

The Ethical Principles of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission in its work overseas

Preamble

We commit to working ethically and professionally according to the principles and values which the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, the Lutheran World Federation, ACT International, ACT Development and the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs have expressed in their strategies, guiding principles and implementation guidelines.

We treat all persons with respect and emphasize the uniqueness of each person in the eyes of God. As a Christian faith based actor and a Church related organisation we recognize that we are ultimately accountable to God for our actions, and also to our partners, to those we seek to serve and to those who support us.

Protecting human dignity

We defend the human dignity and human rights of every person, and respect each person's cultural and religious identity.

We do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of religion, political or ideological beliefs, ethnic background, sex or age.

Religion, or converting to another religion, is never a condition for receiving of aid or participation in development work. In accordance with the principles of biblical love for one's neighbour, no conditions for the giving or receiving of assistance can be applied.

In our planning and implementation we listen to the perspectives of those whose lives are affected by poverty, exclusion or injustice.

Our work addresses the root causes of poverty, injustice and exclusion. We aim to transform structures which exclude people and to support them as they claim their human rights and work to improve their situation

We pay special attention to those who are discriminated against by communities and society at large. We work to ensure their full and equal participation in plans and decision making which affect their lives.

We commit to protecting children and other vulnerable groups from abuse and misconduct.

Collaboration, partnership and dialogue

We work with communities using a rights based approach, taking the needs expressed by the communities themselves as our starting point.

We acknowledge that all religions and cultures contain elements which support positive development, and on which collaboration can be built.

We work in the spirit of partnership, promoting dialogue and peace between religions and ideologies.

We emphasise that the people we work with own the work, and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission participates in it.

The the design, implementation, management and evaluation of development programmes is carried out in collaboration with our partners.

We aim to strengthen the capacity of our church and other partners as they work to improve the living conditions and capacities of the their own communities, using approaches which support sustainability.

We work multilaterally together with churches through international organisations. At the country and regional level we work in open collaboration with the Authorities, ecumenical and civil society organisations and through networks at all levels.

Ecology

In all our work we uphold the importance of the environment and its importance as the sustaining element of all life. We promote approaches which emphasise environmental care.

Good Governance

We work according to the principles of good governance. Our administration and management is open and transparent and is based on mutual accountability and trust.

We work actively to minimise corruption.

We do not accept conditions on funding from back-donors that would compromise our ability to speak and act independently.

We do not use any aid or government funds for the purpose of proselytizing.

Humanitarian action

In our humanitarian work we commit to uphold high ethical and programmatic standards in all of our work such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and the ACT International Code on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Power

Child Sponsorship

In addition, in our work through child sponsorship we

- work to promote the rights of children on the basis of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- we encourage and support our partners in defining and implementing child protection measures in their own work.
- we support our partners in their work to protect children and young people.
- we monitor the realisation of the Rights of the Child in the countries where we work.

Communication

In the communication regarding our work we respect the dignity and human rights as well as the cultural and religious identity of all people. Primarily, we listen to the person her/himself in her / his own issues rather than rely on second hand interpretation.

Our communication materials shall not show people as helpless victims or in otherwise negative connections. Rather, it shall emphasise the potential and strengths of people and communities to develop their own lives.