



# Rights-Based Approach Local to Global

Annual Report 2017



THE  
LUTHERAN  
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actalliance

# Overview

LWF World Service has a track record over many decades of working with rights-based approaches (RBA). Human Rights vocabulary is firmly part of LWF's identity and self-understanding, LWF World Service is community-based and rights-based. Rather than focusing on delivery of aid and services, we support people to organize and empower themselves, and to claim their rights. This community-based, rights-based approach has been applied in humanitarian response, in long-term development, and in action and advocacy for justice and human rights at local, national and global level. LWF's presence in Geneva with its United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) status provides it with unrestricted access to the International Human Rights Mechanisms. Through its Office for International Affairs and Human Rights (OIAHR), LWF has been known for bringing authentic voices from the communities to the UN and it has established links with other important international players in Geneva.

Beginning in 2014, LWF has developed two global initiatives to support implementation, dissemination and mainstreaming of its RBA across country programs from Local to Global level. The two global initiatives focus on 1. Livelihoods/ land rights, 2. the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Both use a project model to link local level action for change to national and international level advocacy, and since 2016, new thematic priorities have been included such as climate justice and women's rights fol-

lowing the same project model, as well as expansion into new countries such as Chad.

Within LWF, cross-departmental ownership is essential to implementing these initiatives. LWF World Service is working jointly with the Office for International Affairs and Human Rights (within the Department for Theology and Public Witness (DTPW)) as the lead on LWF's advocacy work, and the initiatives will increasingly include the Department for Mission and Development (DMD), including through the inclusion of Climate Justice as a thematic focus.

From the very start, these initiatives have been jointly designed and owned with partners: close collaboration with related agencies and international partners has been crucial. So far, concrete engagement and resources have come from Bread for the World (BftW), Church of Sweden (CoS), Finn Church Aid (FCA), the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Swiss embassy in Myanmar. Collaboration with others across the ACT Alliance and beyond is a key part of the approach, and new partnerships have been developed which have brought added-value to this engagement, in particular with the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC). In this report, where we say "we did ..." we intend it to be understood that this has been achieved as a result of this kind of collaboration.

Countries engaged in land rights/livelihoods projects in 2017  
Countries engaged in UPR projects in 2017

Countries with a prospective RBA project for 2018

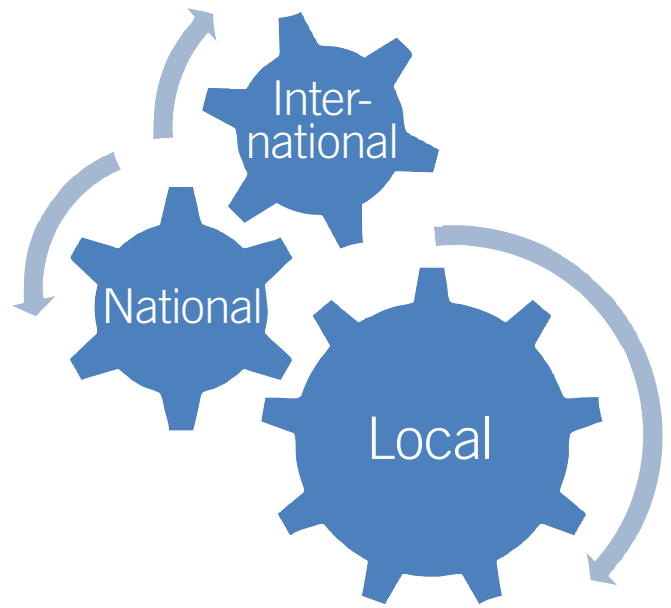




## Our Local to Global approach

These initiatives are in no way separate from other LWF programmatic work: they overlap, reflect, draw on and feed into it. They do serve however, to make this RBA local to global approach more visible, better resourced, and capable of strengthening LWF’s wider programming as it is mainstreamed. These initiatives allow us to work more intentionally at linking local rights-based activity to national and global advocacy.

- With our focus on impact in the community this national and international level advocacy is directed towards reinforcing local impact, rather than engagement in global policy debate for its own sake.
- Our advocacy is simply amplifying the voice of the communities themselves: it grows out of development / emergency contexts, meaning that the people themselves become agents of change and advocacy.



### Land Grabbing – A growing threat in Angola

“I had two hectares where I grew food for my family. Suddenly about a year ago, the area was fenced off and I learned that someone had come with documents saying this land was now his.” — a local farmer in Moxico province.

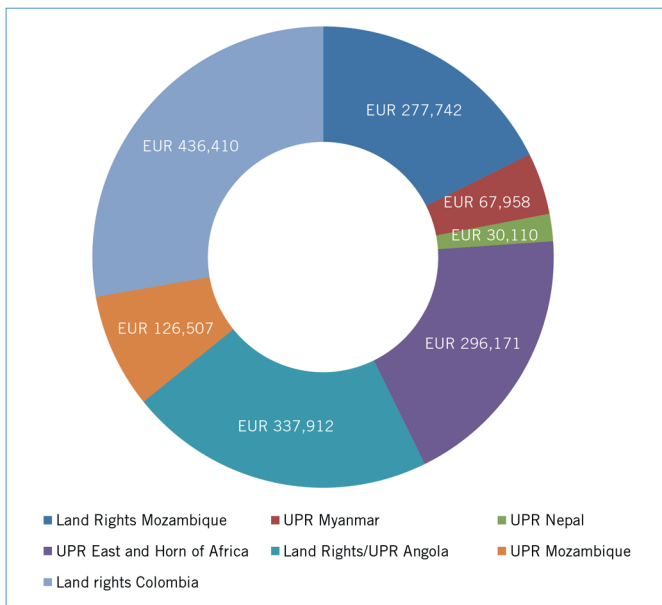


Watch our short video on land conflicts issues and how LWF supports communities at local, national and international level. <https://vimeo.com/266639789>

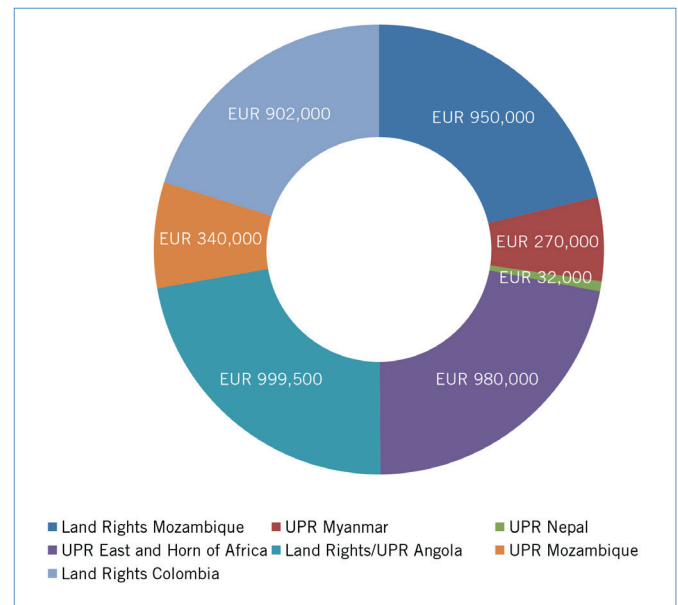
Photo: LWF/C. Kästner



### 2017 expenditure for the RBA local to global projects



### Overall funding for the RBA local to global projects (2015–2018)



# SECURING LAND RIGHTS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

## 1. Defending land rights of rural communities in Angola

### LOCAL

LWF Angola has been working with a rights-based approach since 2002, empowering communities to organize themselves through Village Development Committees and building their capacity to claim their rights. With the diversification of the Angolan economy, large land occupation and grabbing is becoming a growing threat in Moxico province. LWF has been supporting 32 villages to raise their awareness on land laws and accompany them in registering their farmers' association lands as well as community land. Having a land title is the best way to protect them from eviction and abuses; as an example, villagers of Mumanga were able to defend themselves against occupants as they were able to present all the relevant land documentation. Another strand of work is fostering communities' ability to carry out their social advocacy, which resulted this year into 7 initiatives to demand support from authorities in issues like supply of medicine in medical posts, water systems, construction of schools and agricultural input.

### NATIONAL

LWF is following-up on four cases of land grabbing that were reported in Moxico province, providing support to the communities and enhancing their means of getting their voice heard. In a specific land conflict that could not find a solution at local level, the affected communities of Camaiangala were supported to bring their case to the capital Luanda and were able to connect with the General Attorney, who has started to investigate the case and chan-



Farmers in Chindupo villages saw their land ceded to a high official for his private use without prior consultation. The Village Development Committee was able to advocate for their rights to the head of traditional leaders who acknowledged their claims and the occupant was relocated to another piece of unoccupied land. Photo: LWF/C. Kästner

nelled the issue to the provincial level. LWF has started to play a crucial role in bringing together civil society organizations working on land issues to articulate their voice and work more closely with the relevant Ministries to bring about policy reforms and above all an effective implementation of the land laws that protects communities from abuses only on paper for now.

### INTERNATIONAL

LWF has been engaged more strongly on networking with international organizations promoting human rights in Angola, in particular BfdW, sharing information and case studies and will continue its work in 2018 to have land issues considered through the Universal Periodic Review.

## 2. Fighting against impunity in the light of growing violence against human rights defenders in Colombia

### NATIONAL

18 months after the signing of the peace agreement between the government and the FARC guerrilla, Colombia is far from experiencing peace. Serious human rights violations continue and attacks against human rights defenders are increasing; making Colombia one of the most dangerous countries for human rights defenders in the world and the second country in the world with most socio-environmental conflicts. Environmental defenders suffer a very high risk, especially those who oppose extractive megaprojects. Colombia is struggling to recover from over 50 years of armed conflict, which according to official numbers have caused over 220,000 deaths, 80,000 forcibly disappeared and more than 7.4 million displaced from their homes.

Colombian civil society is deeply concerned over increasing violence against environmental and civil society leaders defending the territorial rights of Afro-Colombian communities, indigenous people and peasants. "Social conflicts, environmental conflicts, are taking place, and those who lead protests and resistance against these projects, are being attacked," says Ana Maria Rodriguez, representing the national civil society coalitions.

### LOCAL

Vulnerable communities are directly suffering from the lack of engagement on issues of land and environmental conflicts. Gabriel Urbano, of the Corporación de Desarrollo Solidario de Montes de Maria, a local organization working to protect land rights, states that despite an abundance of water and food production in his community, 90% of the population does not have access to clean water and the palm oil industry is destroying food crops.



People demonstrating in Colombia demanding a peace agreement (the banner says : agreement now). Photo: Ana Vogt – Justapaz

## INTERNATIONAL

With support from international partners such as LWF and CoS, Colombian civil society is raising its voice to ensure that human rights violations in Colombia do not remain invisible: as the peace process is seen as a major achievement and positive outcome internationally, it tends to eclipse the more worrying trends taking place in the country. Through participation in international and regional human rights mechanisms, Colombian civil society has shown its determination to shed light on the assassinations and attacks against local leaders and to hold the government accountable to end impunity and address the causes of this phenomenon.

A parallel UPR report by civil society, with support of LWF, speaks of assassinations of human rights defenders, corruption and a failure to guarantee fundamental human rights to the ethnic communities, among others. Ahead of the UPR for Colombia, LWF supported local organizations to advocate and increase international pressure on the Colombian government.

A lasting peace in Colombia will only be possible if the country engages in a number of structural changes which include ensuring fulfilment of their economic, social, cultural and environmental rights for all.

### 3. Empowering local communities to claim their rights in Mozambique

## LOCAL

Through its Land Rights project in Sofala province, LWF has accompanied a number of Community-Based Organisations to develop their own advocacy plans and claim their rights. Since the project started, in the 36 communities in Chibabava and Buzi districts that LWF is supporting, 55 local advocacy initiatives were successful and reached their objective: the communities of Chiboma and Jirome received seed vouchers, whilst Hamanmba, Njote, Masesso, Mussenemo and Bopira obtained the visit of agricultural technicians. Several communities were able to get training for their polyvalent health agents, and others managed to have literacy

centres set up in their villages, or civil registration brigades sent out to ensure registration of new-borns.

Community-led advocacy action has shown powerful results, with Community Development Centres (CDC) feeling empowered to apply for government funding: the CDC of Jirome obtained a grant of 700,000 MZN (11,000 USD). At the same time, LWF has supported Natural Resources Management Committees to be set up and strengthened in the communities. Legally these committees are entitled to receive 20% of all tax revenues gathered by the authorities from exploitation of natural resources by private actors on their land. Before 2015, there was virtually no application of this rule, and the Committees had received no funds, while in 2017, the Committees of Muxungue and Musenemo each received over 10,000 USD of tax revenues.

## NATIONAL

LWF is continuing to collaborate with national civil society, through coalitions and platforms that have together published a Land Profile of Mozambique, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the situation in terms of legislation and practice around land in Mozambique with specific case studies carried out on allegations of land grabbing in different regions of the country.

## INTERNATIONAL

Best practices and strategies to combat land grabbing were shared between Angolan and Mozambican civil society organizations through a visit from Angolan CSOs to Maputo in July 2017 thanks to support from BfdW. International collaboration has been key in ensuring follow-up on certain cases, such as the Niqel land grabbing case: a meeting was organized with the company management in Mozambique and the shareholders from the Netherlands, to raise the concerns of the affected communities. Now that the dialogue has been established with the company, and following a legal assessment commissioned by LWF, a mediation process is being set up between the company and the communities to hold the company accountable of its human rights abuses.



# ACHIEVING IMPACT THROUGH THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

## 1. Marshalling collective efforts to implement UPR recommendations on peace and reconciliation in South Sudan

After the outcome report of the South Sudan UPR was adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in March 2017, in which the Government of South Sudan accepted 203 out of 233 recommendations, LWF embarked on creating space for the Government and Civil Society Organizations to swiftly begin planning for the UPR implementation phase with support of key partners such as BfdW, FCA and CoS.

### INTERNATIONAL

In March 2017, LWF

co-organized a brainstorming advocacy session in Geneva to strategize on how best to advocate for lasting peace and reconciliation in South Sudan. More than twenty members of the advocacy group, the Ecumenical Network for South Sudan-European Hub participated in the event. In addition to identifying durable peace and reconciliation in South Sudan as a priority, the group also looked at ways by which they can contribute toward humanitarian assistance and development, as well as the issue of civil society space and human rights in South Sudan. In the advocacy plan of action, it was resolved that collective effort will be committed to providing moral, technical and material support to the South Sudan Council of Churches Action Plan for Peace and Reconciliation as a strategic entry point to accelerating the realization of lasting peace in South Sudan from below.

### NATIONAL

In April 2017, LWF facilitated a training workshop on UPR implementation in Juba, South Sudan in which more than thirty members of the UPR civil society coalition and faith-based organizations participated. The training workshop mainstreamed accepted UPR recommendations on peace and reconciliation into the respective programmatic work of the organizations that participated. A UPR implementation matrix of accepted recommendations on peace and reconciliation was developed and outlined several steps on how to work closely with the Government of South Sudan to ensure those recommendations were implemented. The draft UPR implementation matrix was validated as the final plan of action by the South Sudan UPR civil society and faith-based organizations in another workshop that LWF facilitated in December 2017 and in which some members of the parliament and the chairperson of the South Sudan Human Rights Commission participated and endorsed the document as the way forward for South Sudan UPR.

### LOCAL

Following the development of the South Sudan UPR implementation matrix, the draft document was circulated in LWF field offices in the Greater Upper Nile Region and shared with community members to gauge their feedback, which became part of the final document. Efforts are underway to continue engaging the communities at the grassroots level in the Greater Equatoria and Bahr El-Ghazal Regions as part of the implementation process of accepted UPR recommendations on peace and reconciliation in South Sudan.

## 2. Enabling access to justice for refugees and post conflict communities in Uganda

### NATIONAL

### INTERNATIONAL

In Uganda, LWF

joined the national coalition on UPR with support from BfdW and has been leading a newly-created cluster promoting the rights of refugees and post-conflict communities. After the UPR adoption session in March 2016, close collaboration between the 350 CSOs comprising the platform and the relevant state authorities resulted in the development of a national framework for sustainable implementation of UPR recommendations. LWF and the refugees' rights cluster have been advocating for improving access to justice, resulting in Uganda accepting recommendations on improving access to justice and ending the detention of juveniles alongside adults.



Maria (*name changed*) stresses the problem of transportation to go to court and welcomes the mobile aid clinics organized by LWF: "Every time I go to court I have to sell a chicken to cater for transport and a meal, I have no more chicken to sell so as to go to court." Photo: LWF Uganda

## LOCAL

As a follow-up, LWF has worked closely with district authorities to bring about concrete changes at local level. One of the greatest hinderers for refugees to access justice is the long distances to law courts and their ignorance of the law and legal procedures. To bridge the gap, organizing legal aid clinics in ten different sub counties was an effective way to bring legal services closer to the community. As a result, 192 vulnerable and marginalized men and women received direct one-on-one legal counseling; some were referred to court representation, alternative dispute resolution and other legal aid services. In addition, 5062 persons were made aware of land rights, gender-based violence and access to justice, which are the major legal issues affecting the communities. Close partnership with Uganda Law Society Legal Aid Project, local authorities and lawyers from partner organizations was key in making this initiative successful.

On ensuring juveniles are not detained with adults, a milestone was achieved in Kamwenge District where a separate juvenile detention facility is currently under construction. A Probation Officer was also recruited to ensure that cases of juveniles in conflict with the law are disposed expeditiously by the justice system. Furthermore, during the District Coordination Committee (DCC) meetings in Pader and Kitgum Districts, it was resolved that the DCC carry impromptu prison inspections. 15 inmates were released and 13 children reunited with their families thanks to three inspections which brought to light cases of illegal detention, among others. Follow-up actions on health issues also included delivery of mosquito nets to breastfeeding mothers to reduce risks of contracting malaria, supply of medicine and allocation of a nurse to the district detention facility. Such progress was made possible with LWF and civil society working hand-in-hand with eleven institutions, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gender and Justice to the Police and Lands Offices to only name a few.

### 3. Bridging the gap between rights-holders and duty-bearers in Nepal

## LOCAL

To further its rights-based approach, LWF Nepal focused on building the capacity of the most vulnerable communities it works with – Dalits, former bonded laborers (haliyas), refugees and indigenous people. This support included helping them to establish their own democratic organizations and to carry out their advocacy initiatives, meeting with relevant local duty-bearers to claim their rights on specific issues affecting them. As a result, different rights-holders' organizations were granted resources amounting to 44,000 EUR. In addition, birth registration campaigns started in two municipalities where most of the Bhutanese refugees are living.



Rekha Chaudhary – elected as women ward member. Photo: LWF Nepal

A major achievement in increasing local leadership was reached as 63 people from LWF Nepal target communities were elected to different positions at local, provincial and federal level in 2017. Having representatives appointed as Deputy Mayor, Ward Chairperson, Ward Member, to only name a few, is a significant shift for communities' voices to be heard and for concrete measures to be taken.

## NATIONAL

## INTERNATIONAL

LWF Nepal was involved in drafting a parallel report for the Universal Periodic review in 2015. Since the review took place, it has been actively engaged in the implementation phase, focusing on policy interventions at national level and bringing together rights-holders and duty-bearers. Priority issues included just and timely rehabilitation of former bonded laborers; equitable humanitarian assistance to Dalits and marginalized groups; and land rights, citizenship, tenant rights, employment issues of marginalized indigenous groups such as Santhal and Mushar. These initiatives were successful in increasing awareness of the national level government on the gaps and deriving commitments from them.

LWF Nepal also initiated a pilot program to monitor Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR), focusing especially on right to education and right to health, using advanced Mobile App Technology for the first time. The ESCR yearbook was published incorporating the findings collected and was shared with a wide range of stakeholders including relevant government agencies. The pilot was carried out in one district in 2017 with a vision to expand it to other districts and to incorporate other rights.

# Examples of Impact in 2017

	Key processes	Key achievements
 LOCAL	Communities are made aware of their land rights in Angola and Mozambique and are supported to start their land registration.	42 villages in Mozambique and Angola had their land demarcated and 26 villages have started the legalization process.
	Rural communities in Angola and Mozambique are empowered to successfully demand accountability to relevant local duty-bearers through advocacy and human rights trainings.	53 initiatives were channeled through the Village Development Committees in Angola and Mozambique to demand support from authorities. In Mozambique, 2 communities were able to receive the 20% revenue tax from logging businesses (10'000 USD each).
	In Myanmar, LWF and partners have sensitized communities on issues of land legislation and birth registration; baseline data on rates of birth registration has been gathered in targeted communities.	Some villages in targeted areas (Delta, Kayin, Chin and Rakhine) have started the legalization process on their land and birth registration.
	In Nepal, a series of meetings were held with local government for the birth registration of Bhutanese refugees. Awareness sessions were also held with Bhutanese refugees on the importance of self-help groups and saving/credit practices as a way to become self-reliant.	Damak and Pathari Municipalities, where most of the Bhutanese refugees are living, have started birth registration of Bhutanese refugees. 6 saving and credit groups of Bhutanese refugees were established, with verbal commitment from Damak and Pathari Municipalities to be flexible for the business registration process.
 NATIONAL	LWF South Sudan with support from BfdW and FCA brought together 30 civil society organizations together to mainstream accepted UPR recommendations on peace and reconciliation into their respective programmatic work.	The South Sudan Human Rights Commission along with members of Parliament endorsed the final civil society UPR implementation matrix as the way forward on the UPR for South Sudan.
	In Kenya, LWF and the UPR Steering Committee finalised the 1st draft of the CSO UPR Midterm report which involved over 38 organizations, including an additional 10 organizations who had not engaged with the UPR process before, showing a broader engagement and participation of Kenyan civil society.	As a result of the UPR sensitization forums, there is increased refugee community awareness on UPR and human rights. One of the women who participated in these forums attributed her election as a camp leader, during the Kakuma leaders' elections in December 2017, to the training on human rights which empowered her to articulate her issues confidently.
	LWF Ethiopia has been actively involved in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), and supported the Ethiopian government in the launching process.	As part of the CRRF implementation process, the government of Ethiopia has started to issue birth certificates for refugee children born in the country, an issue that LWF has constantly been advocating for in the past years.
	In Uganda, LWF helped facilitate a UPR multi-stakeholder consultative meeting with both state and non-state actors to assess progress in the implementation of accepted UPR recommendations, challenges and ways forward.	LWF worked closely with district authorities, resulting in the construction of a separate detention center for juveniles and prison inspections. 10 legal aid clinics provided legal counseling to 192 vulnerable people (refugees and post conflict communities)
 INTERNATIONAL	LWF and CoS supported the Colombian platform on human rights, democracy and development in their advocacy visit to Geneva for the review of Colombia in the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.	The coalition of Colombian Human Rights Organizations published and submitted a parallel report for the Universal Periodic Review to the Human Rights Council, highlighting the growing human rights abuses and violence against social and environmental leaders.
	LWF World Service Country Programs participated for the first time in the UNHCR annual consultations with NGOs in Geneva. Participants acquired in-depth knowledge about the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), and had the opportunity to network with other NGOs to influence global refugee policies.	LWF chaired the African group discussion involving the UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Africa Director and his deputies.
	LWF organized a Global Workshop in Geneva bringing together representatives of 10 LWF country programs with an existing or prospective RBA L2G project.	Findings and recommendations from the external global evaluation were shared with all countries and related agencies.

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Cover photo: LWF supports Somali refugees in Jijiga, Ethiopia to access their fundamental rights to food, water and livelihoods. Photo: LWF/ C.Kästner



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