



**Guiding
Principles
for
Sustainable
Development**



THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND - FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL - FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development

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The Lutheran World Federation

Cover:

Barbara Robra

Design:

Stéphane Gallay, Office for Communication Services

The Lutheran World Federation

150 route de Ferney

P.O.Box 2100

1211 Geneva 2 – Switzerland

Tel. +41/22-791 61 11

Fax +41/22-791 66 30

info@lutheranworld.org

www.lutheranworld.org

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Introduction

Preamble

This document is an attempt to outline those principles which are understood by the Lutheran World Federation to guide its work in sustainable development. This work is undertaken cooperatively within the federation by member churches, LWF related agencies, and the various departments of the Geneva secretariat, together with other government and non-governmental partners.

The principles which are elucidated here are founded upon an understanding of sustainable development as a process of change by which the basic needs and human rights of individuals and communities in any given society are realized while at the same time protecting the basic needs and human rights of other communities and future generations.

These principles are not necessarily unique to the LWF. They are often shared by other non-governmental organizations which are involved in the work of development. They are also largely familiar to governments which seek to carry out development programs.

However these principles are also particular to the life and work of the Lutheran World Federation since they have grown out of the experience of churches and LWF programs over many decades of emergency response and participation in development work. They have also grown out of the theological understanding and faith tradition of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation which recognizes that all persons are made in the image of God and that as such they participate in the ongoing creation, preservation and sustaining of God's creation and the well-being of the human family.

We in the family of the Lutheran World Federation will recognize these principles since they have been formative to both our understanding of sustainable development and our work in and with communities around the world. The purpose of this document is to gather them together in order to strengthen our contribution to sustainable development and to ensure that our practice is coherent and consistent with our understanding.

It is hoped that this document will be a significant contribution to the ongoing and evolving discussion within the Lutheran World Federation regarding our life in communion and our shared task of creating, supporting and advocating for sustainable communities. It is intended as a guide to assist churches, agencies, and individuals to challenge and support one another in all places in the world where people suffer and do not share in the gifts of God's good creation, and where the creation itself is destroyed and at risk.

It is hoped that these principles will be of use in different ways. Within the whole LWF family they may assist in shaping and focusing a shared approach to development which is consistent with our theological understanding of all persons having been made in the image of God and which represents the best of our shared experience in development work. They may be used for planning and carrying out church and LWF development projects, to support requests to back donors, to interpret the work of the LWF family to church constituencies and the public, and for purposes of planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as training.

Finally, the guiding principles elaborated in this document do not purport to be a checklist of concrete guidelines for development activities. They are intended to act as an aide-memoire in the formulation of policy and guidelines in each context in which development work is being undertaken by those within the LWF family.

A Biblical-Theological Basis

“For I [the Lord] am about to create new heavens and a new earth....No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime....They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat;They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well.” (Isaiah 65:17a, 20a, 21–22a, 23)

The commitment of the Lutheran World Federation to sustainable development, as conveyed through the above vision, is grounded in and shaped by the faith Christians confess in the Triune God. The Spirit of God blew over the waters, and through the Word spoken in creation (Genesis 1:2ff), God created all that is—the cosmos, the environment, all creatures, plants, and human beings—in an interdependent web of life. And “it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Matter and spirit, nature and culture, all of creation is the arena in which God is both hidden and revealed (Luther).

Created in the image of God, human beings, both male and female, are called to be responsible caretakers or stewards in sustaining and developing what God has created. God bestows upon human beings the life, dignity, freedom, capacity, and potential know-how to participate productively—“to till and keep the garden”—with one another and with respect for the limits of creation. Human beings are continually transforming this good creation, as co-creators with God in history. Through such activity, life in community continues to be provided for and sustained, according to God’s creative wisdom.

These purposes of God are continually being distorted, disrupted, and violated through human sin. Sin alienates us from God, one another, and nature. Sin becomes embedded in cultural assumptions, social practices, policies, and institutions through which human beings, commu-

nities, and the environment are dominated, exploited, or treated unjustly. They become dispensable means for the sake of short-term economic gains. The web of creation is altered through human actions so that it becomes unable to sustain life over time. Consequently, “the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains” awaiting restoration or salvation (Romans 8:22).

The Word became flesh. Jesus Christ, “in whom all things in heaven and earth were created” and “in whom all things hold together” (*Colossians 1:16,17*), decisively overcame this reign of sin through his life, death, and resurrection. In his life Jesus reached out especially to those who were poor, marginalized, and outcast, giving them new dignity and possibilities for life. Through those who are “despised” and held of no account (*Isaiah 53:3*) we see the crucified Christ; in him God’s righteousness and justice are revealed (*Matthew 25:31–46*). Through his death and resurrection the whole creation is set free from its bondage to sin and death.

The reign of God’s promised future breaks into history through Christ, providing a vantage point for challenging policies and practices that compromise or thwart what God intends. Human impoverishment, discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or ethnicity, the fragmentation of life-sustaining communities, and the degradation of nature are incompatible with this reign of God. Our attempts to develop sustainable communities are undertaken in light of this inbreaking promise of God, whose fulfillment we await in hope.

In the meantime we respond to God’s saving, justifying action in Jesus Christ with justice-seeking love for the “neighbor,” who is both near and distant, both human and non-human. This includes working with those of various faiths and persuasions for the sake of more just, sustainable communities. In the process we must deal with ongoing ethical tensions, for example, between providing for immediate human needs and what will be sustainable over time. Sin, abuses, and unjust uses of power continue, but they are not the final word. The Spirit re-

news us and our commitments, especially in the face of powerlessness and hopelessness. As we stand between the world's hopes and God's hope for the world, we are empowered to work with and support others in shaping new possibilities for human beings, communities, the environment, and coming generations.

LWF historical review

No discussion of the history of the Lutheran World Federation can fail to take note of the essential role of service, *diakonia*, at the beginning and throughout the course of that history.

One of the major factors which led to the formation and first assembly of the LWF in 1947 in Lund, Sweden, was the call to provide humanitarian aid to the peoples of Europe suffering as a result of the Second World War. There was a strong motivation of self-help in the original charter of the Lutheran World Federation Service to Refugees—to help the one in six Lutherans who was a refugee or displaced person as a result of the war. This gave the LWF from the outset a strong humanitarian orientation, which continues to today.

Of concern to the second LWF Hanover assembly in 1952 was the risk that the commitment to a Lutheran World Federation might diminish once the immediate post-war needs of Lutheran churches and their members had been met. Therefore the Hanover assembly affirmed the on-going nature of the member churches' commitment to helping those in need, irrespective of who they might be, as a call of the gospel. Thus was established the work of the LWF in meeting human need, not only of those within the Lutheran community but also of those beyond its confines. This orientation is significant because the various religious-sponsored aid agencies established as a result of the Second World War initially focused only on people of their own communities. At the Hanover assembly the Lutheran World Federation committed itself, in addition to support for the needs of its member churches, to inter-church cooperation that is global in scope and for the benefit of people in need irrespective of race, sex, creed, nationality or political persuasion.

The commitment for churches to take responsibility in the world through meeting human need was strengthened at the third assembly in Minneapolis in 1957, on the theme "Christ Frees and Unites." This assembly

saw an evolution of the original diaconal emphasis of the LWF on meeting human need, towards consideration of the aspect of justice. This shift would be reflected in the LWF's various development programs and projects in future years as a focus on poverty and economic exclusion as well as issues of justice, peace and reconciliation came to be understood as integral aspects of sustainability.

The 1963 Helsinki assembly focus on justification, while seeking to assess the relationship between justification and experience, did not yet take up the relationship between justice and social ethics which would later inform LWF theology and practice.

It was at the 1970 Evian assembly that the relationship between issues of service, development and justice received full attention, dramatically changing the structure and work of the federation, as well as its understanding of the role and responsibility of the church in the world. The key issues in Evian included a theological reconsideration of the relationship between the nature of the church and social ethics, notably human rights, and the relationship between North and South. Both of these significantly shaped the LWF understanding and practice of humanitarian assistance and sustainable development. A clear emphasis was placed on the principle of the dignity of the human person, and on the unprecedented challenges to that dignity posed by discrimination, oppression, exclusion and injustice in all parts of the world.

After Evian, the work of the LWF in development and emergency assistance, previously based primarily on meeting human need, increasingly made the dignity and participation of the human person key elements in both understanding and practice. In addition new emphases on social ethics and human rights as well as on inclusivity, particularly of women, were recognized and affirmed.

A key resolution from the Evian assembly provided a new, human rights based, framework for linking the LWF's diaconal service to conflict areas. It called upon the appropriate agencies of the LWF to increasingly

respond to the humanitarian and social needs of prisoners of conscience and those struggling against oppression.

The LWF understanding of human rights was sharpened in 1977 at the Dar es Salaam assembly through examination of the pressing reality of apartheid, and of the role of the church in the face of this reality. Ongoing work with Mozambican, Angolan and Namibian refugees was shaped by these discussions and decisions, as were the later refugee repatriation programs of the 80s and 90s. As well, development initiatives in local communities contributed to and were affected by the growing discussions on root causes of social and economic injustice.

The issues of inclusion of women and youth in church and society as well as issues of social and economic justice were again taken up and developed in the seventh assembly in Budapest in 1984, guided by grassroots experience. These emphases were also incorporated into the understanding and practice of sustainable development carried out by the LWF member churches in local communities.

The eighth assembly in Curitiba in 1990, with its theme “I have heard the cry of my people,” represented a further deliberate shift towards a focus upon the world situation, the context in which the Christian message is to be sounded: “the communion of God’s people, the quest for salvation in a world marked by religious pluralism, the global struggle for peace with justice and the almost cosmic cry of an endangered creation.” One key assembly decision was to adopt the current constitution of the LWF, describing the federation as a communion of churches with three main functions, including one which gathered together the many impulses of the past related to the responsibility of churches in the world:

further worldwide among the member churches diaconic action, alleviation of human need, promotion of peace and human rights, social and economic justice, care for God’s creation and sharing of resources.

The Curitiba assembly focused strongly on issues of economic justice, speaking of the intolerable human suffering that has been caused by an exploitative world economic system. It addressed in particular the debt crisis. The assembly recommended that churches should “promote understanding of the need for a new international economic order” and “search for solutions to the debt crisis which is bringing such devastation to the underprivileged parts of the world.” The Curitiba assembly also committed the LWF to confronting threats to the environment: “we hear the cries from creation as a chorus of anguish. In recognising the interrelatedness of ecological and economic problems and the tensions between economic growth and ecological sustainability, the assembly called for a new set of values and a rediscovery of the spiritual dimension of human life on earth.”

At its meeting in Madras in 1992, the LWF Council affirmed the centrality of justice in all dimensions of life and the need to equip churches to become more involved in human rights issues. It declared that a concern for justice is inherent in LWF’s involvement in humanitarian aid and development assistance. It requested the secretariat to initiate a process whereby its units assess whether and how their projects and programs do or do not promote justice and respect for human rights.

The ninth assembly in Hong Kong in July 1997 highlighted several human rights issues including economic justice in the context of globalization; the rights of indigenous people; the rights of the child with particular reference to child prostitution, child slavery, children in armed conflict and discrimination against the girl child; women’s human rights and violence against women; and the rights of refugees, displaced persons and migrants. The assembly called for the empowerment of women as a means of full inclusion in society. To this end, it called on member churches to, among other things, assign a percentage of their global budget to programs and projects which aim to empower women and instill gender awareness and ensure that gender is taken seriously in all projects to be developed. Aware of the tragic consequences of in-

ternational debt in much of the world, the Hong Kong assembly affirmed the Jubilee 2000 charter campaign to liberate the poorest nations from the backlog of unrepayable debt by the year 2000.

For over fifty years the Lutheran World Federation has been actively involved in development work. This work is part of the Lutheran engagement in the ecumenical movement. The ecumenical involvement in the discussion of development is described in the following section.

Ecumenical discussion of the concept of development

Although not under the rubric of “development,” issues related to poverty and wealth were initially put on the ecumenical agenda by the missionary movement. Missionaries encountered devastating deprivation. Convinced that no dichotomy should be made between body and soul, the most progressive among them engaged in education, health and agricultural projects. Thereby, they gained a certain insight into both the problems and the possibilities of improving living conditions, and of seeing such projects in a larger context.

Initially, the transfer of resources and technical assistance were seen as major instruments to improve the living conditions of poor people. The first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam, 1948, declared that “Justice demands that the inhabitants of Asia and Africa, for instance, should have the benefits of more machine production....Technical progress also provides channels of communication and interdependence which can be aids to fellowship...”

The third WCC Assembly in New Delhi, 1961, observed that: “The reality of political independence is threatened by economic dependence either upon countries or upon international industries.” Therefore, the assembly called for a “more adequate strategy for world development.”

It was the pivotal World Conference on Church and Society in Geneva, 1966, which put the issue of world development on the agenda of the churches in a major way. The conference stressed that international economic cooperation is a moral imperative and that this issue should be addressed from a position of solidarity with the poor and the oppressed.

Subsequently many activities were undertaken based on a number of key concepts such as justice, self-reliance and people’s participation. People should not be objects but subjects of development, justice

should not only be distributive but also participatory, and nations should be able to determine their own path towards development.

In the early part of the 20th century, ecumenical thought and action regarding the issue of rich and poor mainly followed a charity approach. Projects were palliative and remedial and did not address fundamental and structural issues. Poor countries should “catch up” with the rich countries and follow the example of their (former) colonizers. It was supposed that the effects of economic growth would automatically trickle down to the poor and it was assumed that there is a basic harmony of interests between the rich and the poor. Little attention was paid to non-economic factors in social transformation such as culture and religion. In this respect there was not much difference between the ecumenical and the secular debate about development.

During the second half of the 1960's the debate changed. The very idea of development was challenged and some chose instead to speak about liberation. Real social transformation was to be measured by what happens to people, and the notion of people-centered development was soon to become a distinctive feature of the ecumenical understanding of development. In the mid-1970s the search for a “Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society” (JPSS) was identified as the larger context in which people-oriented development should be pursued.

This formulation emphasized that “‘sustainable’ should always be defined in ways that give equal normative emphasis to ‘just’ and ‘participatory’.” This approach insists that “moral dimensions, including human rights, are basic qualifiers and determinants of socioeconomic choices. They do not first appear after development engines are in place and running full tilt.” (*Rasmussen, L. “Earth Community, Earth Ethics” 1996, p. 139*)

From the mid-1980's onward, “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation” (JPIC) became the rallying theme of the WCC. The conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to JPIC emphasized that Christian resistance against the powers of death is part and parcel of con-

fessing Christ as the life of the world. Increasingly, it was realized that struggles for justice, peace and a healthy natural environment cannot be separated and that they need to be kept together in a dynamic relationship. It has been argued that this holistic approach of JPIC could be a new ecumenical term for development.

Indeed, the relationship between ‘development’ and ‘sustainability’ received a very nuanced treatment in the ecumenical discussion, emphasizing the sustainability of communities rather than the sustainability of development per se. This distinction was a clear differentiation from the overly ‘economistic’ bias of the development policy discussion at that time, a bias which has undoubtedly persisted in some sectors. The term ‘sustainability’ in the ecumenical discussion on development issues meant, “not global economic growth qualified by environmental sensitivity, but local and regional communities that are economically viable, socially equitable, and environmentally renewable.” This is coupled with the recognition that “love and justice are transgenerational and that we must protect this earthly habitat so that it will sustain the lives of our children’s children’s children, together with other life, into the indefinite future.” (*Rasmussen, op. cit., pp. 141–142, 144*)

A distinctive feature of the ecumenical movement is that it is represented at local levels in almost all parts of the world. The potential to be in contact with local situations and realities—which can be very different—has been used very well. In this way, much has been learned about the importance of cultures and religions in connection with development. Solidarity networks have been built up through which experiences were shared and common actions were undertaken. The far-flung networks of the ecumenical movement have also been instrumental in organizing platforms for ongoing discussion and action on sharing of resources. This feature is quite unique for the ecumenical movement and should not be underestimated.

The Lutheran World Federation has fully participated in the fifty year evolution of the ecumenical understanding of development through

cooperative practice at the local level and by strong Lutheran participation in the international World Council of Churches agenda. It is also reflected in these guiding principles for sustainable development.

A comprehensive development agenda

The last decade of the 20th century saw the emergence of a comprehensive agenda for development, which the ecumenical discussion outlined above critiqued and helped to shape. The series of world conferences relevant to development which took place during the 1990s provided opportunities for a broad spectrum of government and civil society representatives, including churches, to articulate the elements of this comprehensive agenda. (*An overview of those conferences is given in Annex 1 to this document.*)

The comprehensive development agenda which emerges from those conferences and discussions includes the following essential element:

- Development should be centred on human beings. Because an individual's well-being is multifaceted, a multidimensional approach to development is essential.
- Central goals of development include the eradication of poverty, the fulfilment of the basic needs of all people, and the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Development requires that governments apply active social and environmental policies, and promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of democratic and widely participatory institutions. Goals of economic growth and social progress must therefore be pursued simultaneously and in an integrated manner.
- Investments in health, education and training are critical to the development of human resources and social institutions. Social development is best pursued if governments actively promote empower-

ment and participation in a democratic and pluralistic system respectful of all human rights. Processes to promote increased and equal economic opportunities, to avoid exclusion and overcome socially divisive disparities while respecting diversity are also a necessary part of an enabling environment for social development.

- The improvement of the status of women, including their empowerment, is central to all efforts to achieve sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- Diversion of resources away from social priorities should be avoided and, where it has occurred, be corrected. The formulation of structural adjustment policies and programs should take these considerations into account.

Global trends

Some key trends observable globally provide particular challenges to development policy and practice in the current context and for the future.

The phenomenon popularly known as globalization is perhaps the single most significant factor to be taken into account in development planning for the 21st century. 'Globalization' refers particularly to the process of economic liberalization which has facilitated increasingly unrestricted international flows of trade and capital, but also encompasses the exponential growth in worldwide electronic communications and information technology, and in international travel. It has led to an increased interdependence of societies, economically, politically and socially, and to the 'transnationalization' of commerce.

Globalization carries both opportunities and risks in the context of development. It has resulted in widespread, although far from universal or equitable, access to instantaneous communication around the world, thereby facilitating expressions of solidarity and the interchange of in-

formation and expertise. However, it has also led to the growing disenfranchisement of poor people and communities, a challenge to the effectiveness of national decisions and the future of political democracy, a lack of control of the activities of multinational corporations, and the homogenization of culture. There is a rapidly increasing degree of inequality among and within countries, between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.' It is clear that the benefits of economic globalization have been enjoyed by a small minority of the world's people, whilst the vast majority remain in poverty. The engines of globalisation have failed to address, and often do exacerbate the suffering of the most vulnerable.

Economic globalization clearly has the potential, albeit presently unrealized, to increase the material wealth of all the world's people. Nevertheless, even if that potential were to be effectively realized, questions remain about the extent to which the inherent economic bias contained within current policy frameworks can effectively respond to the cumulative injustices affecting many communities and the real needs of human individuals and communities. Economic globalization has not only deepened unacceptable divisions between rich and poor, but is unable to encompass the fullness of life in community. Economic indicators are clearly not the only indicators of the wealth of a community. Spiritual and cultural resources and needs must also be taken into account, as well as economic and social resources and needs.

Addressing basic needs has been the unrelenting theme of the churches and civil society proponents of development, but once basic needs have been met, "there is very little correlation of happiness and well-being with increased consumption and rising incomes. Satisfactions in life relate more closely to the quality of family life and friendships, work, leisure and spiritual richness. None of these is well measured by the GDP." (*Rasmussen, op. cit., p.149*) The explosion of consumption in the developed world, whilst commitments to eradicating poverty remain unfulfilled, make this a critical issue for the global communion. (*See Human Development Report 1998; Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, Commitment 2*)

The ideology of economic growth and the free market is also experienced by some communities as a means for imposing the technology, culture and ethos of dominant political powers. The labelling of people and communities as belonging to the 'undeveloped' or 'developing' world, or to the 'third world' diminishes native or traditional lifestyles, including steady-state economies, and wisdom, including systems of belief so that they are regarded as inferior or archaic. The homogenizing effect of globalization upon culture has also contributed to a kind of 'crisis of identity,' to which ethnic violence has often been the reaction.

Future development strategies have to take these realities into account, challenging the negative effects of globalization on the poor and weak, and endeavoring to take advantage of the opportunities and to minimize the risks it poses to the sustainability of development.

Many societies have undergone and are continuing to undergo major demographic shifts. Sometimes these shifts are closely related to the processes of globalization. Migration, often for economic reasons, has led to fundamental changes in the composition of many societies. In addition, large populations continue to be uprooted due to conflict and oppression, and are forced to seek refuge among other communities.

As a result of these population flows, almost all societies are now much more heterogeneous than in previous generations. Minorities within our societies often find themselves the targets of racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance, especially in times of economic hardship. Significant demographic trends are also reflected in the rapidly aging populations of many developed countries, and the increasing percentage of children and youth in some developing countries. Development strategies must fully recognize and respond to these trends.

The spread of democracy has also been one of the defining features of the 1990s, and it carried with it the expectation and hope of an end to armed conflict. However, the spread of democracy has not necessarily been associated with a decrease in conflict, human rights abuses, or

injustice. Indeed, towards the end of the decade there seems to have been a resurgence in conflict, with old conflicts reigniting and new and unforeseen conflicts emerging. The lack of correlation between the spread of democracy and the establishment of peace with justice has indicated the need for more attention to be paid to the nature and content of democracy, rather than to its outward forms. Whilst the essential role of democracy in promoting peace and development is not in doubt, its fundamental purpose of allowing participation and preventing exclusion needs re-emphasis.

The persistence, resumption or emergence of armed conflict in various countries constitutes a fundamental impediment to sustainable development. In addition to the deaths, injuries and destruction which are the immediate consequences of armed conflict, the long-term effects of displacement of people, destruction of communities, the continuing hazard of anti-personnel landmines, and under-development and poverty cause even more widespread and endemic suffering. Development planning, particularly for communities which have experienced recent conflict, must also incorporate effective conflict prevention and reconciliation strategies in order to promote sustainability of development. At the international level, new and positive initiatives in international diplomacy, such as that of the Ottawa landmines process are to be sought out, encouraged and supported.

Globally, the processes of environmental degradation have been continuing at a rapid rate. Dwindling natural resources, climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, the accelerating loss of biodiversity, population growth, deforestation, erosion and desertification, and the pollution of water, land and air are all issues of current and continuing concern. All have obvious implications for development in both the short and long term.

In all regions of the world, the link between environmental degradation and poverty is a critical but complex one. About half of the world's poorest people live on marginal lands, which are typically the most

susceptible to the immediate consequences of continuing environmental degradation. Especially in many developing countries, lack of effective legislation of environmentally hazardous industrial activities exposes poor segments of society to unacceptably high levels of pollution and risk of poison contamination. The global warming caused by 'greenhouse gases' emitted by industries, predominantly in the North, is being felt first in crop failures on the marginal lands farmed by the world's poorest. The loss of the natural resources of the rainforests, disappearing because of large-scale commercial logging, is keenly affecting indigenous peoples who rely on them. The depletion of the oceans' fish stocks by commercial over-fishing is already destroying the communities supported by subsistence fishing. Increasing population pressure and environmentally-damaging agricultural techniques exacerbate the problems.

In this context, development activities must ensure that they do not themselves contribute to the degradation of the environment. Development work has to provide the knowledge and techniques needed to ensure that the essential natural resources of communities are employed in a renewable and sustainable way. Advocacy strategies must be formulated to address international, national and local policies and decisions which have negative environmental implications. A comprehensive development strategy should also address the global context, advocating for appropriate international controls to ensure that some communities do not live beyond their natural resource means, at the expense of others, or at the expense of future generations. Attention also needs to be given to the difficult ethical issues surrounding access to and utilization of genetic resources, particularly by agrarian and indigenous communities.

Guiding Principles

For Sustainable Development

General Principles

Sustainable development is a holistic and interconnected process

Sustainable development is as much a process as a goal, leading to a life of dignity for people in relationship to the overall context of their community and the environment which sustains them. Development that isolates a person from part of himself or herself, from the community or from the ecosystem which supports life is not sustainable. As well, development of a local area that is not linked to the sustainability of the social, economic and environmental well-being of the human family is likewise not sustainable.

Sustainable development is non-discriminatory and protects the dignity of each person

Sustainable development promotes the God-given dignity of each person. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. It seeks to enhance the dignity of the whole human family.

The well-being of human persons is the priority concern of sustainable development

Sustainable development is human-centred. It is concerned with the lives and well-being of people in their communities, rather than with narrow economic indicators averaged out over localities, nations or

regions. It is concerned with the well-being of the whole person, physical, spiritual and psychological and with the realization of the potential of each individual, in the context of his or her community.

Sustainable development is culturally and spiritually sensitive

The goals and priorities for tackling human rights issues, gender equality, and environmental issues will vary from country to country due to local socio-economic, cultural and spiritual contexts. Although cultural and religious practices can both support and inhibit development, development cannot be sustainable unless the positive cultural and spiritual practices of persons and communities are recognized, enhanced and incorporated into the development process.

Sustainable development does not assume the superiority of any one model of economic and social governance

Sustainable development should embrace, as appropriate and as desired by the community concerned, native or traditional models of economic and social governance as readily as the dominant models of politics and economic growth. Pejorative value judgements of 'under-development' are to be avoided.

Sustainable development is participatory

Development cannot succeed unless the people involved actively participate in and support the process. To the extent possible participation means involvement of all interest groups in all relevant aspects of development: identifying, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development endeavours. Sustainable development equips people to assume responsibility for their own future and the well-being of the communities and nations to which they belong.

Capacity building is a means as well as a goal of sustainable development

Sustainable development enhances the capacity of persons and communities to determine their own future and to increase the utilization of available local and human resources. Development which is imposed or remains dependent upon outside support is not sustainable. Therefore a priority of all development activities should be to engage in and demonstrate the full participation that is necessary to support community life over the long term.

Financial sustainability is necessary for the effective promotion of sustainable development

Financial sustainability relates to the capacity to create long-term financial stability or security for sustainable development initiatives. In the case of income-generating initiatives, clear business plans are a critical tool for ensuring success. Any necessary investments in capital goods require proper projections of running, maintenance and replacement costs. In relation to human resources, the costs associated with the development of those human resources and skills must be incorporated in the financial projections.

Sustainable development depends on institutional sustainability

The critical issues of institutional sustainability relate to the management of human resources, decision-making processes and accountability. Proper personnel policies and regulations, human resource development plans, performance assessments, representative (including a gender balance) and transparent decision-making processes, adequate monitoring and reporting systems, and policies and planning that focus on future financial independence and institutional autonomy are essential to institutional sustainability.

Sustainable development focuses on community assets

The starting point for promoting sustainable development should be the identification of the assets of the community in facing and responding to its self-defined development objectives.

Sustainable development is technologically appropriate

Development is not sustainable unless the technical elements of development are in harmony with and related to the social, economic, cultural and ecological settings in which they are being used. The use of more and more sophisticated technology should not be equated with an increase in sustainability of development. Neither should the absence of advanced technologies necessarily be equated with a lack of development.

Sustainable development is dependent on adequate conditions for health and education

Without adequate provision for health and education development processes are not sustainable. Primary health care, basic education and other processes which are community based, incorporate the expertise and capacities of local people, and equip communities to be active agents in their own well-being are integral to sustainable development.

Sustainable development includes advocacy for socio-economic and political conditions for human well-being

Advocacy involves working with others to mobilize public opinion regarding the root causes of development problems. Awareness raising is integral to people's understanding that leads to advocacy and political participation. Advocacy for sustainable development involves all people of good will in all places working towards justice, and includes concrete and symbolic acts of peace and reconciliation.

The promotion of peace and reconciliation is an essential function and precondition of sustainable development

Development planning, particularly for communities that have experienced recent conflict, must incorporate effective conflict prevention and reconciliation strategies in order to promote sustainability of development. Such strategies should extend from community based trauma healing, reconciliation and conflict resolution programs to direct political initiatives in peace promotion and conflict mediation, where appropriate.

Sustainable development requires equitable and effective resource sharing

Over-consumption and lack of sharing of available resources is an obstacle to achieving sustainable development. It must be recognized that resource sharing within the LWF member churches and related agencies is based upon resources that individual member churches and related agencies are able and prepared to devote to the benefit of others. Such sharing of resources is essential to the institutional capacity of the LWF to promote and participate in sustainable development.

The Human Rights Dimension

Human rights and the mission of the church

Human rights principles are the legal expression of the God-given dignity of every human person, which the church is called to protect and promote. Insofar as human rights represent the minimum conditions for human well-being to which every person is entitled, a human rights ministry also reflects the compassion of Christ for a suffering humanity.

The realization of all human rights represents the essential goal of development

As understood in the framework of the 'right to development', development involves the realization of all human rights—economic, social and cultural, as well as civil and political rights. The right to development, so understood, is not a new and separate right to a narrowly economic concept of development, but a vehicle for the realization of all human rights.

Development objectives are also human rights objectives

The objectives of development are not limited to narrow technical objectives, but constitute a broad agenda for promoting human dignity and well-being. The complete spectrum of human rights, encompassing civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights, can be seen as broadly descriptive of the sort of society which development activities are intended to promote. Some of the specific objectives of development are to establish food security, to improve health, to enhance access to education, to create employment opportunities, to share technological and social advances, and to improve living standards. In all of these respects, the objectives of development are also human rights objectives, reflected in the international human rights instruments as the right to food and to freedom from hunger, the right to the highest

attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to education, the right to work, the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, and the right to an adequate standard of living.

Human rights include responsibilities

Human rights also entail responsibilities—to the community “in which alone the free and full development of [one’s] personality is possible”, to “the general welfare in a democratic society”, and to respect the rights and freedoms of others. Human rights imply a general societal intention and responsibility to secure such rights and freedoms for all. In this context, development can be seen as the process by which society seeks to fulfil that responsibility and to realize those rights and freedoms for all its members.

Respect for human rights is a necessary precondition for development; violations of human rights endanger development

It is clear that serious and widespread violations of human rights preclude sustainable development. For example, if in a given society the right to life, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, the right to just and favorable conditions of work, the right to education and the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress are not protected and promoted, development will not be sustainable. In addition, serious and widespread violations of human rights typically lead to social instability and conflict, the consequences of which invariably wipe away decades of development efforts.

Religious freedom is a necessary precondition for and objective of development

Freedom of religion and belief is a human right to which all are entitled. Religious intolerance inhibits sustainable development by fracturing communities and creating an environment conducive to con-

flict. Religious extremism is in turn encouraged by poverty, deprivation and oppression. Development efforts which effectively address poverty, deprivation and oppression also help to address the root causes of religious extremism.

Promoting human rights strengthens development

Promoting human rights strengthens development in a number of ways. Protecting and promoting human rights can help to prevent conflicts and social instability based on poverty, discrimination and exclusion (social, economic and political), and can thereby strengthen sustainable development. In addition, the promotion of human rights such as the freedoms of opinion and expression, the right to association, and the freedom of movement encourages the free interchange of ideas and experiences which promotes the spread of development. It is also widely recognized that the most successful and sustainable development activities are those in which there is active democratic participation by the local community.

An emphasis on human rights in the context of development helps to focus attention on the structural inequities that cause and maintain impoverishment and exclusion

Conscious reference to human rights standards and objectives helps to ensure that the root causes of poverty and exclusion receive proper attention in the formulation and implementation of development programs, and to guard against narrow technical objectives becoming the reference point for development activities.

Human rights obligations are legally binding, and their application in the context of development can therefore strengthen development initiatives

When a State enters into a treaty, covenant or convention, the provisions of those instruments become legally-binding upon that State.

Existing obligations under human rights treaties, covenants or conventions therefore provide a solid legal foundation for development programs, and for helping to ensure state support for such programs.

Integrating human rights analyses into the development planning cycle contributes to sustainable development

The primary purpose of such an analysis would be to identify human rights factors which, if not addressed, would be likely to jeopardize the sustainability of the development. Human rights deficits identified in the analysis or otherwise observed should be incorporated into the development program in order to contribute to the sustainability of the development activities.

Reflecting the principle of universality of human rights, development activities should be designed to be of benefit to the largest possible number of people

The growing gap between rich and poor challenges those engaged in promoting sustainable development to ensure that development activities are of benefit to the largest possible number of people. Human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, are universal, and development activities should endeavor to reflect this principle.

In accordance with the overwhelming international consensus on the rights of the child, and in recognition of the special needs of children, children's rights should be a priority area for development programs

Children require special care and protection because of their physical and psychological dependency, their own inherent dignity, and because in them lies the hope for a better and more just world. Development activities should therefore prioritize the needs and rights of children, and find ways to engage the creative energies of children as the agents of future social transformation.

The Gender Dimension

The protection and promotion of the human rights of women are fundamental to the sustainability of development

In the development process unequal power relations between men and women result in unequal distribution of and exclusion from the benefits of development. Because women are disadvantaged by most standards of comparison, the protection of the human rights of women and the equal participation of women are critical elements in the development process. The centrality of women's role not only in the family and community but also in the process of development necessitates the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Sustainable development processes require that the root causes of inequality between men and women are addressed and acted upon

The root causes of gender inequality for women include lack of powersharing, restricted participation in society, devaluation of experience and work, and violence against women. Sustainable development can only occur in a context where these broader issues are assessed and responded to by men and women together. Specific advocacy will need to be undertaken to change public attitudes and practices as well as to institutionalize gender equality through the change of public and organizational policy.

Sustainable development requires gender equality and the full leadership of women in all development processes

Sustainable development can only take place when there is active involvement of all members of the community. It requires a gender analysis of the roles of both men and women within the family community and their relations to each other. In order to raise the status of women,

which is necessary for sustainable development, the active participation of both men and women is imperative. As well, in order to be sustainable, development must benefit women and men alike and hold a vision for a better future for children.

Improving the status of women requires the participation of both men and women; addressing gender issues must be the concern of all people, not only women

Advancing the status of women is not the business of women alone, but that of men and women in the community. Active participation of all members of the community is the core of sustainable development including the gender aspects. An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of both men and women in a community as well as their relations to each other are critical. The relations between women and men are the focus of improving the status of women.

Sustainable development cannot be gender-neutral

All development work has a gender impact and does not benefit women and men equally. Gender equality recognizes the differences between men and women that are socially and culturally defined, particularly in relationship to the roles, responsibilities, access to and control over the resources of men and women, and their spheres of authority. If development programs are not intentionally addressing gender equality they have the result of reinforcing patterns of injustice and exclusion for women. For this reason it is essential to recognize and analyze the effects of all development processes on gender.

The participation and empowerment of women in present as well as future programs is a means as well as a goal in the process of sustainable development

The very process of inclusion of women in decision-making processes changes relationships between women and men, as well as changing

decisions which are taken in the community and the way in which those decisions are carried out. It is not sufficient to solely undertake programs for the benefit of women. Full community participation initiates the gender equality which it also seeks to achieve.

All assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation in development work require a gender perspective and analysis which values the work and experience of women

Gender sensitive development demands gender analysis which includes sex desegregated data for all development indicators, including: the improvement of women's access to education and health care; the gender division of labour; access to and control over resources and the distribution of benefits, and social, economic and environmental factors which influence a particular gender arrangement.

Specific programs and projects for women will continue to need investment in order to ensure that women are fully involved in the development process

Sustainable development requires gender sensitive planning which has the objective of promoting gender equality through meeting the practical needs of women. These on the ground practical needs include those that women have for survival and economic advancement, as well as strategic gender interests which are concerned with improving women's position and empowering them to have more access to resources and more equal participation in decision-making.

The Environment Dimension

Sustainable development is environment aware, preserving, maintaining and regenerating the natural resource base

Sustainable development is only achieved when long-term human needs are satisfied without threatening the resource base on which future generations depend. It requires responsible management of the environment and natural resources. Ecological considerations need to be integrated into identification and formulation of work in food security, soil conservation and regeneration, increased agricultural productivity, sustained population growth, afforestation, strengthening emergency preparedness for natural disasters, and rural and urban health and sanitation needs.

Sustainable development aims at lasting human stewardship of nature

The stewardship of creation involves ensuring that resource use is not only sustainable but also equitable. It implies that limited resources will be used in the most careful and efficient manner. In the process of rehabilitation it means that restoration of the environment to an original state is not necessarily adequate, since ‘the original state’ may often be far from ideal for sustainable development. An appropriate rehabilitation cycle should progress—from stabilization to restoration to improvement to sustainable development—all the while maintaining sustainable development as the final objective.

Sustainable development involves incorporating concern for the environment in all development decisions and operations

Environmental problems can be caused, overcome or mitigated by almost any decision or operation. To minimize negative environmental impacts, it is essential to incorporate environmental considerations into all aspects or sectors of development.

Environmental conservation includes participation and responsibility

The only way that the use of local natural resources can be made sustainable is by fully involving all resource users. Damage-prevention and mitigation measures in rehabilitation and development activities need to be based on awareness creation and involving the concerned population in decision making. The special role of women as resource managers and disseminators should be observed. Participation has proved to be an important tool in supporting all mitigative and preventive environmental measures. Community leaders need to be made aware of their particular responsibility for the protection of the surrounding environment.

Sustainable development provides for social justice in access to, management and use of resources

The claims of local populations to rights of access to, management and use of, important natural resources should be seriously studied and, if justified, supported by organizations promoting development. It is of vital importance that the disadvantaged and the poorest sections of the community have equitable access to resources. As environmental care has a lot to do with ownership or use of available natural resources, the exercise of those rights by local populations may prove to be a determining factor in the success of sustainable development work. Moreover, it is above all in the field of land tenure and users rights that development organizations may play an important role in ensuring development based on genuine stewardship of nature, including organizing users, and assisting them to take steps to assert their rights.

Sustainable development includes taking shared responsibilities for environmental damage

The responsibilities for environmental consequences of environmental damage should be shared on a fair basis by all actors concerned. There is usually no one single actor who can be held responsible for

environmental impacts. Commercial enterprises, the home government, the host government, the local population, the international community—all are part of both problems and solutions. This fact is also a fundamental principle in the PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) method as communities themselves discover their link and relationship with the environment that they are living in.

Sustainable development includes making sure that financial resources for environmental operations are selected according to criteria which measure the surplus of benefits generated by these interventions

Financial resources are often scarce. Their optimal use can be achieved by comparing the costs and benefits of environmental operations—including the cost of environmental damage they help to avoid—and proposing the optimum intervention mix in monetary terms.

Sustainable development includes linking international economic interests and commitment to the environment

There is a direct linkage between international economic interests and the impact on the environment. Responsible environmental practice should be seen as necessary for sustainable economic vitality of the economy at the international and local levels. Opportunities should be sought for increased interaction between business, government and civil society to ensure that protection of the environment is incorporated into commercial policies.

Sustainable development includes linking community economic interests and commitment for environment

One very effective way of involving people in environmental activities is to ensure that they are based on viable income generation which will contribute to both improved environmental management, and sustainable development by supporting the livelihood and local economy of

responsible resource managers. Development programs need to introduce appropriate technologies and practices, to provide necessary support in terms of skills training, extension and credit.

Sustainable development includes environmental education, awareness-raising and advocacy actions

Environmental education is a vital accompanying measure for all development activities, reinforcing the message that local natural resources need to be used in a sustainable manner. Such education should be undertaken vigorously among communities undergoing development.

Sustainable development includes using indigenous knowledge

Traditional knowledge of natural resources and their use needs to be fully utilized. There is an obvious need to promote and replicate good practice in environment management. Traditional knowledge usually provides a wealth of information on which adapted, new resource management systems can be based.

Sustainable development includes working for peace and reconciliation between countries and communities in order to avoid environmental devastation caused by conflict

War has devastating consequences for the environment. Effective action to protect the environment includes economic and political initiatives to address the root causes of warfare and conflict, including extreme poverty.

The Communication Dimension

Communication builds community

Communication builds human communities and allows them to develop. Without communication there cannot be a strong community; without a strong community there cannot be sustainable development. The free exchange of information, ideas and experiences contribute to the development of the whole community and in turn the whole person.

Sustainable development depends upon effective communication

Effective communication is essential for enabling local communities to identify their needs and to convey them to others. Inasmuch as participation in the development process by the communities concerned is recognized as essential to promoting sustainable development, communication methodologies must be established which ensure effective participation by those communities in the decision-making process. Communication strategies must also seek to ensure the widest possible dissemination and exchange of information on development experiences and lessons learned, in order to promote a widening and deepening of the development process.

Capacity-building in communications

An important element of promoting sustainable development is capacity-building in communications. This should involve not only capacity-building in the use of modern communications technologies, but also training in culturally appropriate communication, and techniques for overcoming communication barriers and resolving disputes. Training should also promote effective communication within communities for the identification and implementation of development objectives.

Communication methodologies must be relevant and appropriate

The advent of modern communications technologies has undoubtedly increased exponentially the possibilities for exchanging information and creating solidarity. However, care must be taken to identify technologies which are most suited to the communication purpose. The most advanced communications technologies may or may not be the best or most effective for every community. The important factor is that whatever communications methodologies are employed, they should be accepted by and accessible to the whole community.

Communication strategies should make maximum use of traditional forms of communication

Although modern methods of communications can have very powerful development-enhancing effects, they can also threaten traditional cultures and means of communication. In addition to appropriate elements of modern communication technologies, traditional methods of communication should be employed to promote the dissemination of development. These should especially include interpersonal and group communication forms and practices.

Networking for development

The building of networks within and between communities, and with relevant agencies and instrumentalities, is essential for a continuing and active development process. The identification of appropriate partners in such networks is a crucial factor in the long-term viability of development initiatives. Such networks promote the exchange of relevant information and expertise in a mutually supportive way.

Annex

UN World Conferences of the 1990s, and the Development Agenda

A series of major UN world conferences which took place during the 1990s provided the opportunity for the consideration of development priorities from a number of different thematic perspectives. Taken together, the principles arising from these conferences outline an integrated and comprehensive agenda for development in the next century, which both reflects the perspective of the churches and helps to inform church policy and action on development.

At the same time as recognizing the scope and comprehensiveness of the integrated agenda arising from these conferences, it must also be recognized that the strength of international commitment indicated in these conferences has been poorly reflected in practical implementation. Nevertheless, these commitments have provided very valuable standards against which governments can be judged and held to account.

World Summit for Children, New York, 1990

The first of the major UN conferences of the decade was the World Summit for Children in 1990. Significant advances had been made in the status of children globally in the 1980s. The World Summit for Children was inspired in part by recognition that these successes formed a solid basis for broader mobilization on behalf of children. The conference set out seven major child-related human development goals for the year 2000. These included targeted reductions in infant and maternal mortality, child malnutrition and illiteracy as well as targeted increases in access to basic services for water and sanitation, education, health and family planning. It also included a commitment to the pro-

tection of children in difficult circumstances, particularly in armed conflict. Since that time it has become increasingly clear that sustaining progress for children is an essential element in sustaining global momentum towards a more just world for all.

UN Conference on Environment and Development ("Earth Summit"), Rio de Janeiro, 1992

The 108 governments represented at the Earth Summit adopted three major agreements aimed at changing the traditional approach to development

- Agenda 21—a comprehensive programme for global action in all areas of sustainable development, containing detailed proposals for action in social and economic areas and for conserving and managing the natural resources that are the basis for life
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development—a series of principles defining the rights and responsibilities of States in relation to the environment and development; and
- The Statement of Forest Principles—a set of principles to underlie the sustainable management of forests worldwide.
- In addition, two legally-binding Conventions—the United Nations Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity—were opened for signature at the Summit.

World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 1993

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights was the first global review of human rights since 1968. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the 171 nations represented, reflected the difficult and complex nature of human rights issues even as it sought to move towards more global consensus. The conference reaffirmed

the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as the birthright of all human beings, and the responsibility of States to promote and protect these rights. The Declaration underscored the specific rights of particularly vulnerable groups including women, indigenous people, refugees, children, disabled people, detainees, victims of enforced disappearance and migrant workers and their families. The right to development was reaffirmed as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of human rights. However, it is a right that should be fulfilled so as to meet equitably the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action also clarified that while development facilitates the enjoyment of all human rights, the lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of internationally recognized human rights. The Conference identified human rights as a central issue for the agenda of the future, needing to be better integrated into overall policies and programs promoting economic and social development, democratic structures, peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts.

International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994

At the heart of the programme adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 was the recognition that efforts to slow population growth, eliminate gender inequality, reduce poverty, achieve economic growth and protect the environment are mutually reinforcing. The conference goals focussed on three interrelated areas: that family planning be universally available by 2015 or sooner; that population concerns be integrated into all policies and programs aimed at achieving sustainable development; and that women and girls be empowered by providing them with more choices through expanded access to education, health services and employment opportunities. The conference also reaffirmed that voluntary family planning decisions are a basic human right of all couples and individuals and any coercion in any form is unacceptable.

World Summit for Social Development (“Social Summit”), Copenhagen, 1995

In many ways, the 1995 World Summit for Social Development was the centrepiece in the series of global conferences on issues relevant to development. Building on the outcomes of earlier conferences of the decade, this summit represented a landmark shift by governments to support for policies that promote a people centred framework for social development and justice. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action, which was endorsed by 180 countries, represented the largest international consensus on key social development priorities at such a high political level. The summit identified ten commitments which together reflect a comprehensive agenda for social development. Key to this agenda is the creation of an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment to enable people to achieve social development, and the identification of the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind.

Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995

The Beijing Declaration which was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 reflects the commitment of the international community to the advancement of women and to ensuring that a gender perspective is reflected in programs and policies at the national, regional and international levels. The action plan adopted at the conference sets time-specific targets, committing nations to carry out concrete actions in such areas as health, education, decision-making and legal reforms, with the ultimate goal of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in public and private life. The overriding message of the conference was that the issues addressed are global and universal. The conference recognized that measures to protect and promote the human rights of women and girl children must underlie all action for development.

Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 1996

The Second UN Conference on Human Settlements in 1996 provided an effective tool for creating sustainable human settlements for the 21st century. The conference underscored the close linkage between human settlements and poverty, environmental conditions and lack of access to land and secure tenure. It recognized that inadequate living conditions are a primary cause of social conflict, degradation of personal safety and violent disruptions of civil society. It agreed to recognize the right to adequate housing (understood as all systems considered essential for a healthy life, particularly urban life) as a universal human right. The Istanbul Declaration embodied the commitment of governments to create sustainable human settlements for the 21st century with regard to the environment, human rights, social development, women and population in the specific context of urbanization.

World Food Summit, Rome, 1996

In 1996, the World Summit on Food Security adopted the Rome Declaration outlining ways to achieve universal food security. In many ways, this summit brought together concerns that were raised in the specific contexts of other world conferences of the decade. The Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 emphasized the need to ensure food security at all levels within the framework of sustainable development. The Conference on Human Rights in 1993 reaffirmed the need to assure everyone a genuine right to food. In 1994, the Conference on Population and Development emphasized the linkage between population growth and food production. The Social Summit in 1995 made a strong commitment to the campaign against hunger by making it a key element of poverty eradication. The Conference on Women in 1995 drew attention to the fundamental role played by women in food production, particularly in rural areas. The Habitat conference in 1996 drew all of these elements together and emphasized the importance of establishing healthy link-

ages between rural and urban areas, stressing the role of cities in ensuring proper food distribution and drinking water supply.

The combined outcome of these conferences reflects a human-centred approach to development, which emphasizes the elimination of human poverty and the promotion of social development, and the protection of irreplaceable natural resources on which all life depends, rather than on the limited and short-sighted objective of economic growth. The conference outcomes also underline the need for global action on these issues, acknowledging that the problems which the world faces cannot be resolved by national action alone. The agenda which emerges is an integrated one, recognizing the mutually reinforcing and interdependent nature of development, democracy, human rights, and environmental protection.

Sustainable development is a process of change by which the basic needs and human rights of individuals and communities in any given society are realized while at the same time protecting the basic needs and human rights of other communities and future generations.

The Lutheran World Federation

150 route de Ferney

P.O.Box 2100

1211 Geneva 2 – Switzerland

Tel. +41/22-791 61 11

Fax +41/22-791 66 30

info@lutheranworld.org

www.lutheranworld.org

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