in regions where churches have limited scope for work because freedom of religion is not fully observed or because Christians suffer from discrimination. We plan projects that strengthen the position of the Church in society in a way that is appropriate to the local context. Projects that succeed in meeting the needs of the wider community can contribute to reducing

**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**  
(John 14:27)

stigma against religion or between religious groups. We support the networking and cooperation between churches to alleviate their situation as targets of discrimination. Whether Church Cooperation does political or societal advocacy in matters of freedom of religion and belief, is entirely dependent on the context in which our partner operates.

### **We strengthen networks and joint aims to increase impact**

In Church Cooperation advocacy work, we support our partners to make contacts with local decision-makers and leaders of civil society. Strengthening the networks can be achieved in a number of ways, such as organizing partners' and stakeholders' meetings in the area, and by implementing networking strategies with our partner.

Making contacts with decision-makers aims at engaging them in planning activities among the discriminated people groups and in making a contribution to achieving the set goals. We see that churches can play a strong role in societal advocacy and encourage regional actors to enter into dialogue with religious and social actors.

In our advocacy work, we emphasise knowledge based dialogue between different actors. We support local research, which strengthens our message of justice.

Key themes for our advocacy work are peace, children's rights, the right to education in the first language, the rights of ethnic and religious groups, good governance and freedom of religion and belief. We work to promote justice in a contextually appropriate way in each society we work. We strive for the rights of the discriminated to be observed in decision-making and throughout the structures in society.

We reinforce a systematic approach for advocacy in Church Cooperation projects during this programme period. Background and risk analyses are of prime importance in advocacy projects to ensure that we do not put our partners' safety or ability to operate at risk.

### Basic Assumptions

- Engaging decision-makers and civil society leaders in the planning and monitoring of projects is a prerequisite for strengthening the rights of various discriminated groups.
- Education reduces the fear of ‘otherness’, increases awareness among decision-makers of the rights of different groups and of society’s needs, and fosters political will.
- Joint goal setting by different key people in society is crucial to achieving sustainable change.
- In many countries, churches are influential in society.
- Churches have the desire to play an active part in society.
- One of the basic missions of the Church is to strengthen the rights of those who are the weakest in society.
- To do efficient advocacy, it is important to apply methods and approaches which fit in the local context, and to find the right people in places of power.
- The message of our advocacy work is strengthened when we use wider networks to implement our activities.
- Strengthening the thematic expertise of Felm and our partner increases our influence and widens our networks of cooperation.
- Strengthening the will for change among decision-makers can only be observed in actions that have taken place, e.g. in renewal of legislation.

### 6.3.2 Partner Churches and Organisations Operate Professionally and in Accordance with Good Governance

Weak or bad governance undermines the impact of cooperation and hinders the observance of human rights in most countries in which Felm operates. *Weak governance* refers to administration with weak and underdeveloped structures. It often stems from lack of capacity. *Bad governance* refers to a situation in which the organisation has the capacity to improve their administration but not the will to do so. In some cases, governance can be both bad and weak.

Bad and weak governance give way to corruption, which, according to Felm’s definition, is an abuse of power for private and/or group gain. By this definition, corruption can be either material or intangible. It can manifest itself in the exploitation of natural resources and

environment, or through violations of human rights. It can obstruct fair distribution of income, just taxation and decision-making. Any corruption that enables illegal transfers of money or directs money flows outside the country's borders, can significantly impede the economic development of the country. The consequences of corruption are most clearly felt in the lives of the discriminated groups and people at the lowest levels of society. Corruption causes deaths daily, whether directly or indirectly.

The role of a leader is significant in setting up governance practices. The concentration of power and the belief in an infallible leader often represent traditional governance, which is still common in many leadership cultures. Traditional models of authoritarian leadership exist today, both in the religious sphere and in the world of politics and economy. Undifferentiated power is a key factor in making corruption possible.

Good governance, which entails both good leadership and strong administrative structures, is the best way of preventing corruption and fighting economic injustice. The Bible speaks not only against greed, selfishness, discrimination and injustice but also for good governance and leadership.

In many of our countries of operation, the level of education has risen and the number of people with higher or university education has grown. In other words, local expertise is available when partners recruit their staff. This has not necessarily been the case in the past. Expertise from overseas may still be needed in areas where the local, national or regional institutes of higher education do not offer comprehensive courses.

**Good governance, which entails both good leadership and strong administrative structures, is the best way of preventing corruption and fighting economic injustice. The Bible speaks not only against greed, selfishness, discrimination and injustice but also for good governance and leadership.**

#### **Partner's administration follows principles of good governance**

Strengthening good governance is a key way to fight corruption, violations of human rights and injustice which may be present in our own work, in our partners work and on a national level. In project cooperation, activities to improve governance can entail scholarship support for administrative and management studies, training in project and financial management, and assistance to partner organisation in planning and strengthening administrative structures.

We support leadership training for our partners as part of building good governance within Church Cooperation projects. The training can focus on the theological principles of leadership or on practical management skills. This aims at improving our partner's ability to lead their Church or organisation in accordance with good governance and manage their operations to achieve quality results.





Strengthening the project and financial management skills of our partner is one way of supporting our partner's professionalism. New knowledge is enthusiastically put into practice. Picture: Angola/Eeva-Liisa Rantasuumela

### **Strengthening the general administrative and operational capacity of our partner**

We strengthen the thematic capacity of our partners. In Church Cooperation, we particularly support expertise which is related to cooperation among the discriminated focus groups, to church communications, advocacy, peace building, good governance, education, child protection, and financial and project management. Theological capacity building falls under the goal one of our International Cooperation (IC-1).

Thematic training can contain individual training sessions or degree studies. Strengthening administrative and operational capacity are key measures in building the self-reliance of the partners. As a principle, our partners must commit to employing the people who have studied on scholarships at the end of their studies. Correspondingly, a person who has received a scholarship is bound to work for the partner for an agreed length of time.

Providing expertise is one way of building the professional capacity of our partners. The experts can be paid Felm staff or volunteers on assignment from Finland, or they can be recruited locally. The experts are employed for a duration that is specified in the project plan. Financial support to employ an expert is always temporary. A key part of an expert's job description is to team up with a local colleague, provide guidance and gradually transfer the expertise to our partner's staff. Capacity building aims at providing the partner with the professional and financial foundation to take charge of the operations independently.

Some of the Felm's employees overseas are responsible for administrative duties of Felm and Church Cooperation. In addition to their Felm internal tasks, they provide support to building partners' administrative capacity. The Regional Church Cooperation Managers are in charge of Felm's programme implementation. They ensure that the focus areas, principles and methods of Church Cooperation Programme are observed in the planning of all the work. They assist our partners at the various stages of project management and, if necessary, arrange for local training. They act as contacts between our partners and Felm in matters related to the content of our work. Regional Church Cooperation Managers are also in charge of providing pertinent and timely reports from their region to our supporters in Finland.

Every year, we send dozens of volunteers overseas through the Felm Volunteer Programme. Volunteers contribute to the activities of our partner organisations, provide an additional resource for projects or carry out some other assignment for a period of two to twelve months. The Felm Volunteer Programme also provides a channel to strengthen Felm's connections with the parishes, schools and universities in Finland. It is essential that any position or need for special expertise to be filled by a volunteer must be foreseen early and included in partner's project planning.

Felm also builds the professional capacity and international contacts of our partners through an employee exchange programme. Exchange can take place between Felm's international and Finnish partners or between two international partners (i.e. North-South or a South-South exchange). Felm's role is to make the contact between the exchanging parties and, if necessary, assist in coordinating the exchange. International exchange is open to partners with whom the project cooperation is ongoing, or with a former partner who currently operates independently.

We strengthen the impact of the work of our partners and contribute to the improvement of their professional capacity by supporting cooperation between different actors and networks locally, internationally and ecumenically. Local networks increase the opportunities for advocacy and for an exchange of capacities and expertise between organisations.

We strengthen our partners' expertise in peace building. We focus on our partner's capacity for peace building planning and processes. In particular, we work to strengthen the participation of women and young people in peace building.

**Do not pervert justice or show partiality.  
Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds  
the eyes of the wise and twists the words  
of the innocent. (Deut. 16:19)**



Empowering women and girls at risk of marginalisation is one of the goals of Church Cooperation. Gender justice is also one of the cross-cutting themes of the Programme, and it should be taken into account in all work. Picture: Bolivia/Ari Vitikainen

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Project management capacity strengthens a partner's self-reliance and provides a wider base for financing. It also improves the quality, impact and sustainability of operations. Project management training is part of a continuous capacity building of our partners. Training is provided annually. Anti-corruption training included in project management training prepares our partners to identify and combat any external or internal risks of corruption in their organisation. Training strengthens partners' ability to implement good governance practices within their organisation.

### **Economic capacity of the Church and schools is stronger**

We support diakonia formation in theological institutions and thematic training classes in Bible schools with a purpose of building open congregations. It is also possible to include some of the operational costs of churches and schools in project plans provided that the projects contribute to strengthening diakonia and openness.

Financial capacity is one target in our capacity building. Its final aim is the financial self-reliance of our partner. Self-reliance is built gradually, and shows in the percentual annual increase of self-financing by the partner. The financial capacity of Felm's partners can also be strengthened through support for their own local fundraising or other initiatives that support financial self-reliance.



## Basic Assumptions

- Strengthening the professional skills of a partner increases their capacity to support women, girls, people with disabilities, minorities, exploited or abused people, children and young people.
- Education and training improves the impact, quality and sustainability of the work.
- Building advocacy skills increases the amount of advocacy done by our partners.
- Strengthening a partner's professional skills in peace building and advocacy enables them to defend the rights of marginalised people and contributes to peace.
- Project management training strengthens the planning, monitoring and evaluation of a partner's operations and makes it possible to monitor the results more closely.
- Financial management training strengthens the planning and monitoring of a partner's finances and improves the reliability and predictability of their operations.
- By supporting a partner organisation with local or expatriate expertise, we can increase a partner's professional skill in various areas of their work.
- By providing education and/or training for partners' staff we can increase the partner's professional skills in various areas of their work.
- An expert (paid member of staff or a person in employee exchange programme) shares their expertise with the partner for a period determined in the project plan, after which the partner will be able to apply the expertise independently.
- Local experts are able to work independently after studying or working with an expatriate expert.
- Education and training increases a partner's capacity to strengthen the principles of good governance in their own administration.
- Improving the analytical skills of a partner enables them to assess the human rights situation more accurately and to actively engage in advocacy and peace building.
- Anti-corruption training and increased awareness improves a partner organisation's ability to prevent both internal and external risks of corruption.
- Providing information about the finances and results of an activity to the local community and beneficiaries increases transparency and participation.
- Education and training increases a partner's will to strengthen their governance and professionalism in various areas.
- Active engagement by a partner organisation in local networks adds to the amount of information shared, chances of advocacy and enhances professional skills.

## 6.4 We Build Peace and Reconciliation

The fourth Theme of Hope, *We build peace and reconciliation*, focuses on strengthening the conditions for peace and reconciliation. In Felm's Strategy, peace and reconciliation embark on conflict resolution through two of the twelve goals of our International Cooperation. The goals describe the intended results as: *The parties of a conflict build mutual trust and work to find common solutions* (IC-11); and Peacebuilders engage key groups, particularly women, in peace building in order to achieve conflict resolution (IC-12). Building the partner's peace-building capacity falls under the scope of goal 10 (IC-10).

At Felm, we work for peace and reconciliation with various actors in society and with the parties of a conflict. The key target groups of our peace-building work are children, young people, various religious organisations and their leaders, decision-makers and women.

In Church Cooperation, work for peace and reconciliation is planned in line with Felm's Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The Felm unit for Peace Building and Advocacy provides expertise in technical planning and in planning project contents. Our work is also partly connected to international advocacy and networking for peace which belongs to core activities in the Felm Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. Felm's Programme for Peace and Reconciliation also includes special projects that are implemented in areas of conflict. Felm Church Cooperation and Peace and Reconciliation cooperate and interact closely for the two goals under the fourth Theme of Hope.

When we plan and implement Church Cooperation projects, we make sure that they are in line with the projects under other Units and Programmes of Felm's International Cooperation. This ensures that risks are managed and that the projects serve Felm's holistic mission.



We build peace in different conflict areas, such as Columbia, Middle East, Pakistan and Myanmar, through our work among children and youth. Picture: Sari Lehtelä

### 6.4.1 Working for Peace with the Parties in Conflict and the Peacebuilders

In this globalised world, conflicts are becoming increasingly more complex and last longer. At the same time, the growing migration caused by conflicts is geographically wider than ever before, with larger groups of people becoming refugees.

Work for peace and reconciliation in Church Cooperation stems from the Christian message. It entails conflict prevention and engagement in activities during and after a conflict. Churches have a strong standing in society to fight inequality and to contribute to peace and reconciliation. Therefore, we wish to encourage religious leaders to take part in peace building.

Conflicts often arise from social injustice and violations of human rights which usually increase in number and in intensity after a conflict has begun. Armed conflicts do not only violate human rights, but also cause poverty, destroy nature and livelihoods, and reverse existing development. Growing political and financial disparity, and the widening gap between a wealthy elite and marginalised groups of people multiply conflicts between the haves and the have-nots all over the world. These social phenomena highlight the connection between peace and reconciliation and the other strategic goals of our International Cooperation during the Programme period. Worst-hit by conflict are the world's poorest countries and within them the groups of people who are the most marginalised: women, children, people with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities. Peace work in Church Cooperation focuses in particular on children, youth, women and religious leaders.

Conflicts cause people mental stress and all parties in a conflict suffer trauma. Mental trauma is an injury caused by a forceful incident or experience, such as losing a close relation, experiencing or witnessing violence, being in an accident or suffering long-term stress. Mental health is badly affected when the number of trauma triggers or the trauma intensity exceed a person's capacity to tolerate them. Typical symptoms of trauma are disturbed sleep, depression, and anxiety.

Most people can deal even with severe trauma without professional assistance. However, nobody can handle trauma entirely without consequences. The majority of the people who live in a conflict situation, regardless of their role or position in the conflict, will be more or less traumatised. Traumatized people may suffer from fear and anxiety, which may in turn prevent them from performing even simple everyday tasks. It may also exceed entirely the capacity of a traumatised person to plan their own future or to take an active part in life.

Traumas experienced by parents can also have a direct influence on the mental well-being of their children. We often refer to this as so-called inherited family trauma. Psychosocial support is a means for a community to heal and resume everyday life. It contains a comprehensive set of measures to end a vicious cycle of conflict and strengthen reconciliation processes.

Many conflicts result into a total rupture of normal interaction between the parties of conflict for a whole generation. Over time, a lack of everyday contact reinforces narratives that allow people to grow further apart and intensifies the myth of their otherness. The other party can become associated with inhuman traits. The image of them is coloured by strong fear and feelings of unpredictability of what they might do. Seeing the other as sharply different or dehumanising the other gives grounds to committing such deeds and atrocities





Peace education and awareness raising among children and youth give tools for the new generation to examine conflicts from different perspectives and to contribute to building for peace. Peace education is part of the curriculum of the school of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordania and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Picture: Sari Lehtelä

against the other that would not be acceptable in other situations. Reducing the sense of otherness lessens fear, hatred and insecurity. Getting to know the other increases the understanding that the other is a person like ourselves, an individual who feels and experiences things as we do.

Violence breeds violence. Particularly the youth who live in conflict areas are prone to seek solutions to their problems through violence. Frustration can also arise from the lack of opportunities available in their close environment. In a conflict zone it is difficult to study, work, marry and start a family, buy a home and support a family. Young people in particular find that conflict creates many obstacles to achieving the basics of life. In areas of conflict, frustration in conjunction with other factors can make young people vulnerable to extremist movements.

In Felm's Church Cooperation Programme, peace building includes:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ■ Strengthening human rights          | ■ Reducing the sense of otherness |
| ■ Psychosocial support                | ■ Advocacy work                   |
| ■ Encouraging dialogue between groups | ■ Reinforcing Peace Theology      |
| ■ Peace education                     |                                   |

**Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (Phil. 2:1–4)**

In Church Cooperation, we are involved in peace building, which contributes to building a just and lasting peace and reconciliation between different communities, groups and societies. In particular, we work in fragile countries, such as Pakistan, Colombia, Myanmar and Ethiopia, and countries in the Middle East. As situations change and needs arise, we may also work for peace in other countries, either with our partners or through our networks. We ensure that we do not implement or support any activities which add to the potential for conflict in our countries of operation. We apply conflict sensitivity to our work.

As a Christian organisation, we seek forgiveness and atonement in our work for peace and reconciliation. Forgiveness and atonement entails bringing the injustice or injury up, acknowledging it and making atonement for it. At best, a confession of sins made by the perpetrating party can be a step towards peace. Still, we cannot stipulate forgiveness. We understand that forgiveness is singular by nature and that it often involves a long, internal process.

### ***Awareness of the parties to a conflict has raised and the fear of otherness has reduced***

We reduce the fear of otherness among the parties to a conflict by strengthening dialogue and cooperation between them. Church Cooperation strengthens community and joint setting of goals by different groups. Together with our partners, we create networks and opportunities for dialogue between the parties to a conflict and between religious and social groups in society. We work for a just peace with all partners and parties who bring added value to the process.

Our dialogue work focuses on enabling discourse between different religious groups, and between leaders and representatives of civil society. In our work we also have a special interest in building dialogue between young people. We support the work of local peacebuilders and grassroots dialogue.

### ***We facilitate opportunities to end the cycle of conflict***

We strengthen the capacity for peace work of our partners and the non-violent conflict resolution skills of the parties to the conflict. We emphasise peace education with children and

youth as the key target group. Peace education and reducing the fear of otherness are particularly important in overall Church Cooperation work with and among children and young people. Peace education provides tools for non-violent conflict resolution and for assessing the violence in the surrounding reality. It helps children and young people to understand the conflict and its causes in their community. We contribute to reinforcing non-violent behaviour also through Christian education.

The peace-building efforts of Felm's Church Cooperation focus on conflict prevention, the protection of discriminated groups and on strengthening their participation in building the peace. Development and safety sustain one another. Reinforcing and defending human rights in conflict areas is a key part of our peace building. In particular, we highlight the importance of education and safety for the vulnerable women and children of marginalised groups. We also strengthen social adaptation.

We organise activities which bring children and young people from different backgrounds together. Such activities include music, dance, art, sports or other hobby or leisure pursuits that interest young people. We also support peer discussion groups that increase dialogue and understanding between young people. The aim of our activities is not to accept existing structures which twist or violate people's rights. Instead, we aim to help individuals discover new ways of understanding of other people and strengthening mutual respect. We provide awareness raising activities for schools to reduce a sense of otherness. These activities aim at increasing awareness of different groups of people and religions among children and young people.



We bring hope to people who do not get help from anywhere else. We cross geographical, cultural and religious boundaries. We work bravely in society around us. Our outreach diakonia work goes out to places where discrimination takes place and where individual is too weak to seek help themselves. Picture: Bolivia/Ari Vitikainen



Different forms of media serve as an important channel for peace building. Through media, we can reach millions of people. Felm supports media work to increase awareness of different groups of people and religions, to overcome people's sense of otherness, and help them to understand that the human rights are common to all people. Through the media, we also strive to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, and the freedom of speech in any given country.

We also strengthen our own and our partner's local role as experts on human rights. We cultivate a strong presence in local networks, building our own and our partner's capacity and influence, and the impact of our cooperation. We support realisation of human rights during a conflict, activities that strengthen the acceptance of human rights and advocacy work in line with this aim. Our media work contributes to the awareness of human rights.

Refugee flows and migration caused by conflicts are a growing phenomenon globally. Church Cooperation responds to this challenge by taking preventive action by, for example, working for social justice and respect for human rights. During conflicts, we also provide training and offer psychological support. In our post-conflict cooperation, we strive for reducing the fear of otherness, and for providing psychological support.

We work with children and young people to prevent conflict by strengthening their opportunities in life and their awareness of human rights. Through this, we aim at stopping young people drifting into violence or becoming vulnerable to recruitment by extremist movements. In particular, we work to strengthen the legal rights of children, their right to live with integrity, and their right to education and livelihood. Our child protection work in conflict areas is strongly rights-based.

In our peace-building efforts we strengthen the realisation of the human rights of the people who live in a conflict zone. We target at the root causes of conflict, i.e. the factors which have caused the conflict, increase the risk for conflict in a given situation, or are obstructing the possibility of peace and reconciliation. The root causes of conflict can include violations of human rights, hatred, bitterness, hopelessness, unemployment, injustice, discrimination, inequality, exploitation, abuse and non-involvement in society.

Our cooperation in support of human rights concentrates on strengthening the rights of children, women and various minority groups, and on guaranteeing those rights during a conflict. We focus on legal support, protection, monitoring and reporting on human rights, awareness raising and advocacy. Through our partners, we are involved in advocacy from the local to the international level.

Part of our advocacy work entails building dialogue between the different actors in society. We aim to provide a neutral environment for these discussions and an opportunity for the different parties to meet. The firm resolve of the actors may induce change on a wider scale in society and in its structures.

Felm contributes to deepening theological understanding of peace in cooperating with our partners, through media and in our own operations. We foster a common will for peace among the parties of conflict through Christian education and theological understanding of peace. We support spiritual capability of the people to process their feelings, and eventually



Millions of children live in the worst hit conflict areas of the world. Conflict tramples the smallest ones and their rights to safety, physical integrity, education and happiness. Our work aims to ensure that these rights were observed. Picture: Middle East /SAT 7

to find inner peace, reconciliation and forgiveness. We help churches and congregations to develop their activities which encourage the congregants to shoulder more responsibility for their community and act as channels in building peace in community and society at large. Theological insights can enable members of congregations to reach the Christian ideal of love for their neighbour and a desire for peace.

### ***Healing of the parties to a conflict***

Psychosocial support strengthens the ability of individuals and groups to move on and lead their lives as fully functional people during and after a conflict. Strengthening people's mental structures contributes to the emotional healing of the community and to a safe processing of what has happened.

We engage in both community-based and individual mental support. We also build the capacity of the churches to provide psychosocial support. During this programme period, we focus on developing the quality and thematic contents of this work. We plan programme content to be broadcast through traditional and digital media. The programmes aim at improving the ability of teachers and parents to provide support for traumatised children, to identify their own symptoms of trauma, and to increase understanding of the impact of

psychological processes. The programmes also strengthen the psychological capacity of marginalised and vulnerable groups to function in difficult and oppressive situations. In the projects which offer psychological support, we select methods that take into account both the context and the special needs of each of our target groups.

Psychosocial support extends to projects under several Themes of Hope and goals of international cooperation, but it is also a key part of Felm's peace and reconciliation. In cases of severe trauma, we cooperate with local professionals. We assess the risks of our activities with a view to different individuals' readiness to handle mentally difficult situations and questions. We assess and select the activities carefully to match the mental and emotional capacity of the target group.

### Basic Assumptions

- Community-based operations build connections that help reduce otherness between the parties to a conflict.
- Core message of Christianity is a strong motivation for the churches to do peace-building work.
- Peace education lays foundations for non-violent problem solving.
- Neutrality and sound background analyses provide for an open ground for key representatives of many groups to attend training and participate in activities.
- The themes and outcomes of the events are chosen for their importance to all parties to a conflict.
- Conflict sensitivity and the capacity to apply it in programme planning strengthen stability in an area and reduce the risk of conflict between the various groups and actors.
- Churches identify their role as mediators of peace and reconciliation.
- Strengthening human rights contributes to peace and to stopping the cycle of conflict.
- Christian education can deepen theological understanding of peace work and forgiveness.
- Psychosocial support enables healing of the conflict victims and makes it possible to break the cycle of conflict and build an unbroken society.
- Education and training strengthens the quality of peace-building operations and the ability of the peacebuilders to engage women in their activities.





Identifying and tracking risks are an important part of the quality project implementation.  
Picture: Juri Veikkola

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# Dimensions and Delineations of Church Cooperation

# Dimensions and Delineations of Church Cooperation

Expertise, networking and prioritising are prerequisites for inducing change which conforms with the goals of Felm's International Cooperation. If the scope of activities does not tally with resources, we reach weak results. Therefore, the Church Cooperation Programme draws the outlines of the Programme: The programme concentrates on selected groups of people. It is limited to specific geographic areas, applies a restricted set of methods, and is implemented with selected partners. These delineations are based on Felm's strategy-level analyses and choices.

Felm's added value arises from theological capacity, expertise on international cooperation, holistic understanding of the Church's mission, and long-term partnerships.

## 7.1 Countries of Operation

We implement the Church Cooperation Programme mainly in countries where the percentage of Christians amounts to less than 50% of the total population. In addition, we focus our work on areas where there is a significant number of discriminated people groups who are not receiving help through other channels. Felm's work has an added value in countries where there are few foreign organisations and the local church has insufficient resources to build self-reliance.

We support Church Cooperation in countries where the political situation or legislation allow Felm to cooperate with a local partner. We carry out a continuous background analysis of the operational environment in the countries we operate. We monitor the challenges which arise from the analysis and assess the risks of our operations. We implement projects in a country if the operational environment is sufficiently stable and the risk management reaches an adequate level. Felm does not send employees to war zones.

We can expand our work into new areas if the prerequisites exist for a sustainable and sufficiently large-scale cooperation. Correspondingly, for areas where the volume of resources is at present very limited, the options are either phasing out or increasing resources significantly. Regional choices are based on strategic factors and background analyses.

The choices of countries for Church Cooperation follow Felm's Church Cooperation Country Criteria (see Appendix 4). In some cases, the wider Church context and church relations must also be taken into account in the choice of a country. The Country Criteria only apply to countries where we already have or wish to set up cooperation on a bilateral partnership agreement. Criteria do not concern joint projects that are realised through global networks.

During the Programme period, we initiate bilateral Church Cooperation between Felm and a local partner in 2–4 new countries. The decision to expand Church Cooperation is well motivated, particularly if Felm already implements projects in the area through another

Programme of International Cooperation. If the capacity of the partner is relatively low, or the partner is new, the size of a project may be small in the early stages of cooperation. The volume of the project and the scope of cooperation should expand in proportion to the increase in the partner's capacity or to the achieved results.

The geographic focus of our work continues to move from Africa to Asia. This is a developmental direction that was begun during the previous strategy period.

During this programme and strategy period, the focus countries of Felm's Church Cooperation are:

■ Angola	■ Nepal
■ Cambodia	■ Pakistan
■ China	■ Palestine
■ Israel	■ Thailand
■ Myanmar	

The Programme foci are shown in particular in the distribution of resources. There is a relative increase of resources for our focus countries, which means that the budget for the region is greater than previously or there is a change in regional priorities.

In the new strategy period Church Cooperation continues at its present volume in: Bolivia, Botswana, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Senegal, Tanzania and Venezuela.

Phasing out plans are drawn up for: Hong Kong, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Taiwan and Russia.

Church Cooperation project cooperation ends in the 2017–2022 programme period in: France, Singapore and Estonia.

## 7.2 Resources

The average annual budget of Felm's Church Cooperation is about EUR 9 million. About half of that sum covers project costs and the other half covers staff costs. Staff costs are comprised of the salaries and employer's health insurance contributions for some 100 experts in International Cooperation overseas or at the Felm office in Helsinki. The aim is to keep the Church Cooperation budget at its current level throughout the programme period.

The allocation of resources for Felm's Church Cooperation is one of the key areas of global programme management. By *resources* we mean all the resources allocated for Church Cooperation, such as financial support for projects, recruitment of experts, and other input to thematic development of the cooperation.

The global budget planning is an instrument for directing resources to content-specific and geographic focus areas of the Programme.

The twelve goals of Felm's International Cooperation (IC-1-12) are not necessarily implemented in every region or country of operation. The priorities of project cooperation in each



region are set to meet the needs of the local partner and the operational environment. The target groups for each region are selected on the basis of the background analysis. Consequently, the set of goals for each region varies according to the regional priorities. In addition to background analyses of the operational environment, project monitoring and evaluations are used as continuous tools for the allocation of resources in the programme period.

The Church Cooperation Programme 2017-2022 focuses on four goals of the International Cooperation (see Chapter 2). As mentioned above, the focus areas are reflected in the allocation of resources.

In this programme period, we increase the resources for sharing the Good News (IC-1). IC-1 includes theological education with growing support. Resources for the activities to build congregation's openness (IC-2) is reduced during the Programme period. This is due to visible development of our partners' capacity in diakonia and in the strengthening of spirituality in the past. There is also a shift in the allocation of resources from traditional congregational activities to activities which specifically contribute to an attitudinal change and builds an open church community, or to activities which strengthen a church's financial self-reliance.

Diakonia projects are contained in goals IC-3-7 in the International Cooperation. All these goals strengthen the human dignity and human rights of different groups. During the programme period, work with women and girls (IC-3), with minorities (IC-5) and among those who have been subject to exploitation and abuse (IC-6) stays at current levels. Within the target group of the goal IC-6, we place more focus on elderly people who are neglected.

In Church Cooperation, we diminish our work with people with disabilities (IC-4) globally, while there is more emphasis on empowering children among the entire group of people with disabilities. This reduction has no substantial effect on this work in International Cooperation as a whole, since Felm's Development Cooperation Programme retains a strong emphasis on helping people with disabilities. This programme period Church Cooperation focuses on children and young people (IC-7), and hence this goal receives additional resources.

During the programme period, we also strengthen advocacy (IC-8 and IC-9) which is integrated in projects under different goals of International Cooperation. This means that we add to an existing project an advocative component to strengthen the rights of the target group in society. Projects with children are already one of our key areas of integrated advocacy. In the new programme period, we increase expert input, and methodical and systematic planning. Advocacy becomes part of an increasing number of projects.

A special focus area in Church Cooperation is strengthening the expertise and good governance of our partners (IC-10). There is no change in the allocation of resources to this goal since the previous strategic period, but the emphasis of the activities inside this goal shifts to leadership and thematic training. On the contrary, the amount of scholarship support decreases.

Goals that contribute to peace and reconciliation (IC11-12) receive additional resources in the 2017–2022 programme period.

Geographically, the allocation of resources within the Church Cooperation Programme remains flexible, so that we can react to sudden changes in the operational environment without difficulty.

### The distribution of resources for International Cooperation within the Felm Programme for Church Cooperation

(The figures are based on the budget figures that Felm's electronic system has produced for the year 2017. This table focuses only on the percentage distribution between IC-1 through IC-12. In addition to this, administration costs are on average 13% of total costs, which is reflected in the full budget figures.)

Goal for International Cooperation (IC)	Percentage (%) of resources for all Church Cooperation in 2017	Targeted percentage (%) of resources for all Church Cooperation in 2022
<b>IC-1</b> Those who have not yet heard the Gospel have been touched by God's all-encompassing love.	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>IC-2</b> Congregations serve as an open community and cross all boundaries as part of the global church.	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IC-3</b> Women and girls facing gender discrimination identify and grasp new opportunities.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IC-4</b> Persons with disabilities become self-reliant and live in a more accessible environment as part of society	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IC-5</b> Minorities live in accordance with their cultural identity and lifestyle in interaction with and as part of society.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IC-6</b> The exploited recover and are empowered to make decisions about their own lives as part of society.	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>UT-7</b> Children and youth at risk of marginalization learn life skills needed for a responsible adulthood.	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>IC-8</b> Political and financial duty-bearers become aware of the shortfalls in the realization of human rights and take action as change agents.	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>IC-9</b> Leaders of civil society actively advocate for the rights of the discriminated.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IC-10</b> Partner churches and organisations operate professionally and in accordance with good governance.	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>IC-11</b> Conflict parties trust each other and work together for joint solutions.	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IC-12</b> Peace builders ensure the participation of key stakeholders, especially that of women, to conflict resolution.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

## Human resources

Human resources are to remain at the current level throughout the programme period. The number of administrative experts are to increase in number and take a priority when vacancies are opened to recruitment. In addition to administration, we increase the number of other expert positions which are essential to promoting the goals of Felm's International Cooperation.

In the allocation and recruitment of human resources we emphasise that there is a genuine need for the position. The new recruitment must fill a gap of expertise in the thematic capacity of our partners. The need for capacity building must be defined in the project plan. We and the partner assess together what is the best way of building the partner's capacity: employing an expert from overseas to work for the partner, recruiting a local expert, sending a volunteer from overseas, organising training, or providing a scholarship for a student who will subsequently work for the partner.

We open new positions foremost in countries on focus. For well-grounded reasons, however, we may recruit new staff in countries where the cooperation is ongoing or for partners who have a phasing out plan in progress. There is more flexibility for Felm's experts to use their expertise in different areas of the country they are assigned to, across the regions, or even in the course of one overseas assignment.

## 7.3 Funding Sources

The largest part of funding for Felm's Church Cooperation comes from parishes and member organisations in Finland. Child Sponsorship agreements by private citizens are a significant source of support for our work with children. Testamentary or birthday donations are also an important source of funding for specific regions and project contents.

Felm organises annual fundraising campaigns for different themes, such as the Christmas Carols Collection. Through Children's Bank donations we finance projects and training that support the well-being, safety and protection of children. We also explore new innovative sources of income during the programme period.





People with disabilities and their families still face discrimination in the society. Disability of a child may be a reason for shame and the child hidden behind locked doors. We work to improve the situation of the people with disabilities through community based empowering project in Dessie and Kombolcha, Ethiopia. Project Coordinator Anteneh Birhanu is responsible of planning and implementation of the project. Picture: Ethiopia/Juri Veikkola

## 8

# Monitoring and Evaluation

# Monitoring and Evaluation

The planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Felm's Church Cooperation Programme are all built on results-based management. The focus areas and content of the Programme define what we do, who we do it with, where we do it, with which volume and how we do it, and who benefits from our activities. The Programme defines the contents of our cooperation and our activities. In projects to be implemented, we assess how well the project corresponds to the goals of the Programme and to the regional plan that is set to realise those goals. In accordance with the priorities of the content of the Programme, we exclude from our cooperations any themes, countries and partners that are not in line with the Programme.

## 8.1 From Results-Based Project Planning Towards the Results of the Programme

While planning our work, we rely on the analysis of the operating environment as well as other background data to determine how to best implement our activities. This is one characteristic of results-based management.

As a starting point of this programme planning we have carried out country-specific background analyses in each Felm region. The analyses focus on the development in the country of operation with a view to human rights of various people groups, to the principles of good governance and the Rule of Law. The analyses also depict future tendencies regarding the political, religious and social development in different countries.

The results of the analyses are used to formulate regional plans which define the priorities for Felm's International Cooperation in each region. Goals and priorities for regional church cooperation need to be in line with the foci of the Church Cooperation Programme in general. They also need to respond to the specific needs of the region. We monitor the challenges raised by the analyses and how we respond to these challenges in annual regional reports.

The process which precedes the inclusion of an individual project as part of the Church Cooperation Programme follows the recommendations of the Felm Church Cooperation project manual. Firstly, the project idea (concept note) is assessed in the Church Cooperation Unit in Helsinki. As a general guideline, the project idea must be in line with the Church Cooperation programme foci and regional priorities. There also need to be sufficient financial resources for the project implementation on the Programme level. If necessary, further information or clarifications of the project idea may be requested before the approval. If all the requirements are met and the project idea is approved, the local partner draws up a project plan independently or with the assistance of Felm's Regional Church Cooperation Manager. Not all project ideas are granted approval.

Project planning follows the Church Cooperation Programme and the Project Manual guidelines. As mentioned above, systematic background analyses precede the actual planning. These include risk analyses, do-no-harm analyses, conflict analyses, interest group and



gender impact analyses, and other analyses that are relevant to the content and context of a project. Project plans are discussed in the Church Cooperation Unit, and approved by the Director of Church Cooperation. A specific Terms of Funding is drawn up for each project in accordance with the Church Cooperation manual.

The approval process follows a different path when cooperation is started with a new partner or in a new country of operation. The approval of a new partnership proceeds from the affirmative of the regional team and of the Church Cooperation Unit in Helsinki to the Felm Leadership Team who makes the final decision. The selection process involves careful study and discussion on how the new opening fulfils the partnership and country criteria of Felm's Church Cooperation Programme. A new partner also needs to demonstrate a willingness to implement Felm's cross-cutting themes in their work or preparedness to strengthen the themes in the future.

All projects of Felm's International Cooperation must adopt the results-based management approach. This model defines the impact, outcome, output, activities and inputs of the project. At the Programme level, the hierarchy of results follows the same results-based structure:

<b>PROJECT Hierarchy of Results</b>		<b>CHURCH COOPERATION PROGRAMME Hierarchy of Results (see also Appendix 8)</b>
Long-term change in the operational environment	Impact	1–4 Themes of Hope
Intended results to be achieved by the end of the project period	Outcome	Programme Outcomes for Felm's International Cooperation 1–12
Immediate results of the project's activities	Outputs	Programme Outputs of International Cooperation
Various activities within the project	Activities	Activities which map into the Programme Outputs
Financial resources, staff, project premises.	Inputs	Global Church Cooperation Budget Staff Felm Volunteer Programme Employee Exchange Programme Investments and premises

Outputs in a project plan correspond with programme outputs in Felm's Programme-level results monitoring system. Programme outputs are Felm's internal tools for monitoring the programme level results. Programme outputs serve as headings to group project activities according to the similarity of content and intended result. The range of activities which may be included into each programme output follow the joint definitions of the Felm's International Cooperation

Each programme output is linked on the basis of its overall content of activities with one IC programme outcome (goal of International Cooperation). The choice of the IC programme outcome depends also on which group of marginalised people the project beneficiaries belong to. Usually, a project entails several programme outputs, which means that a single project can simultaneously promote several programme outcomes for Felm's International Cooperation (see Appendix 7).





Regional Director Päivi Anttila and Church Cooperation Manager Juri Veikkola having a cup of coffee in a cafe run by the students of Hosaina School for the Deaf. Planning of the content and taking charge of the management of the Church Cooperation are a joint venture of Felm's Head Office in Helsinki and employees of the regional administration. Picture: Ethiopia/ Juri Veikkola

The codes for programme outputs and for IC programme outcomes have been planned to serve as Felm's internal monitoring tools. Partners are not expected to apply Felm's coding for their operations but are free to use different systems and categorisations of their operations. Partners are required to submit a project plan which is drafted according to the principles of the RBM, while Felm staff will make the necessary adjustments for the monitoring of Felm programme output and programme outcome level results.

Felm's annual budget is divided into headings according to the programme outputs of each project. The same headings are used in budget monitoring and in transfer of payments. When Felm describes the project content for its own annual plans and reports, the project descriptions are also structured on the basis of the programme outputs and their respective project content.

On the organisational level, the budgeting and project descriptions constitute the major elements of Felm's annual operational and financial planning process. In the budget planning and monitoring Felm applies a financial planning computer application, while project descriptions are inserted into a separate project management platform. The two applications are interconnected. The outcomes of a project stay unchanged throughout the project period, unless there are well-grounded reasons to change the activities of the project. The annual operational and financial plan, including church cooperation budget and projects, is granted the final approval by the Felm Board towards the end of each year.

## 8.2 From Results to Monitoring Data

Every programme outcome for Felm's International Cooperation has a pre-defined set of indicators. The most suitable indicators are chosen for each project. Some of the indicators are cumulative by nature. The indicator may show the qualitative or quantitative progress of a project. The indicator illustrates that the selected activities contribute to reaching the intended outcome of the project on the programme level (IC programme outcome). An indicator is a tool to answer the question, 'How can we know whether our goals are reached or not?'

Individual projects become part of Felm's holistic international cooperation through regional plans. A regional plan records every project in the region together with the overall strategic goals and indicators of the region. An annual plan, which is drawn out of the regional plan each year, is monitored through regional annual reports at the end of each year and through continuous monitoring throughout the year.

The Church Cooperation Programme targets all the twelve programme outcomes for Felm's International Cooperation (see Appendix 6). The results of our activities are monitored on the project level, regional level and programme level. The departmental and strategic monitoring of results is done through the programme outcomes for International Cooperation.

Information about the progress of a project is gathered throughout the implementation and monitoring processes. Each of the Church Cooperation Programme indicators selected for a project provides specific data about how the project contributes to reaching programme-level goals. Depending on which indicator is used, the outcome data is collected either annually or in the interim and final reviews of a project or programme. Data sources and verification methods (see Appendix 1) are indicator-specific. In addition to monitoring at the programme level, projects are also monitored at the project level to keep track of progress in the light of project-specific plans and indicators. Continuous, quality monitoring is a key element in reporting reliable results and implementing quality projects.

Principles used in gathering data through indicators are typical of academic research. Firstly, the results must be reliable. To ensure this, particular attention is paid to the reliability of the sources of information. Secondly, results must be verifiable in more than one way, and they must be repeatable to ensure that the compiled data corresponds to reality as closely as possible. Thirdly, information that rests on only one source can lead to erroneous conclusions of the project progress. This is why monitoring, among other steps of PME, must always take into account beneficiaries' first-hand experience of the project outcome. Monitoring is also important because it gives beneficiaries, particularly those in discriminated people groups, a voice in matters that concern them. Result data contributes to increasing relevance of our activities.

The progress of reaching the project outcome is also monitored through regular monitoring trips and partnership discussions. Felm's partners shoulder the main responsibility for monitoring and implementation on the project level. The Church Cooperation Manager in Helsinki provides expertise for regional staff and partners in terms of project content, planning, monitoring and evaluation. In some projects, overseas staff serve as advisors of the project management and implementation, which strengthens the project monitoring.

The Church Cooperation Manager at Felm's headquarters provides guidance to make sure that the projects in the regions adhere to the Church Cooperation Programme and their

planning follows Felm guidelines. The Manager also helps to make sure that the quality of each project corresponds to the recommendations of the Church Cooperation Project Manual. The partner reports on the project and its outcomes in accordance with the manual 1–4 times a year. All specific forms to be used in planning and reporting are available as appendices of the manual. The semi-annual report forms contain both a narrative and a financial section.

A partner's project report is checked by Felm staff in charge of project management in the region and by their counterparts in Felm Head Office. They verify that the project activities are implemented as agreed in the project plan. In addition, the report check needs to confirm that the funds have been used as presented in the project plan. Furthermore, Felm staff doublecheck that the narrative and financial reports share the same content. If the information in the report is not consistent, the report content is checked separately with the partner. If necessary, we request an extra audit or other type of assessment of the project. The projects need to meet the Financial and Administrative Policy of Felm.

Monitoring data is entered annually into Felm's project management system. Every year, data is collated in the system for programme and strategic development. The retrieved data is also used for Felm's donor and cooperation reports.

Result Data are used in reports, events and publications for the general public, such as:

- |                             |                                       |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Annual Report             | ■ Speeches and other comments         |
| ■ Performance Report        | ■ Visits to different Interest Groups |
| ■ Child Sponsorship Reports | ■ Articles and News                   |
| ■ Parish Reports            | ■ Regional Annual Reports             |
| ■ Parish Visits             | ■ Background Analyses                 |

Most of the indicators of the Church Cooperation Programme provide result data on an annual basis. Each region also monitors regional indicators. The annual result data serves Felm's communication and fundraising needs. We can use the data to tell parishes, private donors and other funding parties what we have achieved with the funds they provided for us. Result data also reveals if we have succeeded in reaching our goals, i.e. the positive change which is defined in Felm's strategy.

We monitor the results through the reports from all our international partners. We also gather information through various enquiries, interviews and other methods of analysis. We apply Felm's electronic project management system for the management of Church Cooperation Programme's result data, for the collation of data from different sources of information, and for reporting purposes. The electronic monitoring system makes it possible to extract result data from the programme output level, from different regions, different groups of beneficiaries, from IC programme outcomes and Themes of Hope. The result data forms a results chain which can be followed from the programme output level to the topmost levels of the programme and strategy.



The project management system retrieves and collates information from different reports of Felm's International Cooperation. This electronic platform is used for processing and reporting the data from Regional Annual Reports, and from internal audits and financial inspections. The electronic data can be used to assess the sustainability of a project, and it may entail information which is relevant to the capacity building of a partner. The financial system is used to monitor the budget versus actual variance on the programme and project levels as well as the payments of project funds.

Felm's Church Cooperation Unit reports to its domestic parish partners and individual donors on its results through Cooperation Reports, Child Sponsorship Newsletters and Felm's Annual Report, which is directed to the general public and our supporters as well as the Felm Board. The Cooperation Reports and Child Sponsorship Newsletters are based on the semi-annual and annual reports from our partners. The Cooperation Reports may also include personal experiences of Felm's employees. Felm Annual Report which is presented in Felm Annual General Meeting, is also an appendix of the audit report. It is based on Regional Annual Reports as well as monitoring data from the previous year. Felm annual result review collects performance data from the partners' annual reports and project monitoring.

## 8.3 Evaluation

Regular evaluations by an outside expert guide our work. On the project level, the outcomes of our Church Cooperation efforts are assessed every year. However, the results of our work can often be observed over a time span of several years. It is also worth noting that change is often slow in challenging operational environments.

The intended outcomes and the length of a project are often set at around three years. Each project is usually evaluated at the end of the project period. Depending on the volume of the project and the specific needs, the evaluation can be done either as an internal or an external assessment. In addition to project-specific evaluation, Church Cooperation carries out thematic evaluations once a year during this programme period. These thematic evaluations also make use of the project-level evaluations. Each evaluation entails an implementation plan which is a joint agreement between Felm and the partner to revise the project plan following the recommendations of the evaluation. The first thematic programme evaluation of the 2017–2022 concerns Felm's Child Sponsorship Programme.

The purpose of thematic evaluations is to gather information about the implementation of the Programme's themes, particularly in relation to quality, sustainability, efficiency and added value. The information is used to develop the work further and for direction. The evaluations on the programme level serve Felm's internal programme development purposes.

During the Programme period, we carry out evaluations, and governance and capacity analyses on the capacity of Felm's partners. These assessments provide information about our partners' needs for capacity building and what added value Felm can bring to the relationship. The data is used to plan future cooperation and to specify the contents of that cooperation. Through evaluations of our partner's capacity, we can also determine if it is possible to redirect the focus of our cooperation or to decide if the partner has reached a sufficient capacity to

operate independently. The evaluations may also result into updating the goals of the cooperation in the partnership agreement.

Church Cooperation Programme is evaluated in the middle and at the end of the programme period by an external evaluator. The interim evaluation for this 2017–2022 Programme period takes place at the end of 2019, while the final evaluation is scheduled at the end of 2022. The evaluations focus on mapping the outcomes of the Programme as well as the sustainability, quality, efficiency and added value of those outcomes. The findings of the interim evaluation are used to review or redirect the Programme activities and resources if needed. The results of the evaluations are reported and published for our supporters and partners.

## 8.4 Baseline Data for the Programme

To have the maximum use of the interim and final evaluations of the Church Cooperation Programme, the necessary *baseline* data is gathered at the beginning of the Programme period. Creating a baseline means providing a comprehensive mapping of the current situation for the indicators used in the Programme. The baseline information provides as accurate a description as possible of the situation among beneficiaries and churches, communities and society at the beginning of the Programme period. This information is used for comparison in both the interim and final evaluations. Based on this comparison, it is possible to determine the indicator-specific outcomes of the Programme. As our baseline information, we will use the result data for the first year of the Programme period, that is the data for 2017.

## 8.5 Risks

We operate in some of the world's most challenging environments: places where internal conflict is rife; where the natural conditions are difficult; where there are changes in civil society and in the political scene; where there is corruption and economic tension. Even if we plan carefully our own operations and the projects we implement with our partners, it is always possible that external and internal risks endanger our work. Therefore, monitoring and pre-emptive risk management are an important part of our work.

At the programme level, we have charted the key risks of each IC programme outcome as they seem in Church Cooperation. We assess annually how the risks develop in each region and enter the relevant information in the project management system. We have also planned measures to prevent risks (see Appendix 2). We monitor the outcome of these measures every year. In addition, we also track risks at the project level and at the level of all Felm's International Cooperation.

Church Cooperation coworkers in different regions and in Helsinki have participated in the assessment of programme-level risks. We chose to monitor the risks which received the highest numeric value in global risk assessment. The risks were graded on the basis of likelihood of occurrence and on their impact on the implementation of projects and on partners' viability. Our risk management also includes keeping track of basic assumptions and their validity with a view to reaching intended IC programme outcomes. If necessary, risk mitigation measures and basic assumptions can be adjusted after the interim evaluation.



"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:21)

Picture: Ethiopia/Juri Veikkola

# 9

## Communication Plan



# Communication Plan

## 9.1 Focus Areas for Communication in the Church Cooperation Programme

Focus areas of communication:

- Children and Young People at Risk of Marginalisation
- Sharing the Good News
- Open Church.

The focus areas for communication in the Church Cooperation programme rise from the most important, current themes in the programme. One important theme and focus groups are the children and young people at risk of marginalisation. Through the accounts of children and youth, we want to illustrate how Felm's holistic approach impacts the lives of these people. Sharing the Good News is a core activity of Felm's Church Cooperation. By sharing



The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation was celebrated in Windhoek, Namibia in May 2017.  
Picture: Namibia/Pirre Saario



Strengthening women's leadership is one of the Church Cooperation Programme's subgoals.  
Picture: Namibia/Pirre Saario

aspects of this part of our work, we join in the current debate on what mission work is all about. The communication on the theme of an Open Church takes in a debate about the Church's active role in society as a defender of the human rights of the discriminated people groups. Gradually, the openness of a congregation towards the marginalised may grow into wider advocative role of the church in society: Church takes an active stand to change discriminative structures and opens discussion about the similarities and differences in understanding the concepts of human rights and human dignity.

Church Cooperation Programme Communications is implemented in cooperation with the Communications and Fundraising Department.

## 9.2 Aims of Programme Communications

The Communications Plan of Felm's Church Cooperation aims to ensure that Church Cooperation and its principles are known within Felm itself and among our partners in Finland and overseas. It also contributes to illustrating the expert role of Felm's Church Cooperation in its field. Annually, we arrange 1–5 public debates about selected thematic foci with Finnish and international experts as guests. These events contribute to awareness raising and to building networks of experts in Finland and in Felm's different regions.

We present our expertise by communicating with and reporting to our supporters about the concrete results of our work and about its sustainable and high-quality implementation. We share stories of people who have found new hope and new opportunities through our work. We communicate about the sustainable change that our work has brought about. Through our communications, we also aim to make our work better known.

Since we strive for bringing current issues of our Programme to the wider public, we focus also on expanding the coverage of our communication. We utilise e-communications and social media applications to support our communications work. In each region, there is a full-time communications officer or a member of staff is in charge of communications along with other job responsibilities.

Through professional communications we strengthen our professional profile. We produce articles to lift the voices of the discriminated people groups overseas and to bring social disparities into open discussion in Finnish media. This is part of our awareness-raising work in Finland.

We produce a summary of the Church Cooperation Programme which illustrates the dimensions of the programme and its role as a technical handbook. The summary is intended for various interest groups, parishioners and any other groups who are interested in what we do. In addition to Felm's own employees, the full version of the Programme serves those who make decisions in parishes or other financing parties and require detailed information about the principles and implementation of our work.

## 9.3 Target Groups of Programme Communications

The communications target groups of Felm's Church Cooperation Programme are parishes and their Mission secretaries and committees. Felm arranges various events for parishes and congregations in connection with the Programme. Felm also keeps individual supporters of the Programme informed, mainly through our newsletters.

We communicate about the Programme to our overseas partners and interest groups in partnership meetings in different regions. These meetings make it possible to discuss the focus areas and themes of the Programme. We also produce communications materials for the events.

In addition to communicating to external parties, Church Cooperation Unit also communicates to its own staff about the Programme. In 2017, we organise 3–5 internal events about the Programme.





Churches participate actively in strengthening the local communities. Rural churches of Cambodia teach local people health education, sustainable agriculture, use of computers, English and practical awareness raising themes. Picture: Cambodia/Ari Vitikainen

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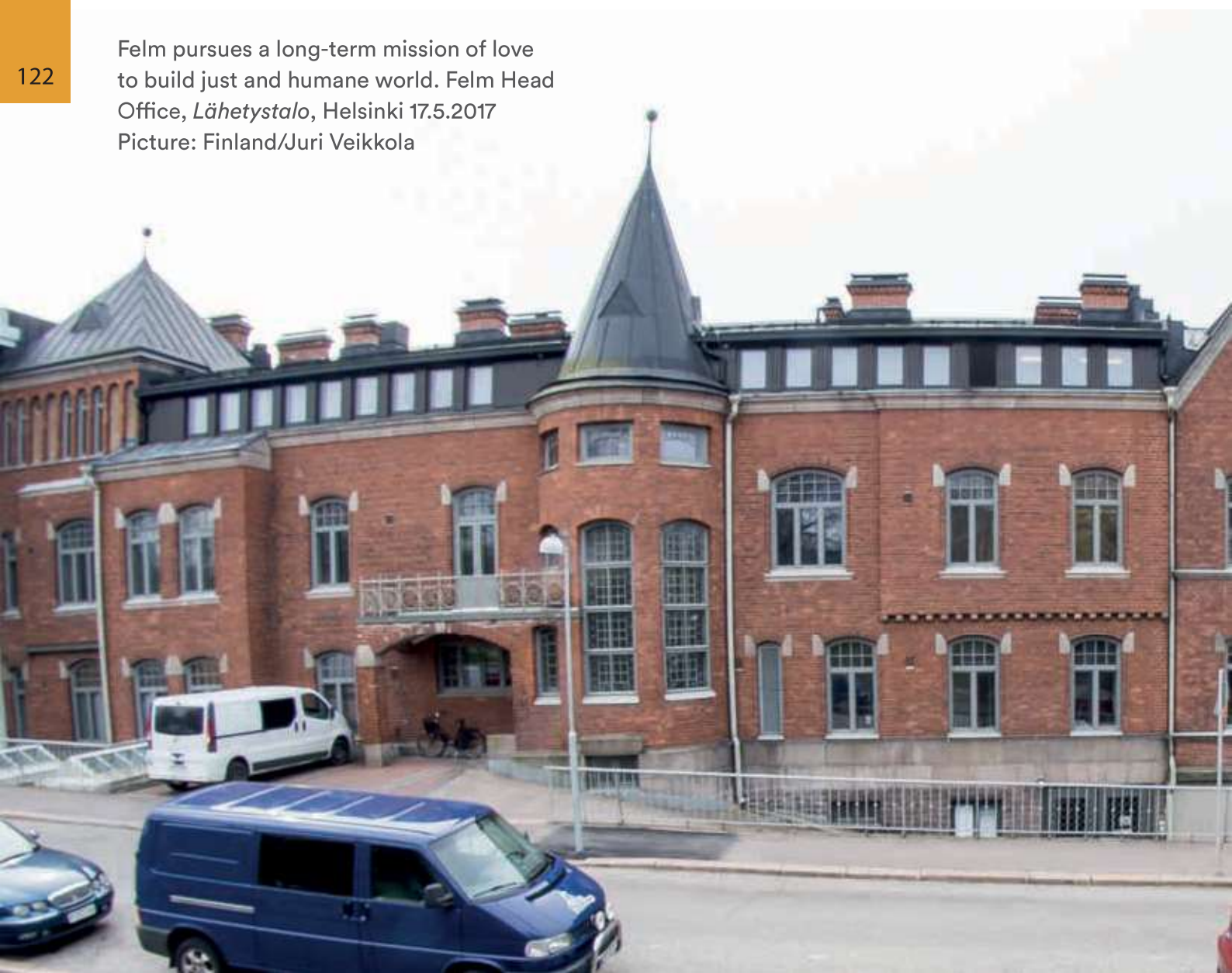
# Implementation of the Programme

# Implementation of the Programme

Felm's Church Cooperation Programme 2017–2022 is a document that guides all Church Cooperation. During the Programme period, we evaluate current and new partnerships according to our partnership criteria. Our countries of operation and any new countries are also selected according to our country criteria. The Programme guides the annual allocation of budget funds and resources. We direct our current efforts and start new activities according to the focus areas in the content of the Programme.

The Programme applies to all partners who implement Church Cooperation projects in all the countries of operation. As to the contents of the Programme, we arrange seminars and briefings for Felm employees, interest groups, supporters and regional partners. Deployment of the Programme with our partners is done either at partnership events, at individual partnership meetings or as part of the project planning process. We will also organise training for employees on various themes of the Programme. Through these measures we verify that all the planning and management tools come to use, and the information about the programme foci applies in regional and project activities. We also update Felm's Church Cooperation Project Manual as part of the implementation of the Programme.

Felm pursues a long-term mission of love to build just and humane world. Felm Head Office, *Lähetystalo*, Helsinki 17.5.2017  
Picture: Finland/Juri Veikkola





# Appendices

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