

### 1. MISSION

**ACTION** for human dignity.

### 2. VISION

FINN CHURCH AID'S (FCA) vision is a world comprised of resilient and just societies where everyone's right to peace, quality education and sustainable livelihood has been fulfilled.

### 3. VALUES

**UNCONDITIONAL LOVE FOR OUR NEIGHBOURS**: We promote human rights for all and regard all human beings as equals. We trust our partners and learn together with them. We embrace diversity and create connections between people with differing views.

UNYIELDING HOPE: We are committed to working collaboratively and consistently in order to achieve our long-term goals. We celebrate our achievements and are not disheartened by setbacks.

**COURAGE:** We work courageously for change. We dare to question established practices and call for the reassessment of power structures where needed.

**RESPECT:** We respect each other and our different beliefs. We respect the communities we work with, extending this to the environment and all its inhabitants. We value the resources given to us and use them in a cost-effective and transparent manner. We strive for mutual learning with our partners.





## 4. IDENTITY

FCA IS A RIGHTS-BASED actor, and our action is guided by international human rights standards and principles.

FCA IS A FAITH-BASED and church-related organisation founded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. The Church has mandated FCA to carry out its international diaconal work to help those most in need globally. The Christian tradition of compassion and social justice guides us.

We value the different backgrounds and beliefs of all people we work with and promote interfaith collaboration.

FCA IS A MEMBER of ACT Alliance and is committed to working with its ecumenical and faith-based partners.

Finn Church Aid is Finland's largest international aid organisation with more than 70 years of experience. We specialise in the world's most fragile contexts and work with the most vulnerable people, regardless of their religious beliefs, ethnic background or political convictions.

Laxmi Darlami, 42, attended the training to become a kiwi farmer four years ago in Nepal. Her kiwi farm allows her to save money, help her parents, and send her children to school. PHOTO: MONICA DEUPALA



# 5. HOW WE SEE THE WORLD

**MAJOR CHANGES** are happening in the world. Following two decades of positive progress in human development and reducing poverty, the combined negative effects of the global health and environmental crises, political fragility and conflicts are causing growing instability and disruption in many regions.

Wealth and social and political power are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, restricting the space for civil society action and threatening progress across the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Climate change- related crises have caused more displacement than conflict and insecurity in the last decade. The growing demands for food, energy and water hit vulnerable groups hard, with millions of displaced people living in protracted crisis situations. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection is increasing.

Gender disparities also remain a global challenge and addressing the gender gap is critical.

Young people have been increasingly moving into cities in search of a better life. Urbanisation and migration are

leading to inadequate livelihood opportunities, competition for work and income, and considerable poverty. At the same time, poverty worldwide is still concentrated in rural areas. International migration and hosting large numbers of refugees are enormous challenges for countries in already fragile situations. All these factors often exacerbate the previously existing and intersecting inequalities, with the most vulnerable groups most affected.

Addressing the most pressing development challenges requires coordinated efforts. Supporting innovative, effective, environmentally sustainable, and locally driven solutions in overcoming poverty has become a high priority for the international development community, offering a way to rethink development. Local leaders and communities have a key role to play in these development efforts. The youth, women, marginalized and excluded groups are also raising their voices and taking action for a more just world. Despite all the threats, with political commitment, appropriate resources and partnerships, it is possible to make positive progress in promoting human rights, equality and sustainable development for all.

### The world we live in

#### **Demographic changes**

Demographic changes include global population growth, aging populations in some regions, and a youth bulge in others. In fragile contexts, youth constitute the majority of the total population. Young women and men are vulnerable to many risks and often have unequal access to resources and opportunities. Youth unemployment is increasing youth migration, unrest and the risk of terrorism. At the same time, young people present huge potential for change with the capacity to innovate and adapt to different circumstances. Yet, gender, age, disability and other intersecting factors restrict the active participation and leadership of especially women and youth, and can cause marginalization or discrimination.



### **Shifting political landscape**

The globalization and integration policies of the last decades have been disrupted by major changes in geopolitics that are fragmenting the multilateral system. The marked return of power politics, nationalism and economic sanctions cause disruption and have longterm consequences. The Covid-19 pandemic and shifts in the geopolitical landscape have contributed to an acceleration in the shrinking of the civic space, rise of authoritarianism, decline in democratic processes, and a global pushback in women's rights and gender equality. In the future, political changes are more likely to result in humanitarian crises, lead to migration and exploit people in hybrid warfare.

#### **Development cooperation** in transition

Some of the changes in the global development landscape include the expansion in the number and diversity of development actors, more siloed and short-term funding, and growing demands on the implementing agencies. In response, development actors are adapting their programmes and ways of work. They are diversifying their funding sources with new types of finance, including public-private partnerships and impact investment.

Local ownership is one of cornerstones of sustainable development. Yet, there has been limited success in building genuine, mutually beneficial partnerships with local actors. Localisation is about putting people at the centre of development and a locally led engagement, which promotes diversity of skills and experiences. However, it cannot take place without discussions about the history of aid and power. Localisation is also an important aspect in private sector development and nexus discussions.







### People on the move

Diverse forms of migration will continue and urban areas in low-income countries will absorb most of the global population increase in the coming 30 years. People will continue to move into cities in search of jobs and social and economic opportunities, or as a result of environmental deterioration. In many countries urbanization has resulted in the proliferation of slums, pollution, urban poverty and rising inequality.

Within the last decade the global refugee population has more than doubled. People are forced to leave their homes due to social, economic and political instability and violence, and natural disasters exacerbated by climate change and environmental degradation. Displacement and conflict often have disproportionately negative consequences for women, girls and people with disabilities who are vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation, and gender-based violence (GBV).



#### Climate change and unsustainable use of natural resources

The unsustainable use of natural resources has had catastrophic effects on our planet including polluting air, water, and soil, changing the climate, and destroying entire ecosystems. These effects directly impact the quality of life and human rights, which in turn may worsen the current climate and environmental crises.

The impacts of climate change are multiplying existing pressures and leading to the reduced adaptive capacity of local populations, especially in countries with high levels of inequality. In some regions, climate change and unsustainable use of natural resources are also likely to challenge peace and sustainable development.

The negative effects of climate change and unsustainable use of natural resources hit the world's poorest and most marginalized people the hardest.

### **Governance and fragility**

By 2030, more than 80 % of the world's poorest will be living in fragile contexts. Fragile countries often experience alternating periods of relative stability and emergency caused by conflict, natural calamities, or both, with considerable consequences for local populations. This fragility is highly context-specific, yet most fragile states are characterized by inequality and exclusion. They suffer from poor governance and the absence of infrastructure and services. Countries with high fragility or conflict also face the biggest challenges in achieving inclusive and equitable quality education and enabling sustainable livelihoods.

Fragile states may lack the capacity or willingness to provide sufficient voice and accountability to their people; they face risks of conflict, political instability and rising violent extremism. Simultaneously, there is a shift in global attention, priorities and funding, as well as an increasingly shrinking space and difficult operating environment for civic participation.





#### **Enabling technology**

At the same time, a number of opportunities are offered by enabling technology and digitalisation. The digital transformation creates risks but can also promote more innovative, inclusive and sustainable development, and in doing so contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030.

Digitalisation can have a positive and proven impact on people's lives: it can reduce unemployment, improve quality of life, and enhance access to information and public services. Digitisation also provides opportunities for governments to operate with greater transparency and efficiency.

### 6. HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**BASED ON OUR RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH**, tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice is the basis of our work. FCA's experience has proven that equal access to information, participation and dialogue for the rightsholders and the duty-bearers at different levels of governance, is the best way to build more just societies and increase accountability mechanisms. FCA sees this structural transformation as a prerequisite for sustainable change and works actively toward it.

FCA supports the rights-holders to claim their rights. At the same time, FCA seeks to strengthen the ability and resolve of state, regional and local administrations and other duty-bearers to act for the realisation of human rights. In fragile contexts and during humanitarian crises, the role of the civil society may be quite prominent. FCA's catalytic contribution to change is paving the way for primary duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations.

Civil society has a tremendous role to play in the development of societies. Therefore, FCA actively defends the space that civil society actors need for their work and supports actors in strengthening their capacities.

FCA considers three thematic areas as central to sustainable change. These themes are associated with sets of rights: people have the right to live in peace and acquire quality education and sustainable livelihoods. The themes form our holistic programmatic approach, proactively tackling gender- and inclusion-specific concerns and dimensions. We will increasingly invest in developing our programmatic approach in disability inclusion throughout the three thematic areas. A healthy environment is also fundamental for sustainable change, and FCA contributes to this by mainstreaming climate action and environmental sustainability across the organization. projects and partnerships.

The realisation of these rights is most challenging in fragile contexts. Therefore, working and being present in such contexts remains a priority for FCA.

Resilience refers to the ability of individuals, communities, systems, countries or regions to anticipate and manage risks, and to respond to, cope with, recover and transform from shocks.

FCA puts people's resilience, their wellbeing, and the fulfilment of their rights, at the centre of its work. FCA's work increasingly relates to people on the move. Our programmes extend from community level projects, national dialogue and sector development to regional and global networks. Depending on the challenge and operating environment, we provide humanitarian assistance, engage in development cooperation, advocacy and investments.

**FCA's vision embeds** the belief that societies cannot be resilient and just unless they are upheld by local ownership, resources, structures and governance. Therefore, FCA's efforts aim at catalyzing and strengthening these aspects. External resources and ideas can effectively support this process as long as they are managed responsibly and consciously.

With the increasing needs in humanitarian assistance and protection, we will ensure a strong response and operational capacity for effective delivery of aid in emergency situations, and that our response is appropriate, effective, efficient and timely when crises erupt.

FCA is committed to addressing the rights and needs of refugees and internally displaced people, and to meeting the special needs of people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies.



Impact Goal: FCA works towards the world where economically and socially empowered people in fragile contexts will contribute to a positive and sustainable change in creating resilient and just societies.

FCA considers and promotes a triple-nexus approach, with different interventions combining response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness, linking also with longer-term development and peacebuilding. We believe that supporting local actors - as first responders when crises strike, as insider mediators and as owners of local knowledge - is the key for addressing needs during crises and in promoting sustainable development.

**FCA considers peace** as a prerequisite for sustainable development and the realisation of human rights. We contribute to preventing and resolving conflicts on multiple levels and ensure that peace processes are inclusive. In many conflict areas, traditional and faithoriented, insider mediators and excluded groups - including, but not limited to, women and youth - hold the keys to building sustainable peace. Consolidated peace also requires thematic and cross-thematic extension in order to include, for example, local and national governance, social cohesion, livelihood, healthy ecosystems, education and inclusive participation in political processes.

FCA's work in education is guided by the strong evidence that education empowers people and positively transforms their futures. Quality education from early childhood development (ECD) to tertiary level, following the lifelong learning principle, is increasingly important for individual and national development as people move to urban settings or are migrating. FCA addresses educational needs in humanitarian and non-humanitarian settings at both community and national levels. We play an active role internationally contributing to the development of the education sector. To ensure that changes in the education sector are sustainable, we contribute to teacher training and continuous professional development, and the capacity-building of community structures and local government.

FCA understands that promoting sustainable development is not a linear process. We acknowledge that agility and timely responsiveness are required from FCA in adapting our work to the evolving situations in each of our operating contexts.

Successful sustainable development requires partnerships between governments, institutional development actors, the private sector and civil society. These play a key role in achieving the programme objectives and ensuring sustainable transformative change. Within FCA, we share a common understanding about the importance of partnerships and wish to be the best possible partner for those we have chosen to work with.

FCA seeks innovative solutions and aims to take advantage of diverse opportunities offered by digitalisation to address context-specific development challenges. We believe that supporting digitalisation can help close the digital divide that can have adverse effects on the most vulnerable. We will ensure that digital initiatives are appropriately tailored to the local contexts and enable meaningful local participation. We will promote digitalisation to enhance our capacities to engage with the private sector. This includes programmatic innovation and diversification of livelihoods, increasing access to quality education through digital solutions and increasing the use of digitally enabled tools and methods to promote inclusive peacebuilding.

**FCA is committed to** investing in the growing number of young men and women in fragile contexts. Skilling youth for jobs that lead to decent employment is a priority. Job opportunities are increasingly found in new areas including digital services, in non-traditional sectors and through entrepreneurship. Green investments and jobs will be explored, prompted by the urgency of climate and environmental action.

**FCA focuses on** women and youth's entrepreneurship. The role of microenterprise is important both in rural and urban settings as the public and service sectors and large-scale companies cannot provide work for all. With our partners, we develop ways of mentoring promising



microenterprises and cooperatives so they can attract larger investments and grow into mid-size enterprises that have the potential to create jobs. To this end, FCA will strengthen its private sector engagement and partnerships.

While urbanisation is a growing trend, it does not take place separately from rural development. Consequently, we will work with rural communities to diversify income-generating opportunities and develop both inclusive and sustainable food and market systems.

FCA promotes women, youth and excluded groups' access to and participation in government decision making that reflects their needs and aspirations. Inclusive governance is one of the key contributing factors for the eradication of poverty and for sustainable development.

At the same time, we support local communities and civil society to play their legitimate and active role in building sustainable and peaceful societies. Promoting peace and sustainable development reduces poverty and prevents conflict.

### 7. THEMATIC GOALS

**TO ACHIEVE THE CHANGE** we want to see, FCA is committed to empowering people and local communities in fragile situations in their efforts to create just and resilient societies, namely through three main strategic themes: Right to Peace (R2P), Right to Quality Education (R2QE) and Right to Livelihood (R2L). These themes are associated with sets of rights: people have the right to live in peace and acquire quality education and sustainable livelihoods.

FCA's thematic expertise enables us to tackle complex development issues appropriately and efficiently, achieving the set objectives and impact in specific operating contexts. In addition, FCA is committed to promoting gender equality, social inclusion, in particular disability inclusion and diversity, and works actively against any forms of discrimination based on gender or other intersectional factors.

FCA's thematic goal: All persons, from children to adults, have increased access to quality education and lifelong learning. All community members, including marginalised and excluded groups, live in inclusive and peaceful communities, and benefit from sustainable livelihood opportunities that reduce poverty and build resilience.





### Right to Peace:

FCA contributes to conflict prevention and building sustainable and just peace through inclusive peacebuilding.

FCA CONTRIBUTES to inclusive political processes, peace support processes and dialogues at many levels by supporting the meaningful and positive role of the often excluded, yet relevant groups including traditional and faith-oriented actors, women and youth. We actively promote the inclusion of women and their leadership in peacebuilding. Our added value comes from our ability to work through all conflict phases, and in urban and rural conflict settings. This way our peacebuilding and peacemaking work contributes to sustainable development outcomes, realisation of human rights, and just and resilient societies. It also supports fair access to and sustainable use of natural resources.

FCA is a key actor in the development and success of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers. The Network aspires to ensure that religious and traditional actors play a positive role in preventing violence and contributing to sustainable peace by enhancing the effectiveness of efforts toward peaceful and inclusive societies.





Summer clubs supported by FCA brought children and youth together in Chernihiv, Ukraine during July and August 2022. The clubs provided valuable psychosocial support to a waraffected population.

PHOTO: ANTTI VP IÖNEN

### Right to Quality Education:

FCA improves access to and quality learning in Education in Emergencies, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and through Teacher Education, and Education Sector Development.

FCA WORKS in formal, non-formal and informal education. We create innovative solutions for quality education, including digital solutions in both high-tech and low-tech environments, greener learning spaces, and increasing education for sustainable development and climate literacy.

We support children and youth's access to retention and transitions in, as well as enhanced returns to education and learning at any age, with or without previous education background. This includes through Accelerated Education Programmes and utilising career guidance and counselling. FCA actively promotes girls' equal access to and continued schooling. In ensuring inclusive education pathways, we pay increasing attention to enablers and barriers for persons with disabilities of all ages.

We contribute to teacher education as teachers are

the most important resource for improving learning. Through Education in Emergencies, we provide access to learner-friendly, gender sensitive, inclusive, protective, and safe learning environments, and quality learning opportunities for children, adolescents, and youth. In this work FCA builds on Finnish Education Expertise and Finnish lessons learnt, especially through collaboration with the Teachers without Borders (TwB) network.

We aim to find practical ways of ensuring the accessibility and quality of vocational education to provide youth with updated and marketable competencies. We link vocational education to the job market to facilitate employment. We promote career guidance and counselling for fulfillment of rights and potentials. We support the education sector development to ensure sustainability, especially in fragile situations.



A majority of Cambodia's people live in rural areas, earning their livelihood from smallscale farming, fishing, casual work or micro-enterprises.

PHOTO: THOMAS HOMMEYER

### Right to Livelihood:

FCA promotes the right to develop, secure and sustain livelihoods through employment, entrepreneurship and strengthened resilience.

FCA REINFORCES the resilience of rural and urban communities where livelihoods are challenged by poverty, crises, and migration. We promote climate action and environmental sustainability, enabling climateresilient livelihoods. We focus on creating sustainable job opportunities for vulnerable youth and provide them with skillsets needed by the transforming working life. Furthermore, we promote inclusive market systems and access to business development services such as business incubation, start-up support, and advisory and financial services that facilitate employment and sustain growth. We foster economic empowerment and enterprise particularly of women, while at the same

time challenging widely prevalent patriarchal values. We assist women and youth in expanding small-scale, income generating activities into businesses that have growth and employment potential, and in securing equitable access to finance and other resources.

We also support cooperatives as they have proven an effective means to pool resources and gain access to services, inputs and markets that enable fairer participation for all (including the vulnerable) in market systems, engaging with the private sector in this work. Special attention will be given to the global refugee crisis, the drivers of migration, and livelihood development in the affected communities.





### 8. HOW WE OPERATE

FCA STRIVES at ensuring effectiveness and high quality of work, as well as accountability to all key stakeholders. Together with our partners, we hold duty-bearers to account for their actions, and we hold ourselves accountable for applying the highest aid sector standards.

FCA identifies practices to promote actions that respect globally set criteria and standards and that are relevant, coherent, effective and efficient and generate sustainable positive impact.

For FCA, local ownership is key to ensuring quality and appropriateness. The rights-holders, partners and national and local stakeholders are the experts on local conditions and issues that have an impact and ensure sustainability of our interventions. Our country presence and this close cooperation supports decisions and initiatives that allow us to react flexibly and appropriately to changing circumstances, also in the context of shorterterm donor funding.

FCA's country programmes aim to use our expertise, skills and added value effectively. We focus on consolidating operations and ensuring high-quality implementation of our programmes and ensuring that funds are used in the best possible way and so that targets are achieved.

The Sustainable Development Agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. As a result, FCA actively seeks and strengthens partnerships with a variety of actors that add value

FCA emphasises the role of national and local actors who legitimately represent rightsholders, facilitate their ownership and enable the effective use of local capacities.

to our work, including with the private sector. With all our partners, the principles of complementarity of roles and capacities, shared understanding of common goals and commitments, mutual respect of values, as well as transparency, accountability and learning from each other guide our work. FCA has made a clear commitment to localisation that permeates the thematic focus areas and all operational modalities.

FCA collaborates with ACT Alliance on both the local and global level. We support and develop the work of ACT forums in place in FCA's programme countries and lead local emergency responses when needed.

Non-discrimination, peaceful coexistence and respect for humanity are values which are shared by many faith traditions. This leads FCA to work with faith-based actors and religious communities. We work through global interfaith collaboration when it is strategically and practically relevant.



### **Organisational Goal 1:**

FCA promotes rights-based interventions based on the Sustainable Development Goals through the modalities of development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, advocacy and investments.

WE SEE THE WORLD FACING many fast-paced and interconnected global changes. In response we continue to specialise in our thematic areas, and facilitate the emergence of new ideas, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Amidst such changes, professional, evidence-based, comprehensive and flexible advocacy is needed globally, as well as in the countries where we work and in Finland where we are based.

FCA wants to amplify local voices and inspire people to take action for global justice. We will continue to invest in and expand skill-donation initiatives including the Women's Bank and Teachers without Borders and invest in volunteers and volunteer initiatives such as human rights observers and the Changemaker Finland Network. We are committed to supporting the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers by acting as its secretariat.

We also strive to develop our capacity and working methods to respond transparently, effectively and with agility in situations of humanitarian crisis, with our main focus on Level-3 emergencies. In particular in vulnerable contexts, sustainable impact requires also effectively promoting and implementing the nexus approach.

We promote scalable, sustainable and contextually appropriate development solutions based on our longstanding experience. We aim at thematic synergy as well as a context-specific and systematic combination of development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, advocacy and investments. We will engage with our partners to boost inclusive and sustainable development of SMEs and create opportunities for decent jobs, with a focus on young people and women.



Students in Kyaka II refugee settlement accessed tablets to continue their education while many classes remained closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. PHOTO: HUGH RUTHERFORD

### **Organisational Goal 2:**

FCA commits itself to quality, accountability, sustainability and effectiveness in all areas of its operation.

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE to our stakeholders including the communities and individuals we serve, donors, partners, staff, and the general public. We are committed to and comply with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) that describes the essential elements of accountable, effective, and high-quality action. We promote continuous learning and improvement.

We will strengthen operational systems to ensure effective and efficient use of resources and quality programme delivery.

We will strengthen proactive risk management to address risks present in the contexts and environments where we work. This is paramount in fragile contexts to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff members and partners. We welcome feedback and complaints in order to learn from both our successes and mistakes.

FCA is aware of the many risks involved in working in fragile and conflict states; we manage those risks together with the people we work with on a long-term basis.

We seek to take advantage of the benefits offered by digitalisation while minimizing the risks.

FCA is committed to reducing its ecological footprint. The environmental impact of our operations will be considered and minimized.



Women's Peace Committee in Pibor, South Sudan.

### **Organisational Goal 3:**

FCA puts emphasis on leadership, professional management of people and long-term planning of all human resources.

FCA OFFERS INSPIRING JOBS to professionals from a variety of fields and will attract and retain the most talented and committed individuals. FCA has in place policies and practices for accountable, flexible and sustainable people management.

An inclusive organisational culture enables quality leadership of staff with diverse backgrounds. FCA offers career development opportunities and promotes the competence, motivation and the wellbeing of its staff members, who are central to its work.

Our aim is to build ONE FCA where all staff members have a strong sense of belonging.

### **Organisational Goal 4:**

FCA actively collaborates with financial partners and other stakeholders and uses financial resources in an ethical and effective way.

FCA CONTINUES TO BUILD close and long-term relationships with the UN and UN agencies. Similarly, we will interact with other international agencies, donor agencies, institutions and donor governments. We seek collaboration with multilateral development institutions.

Sustainable financial growth is based on the strategic choice of using various funding sources. FCA recognizes changes in the global aid architecture and will respond with new initiatives. For example, FCA will develop new instruments for improving loan and investment mechanisms for actors in high-risk and otherwise challenging business environments. We continue to be a committed and accountable partner.

FCA is a reliable actor in programme operations, fundraising, communications, finance and administration. This translates into responsible and effective use of all our resources, in accordance with the principles of good governance and sustainable development.



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