



**Christian
World Service**
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

DRAFT: OUR DIRECTION



Summary of our Draft Direction

Our Hope:

Hope and life for the world's most vulnerable

Our Calling:

Inspired by Christian values, CWS partners with all across Aotearoa to support local communities across Oceania & the globe so that as stewards of creation together we build awareness & act on poverty eradication, injustice & peacebuilding

Our Values:

Manaakitanga

Respect, empathy, generosity & care

Mahi Tahi

Partnerships, building trust & working together

Whakauru

Our shared humanity is sacred and all have importance

Anga Whakamua

Learning, being thorough & accountable

Pononga

Giving & receiving honestly & transparently

Hauora

Wholistic wellbeing physical, mental, social, spiritual

Our Goals:

Strong Partnerships in Aotearoa NZ

We will earn support in Aotearoa by communicating compelling stories from our international partners, detailing hope, courage, and their impact amidst adversity.

Strong International Partnerships

We will partner with trusted local organisations who share our values, and we commit to supporting them in achieving their goals.

Strong Structures, Systems & Finances

We will ensure all decisions & processes within CWS deliver the best possible outcomes for the world's most vulnerable.

Our Current Activity and Priorities:

Take action on poverty eradication

Take action on global emergencies

Take action on climate change

Focus on partners in Oceania

Create a strong online presence

Establish a Youth Council

Collaborate with MFAT

Initiate a major financial donor project

Strengthen church relations

Strengthen Maori & Pacifica relations

Collaborate with Christian development orgs

Communicate more with our community

Deliver Christmas and Seasonal appeals

Profile bequests and regular givers

Refresh Gifted & Operation Refugee

Maintain and develop partnership in Oceania

Focus international partnerships for impact

Strengthen relationships with partners

Develop partners' capabilities

Simplify application and reporting processes

Develop simple safety & security checks

Ensure > 70% of funds go to partners

Strengthen connection with ACT Alliance

Annually review & extend CWS strategy

Annually review & develop workplans

Deliver balanced financial accounts

Constantly review and develop CWS policies

Introduce quality assurance across CWS

Recruit & retain capable & diverse personnel

Integrate processes to avoid duplications

Ensure data is safe & confidential

Embed simple systems and responsibilities

Regular governance reviews and upskilling

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The needs we see

A daily scan of global news headlines indicates our world both people and planet are fragile.

Tensions between ethnicities, ideologies, and religions remain elevated. So much so that the Action of Churches together (ACT) Alliance expressed the view at its Assembly in November 2024, that rather than the world experiencing reduced polarization, its presence is increasing¹. Conflicts and war are plentiful, leading to destruction of life, land, property, livelihoods, and the forced displacement of people. It is estimated by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that in May 2024, more than 120 million persons were displaced². The Danish Refugee Council has since estimated this number is likely to have experienced a rise of a further 6.7 million by the end of 2026³.

Yet, not all the world's challenges result from human activity. Natural disasters also play a significant role. The United Nations (UN) express this reality throughout its sustainable development goals. Specifically goal 11.5 speaks of the need to reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters. Our closest geographic neighbours across Oceania experience these disasters all too regularly. Cyclones sweep through almost annually. However, earthquakes and/or eruptions also present real challenges. So frequent are these problems, that Tonga has been determined the second most disaster-prone nation in the world⁴. Changes to our climate compound the intensity of natural disasters by creating peaks of temperature, droughts, king tides, floods, and rising sea levels. The causes of climate change are not only natural, human activity has also played a significant role in its advance. Regrettably, those who contribute the least to climate change in Oceania are impacted the most, yet they have the least power to effect altering the human behaviour that is at fault.

A third area of concern to CWS is scarcity of food for so many of the world's most vulnerable. While poverty stands as the first concern in the UNs development goals, its ally, hunger features as the second. Without doubt, significant progress has been made to address poverty. The World Bank estimates that forty-five years ago (in 1980) around 40% of the world's population lived in extreme poverty, which they define as living under 2.15USD per day⁵. However, the Bank continues by positing that this figure reduced to below 10% prior to the pandemic. Yet, as Covid-19 was in full force, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs proposed that decades of work to alleviate poverty had been reversed because of the impact of the virus⁶. More encouragingly, by 2024 The World bank estimated that only 8.5 percent of the global population (700 million people) were living on less than \$2.15 per day⁷. However, they added, that if poverty was defined as living on less than \$3.20 a day, as is the definition for lower-middle income countries, then poverty still impacted around 25% of the global population.

It is these kinds of challenges that motivate and drive us within Christian World Service. Suffice to say, sadly these problems continue to be very real and to cause much suffering to victims. There is much work yet to do in supporting, standing alongside, and empowering those who are most vulnerable – and to this we are committed.

¹ See <https://actalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/PUB-19-Assembly-Message-FINAL.pdf>

² See <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

³ See <https://www.reuters.com/world/global-displacement-rise-by-67-million-people-by-end-next-year-aid-group-says-2025-03-14/>

⁴ See <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WorldRiskReport-2020.pdf>

⁵ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY>

⁶ See <https://www.un.org/nl/desa/un-report-finds-covid-19-reversing-decades-progress-poverty-healthcare-and>

⁷ See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-prosperity-and-planet>

Our Identity

Christian World Service (CWS) was founded in December 1945 when a group of Christian denominations within Aotearoa New Zealand collaborated to host a Christmas Appeal that would raise funds to support relief in post-war Greece. In undertaking this project, it became one of, if not the first international aid and development organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Since its early days, the mission has developed and grown. Its concern has always been to express basic Christian values of compassion, care, peace, and justice for the oppressed and those who are most vulnerable around the globe.

Based on one of our previous publications entitled 'Partnership and Letting Go' we believe all are made by God, in the image of God, and that all are loved unconditionally by God. As people who seek to model our lives on the example of Jesus, our purpose is aligned with his - bringing life to the poor, the broken, the prisoner, the blind, the bruised, and the oppressed (Luke 4:18). We take seriously the call to care for our neighbour (Mark 12:31), the foreigner (Exodus 22:21), and those who are different to us (Luke 10:25-37).

In 2025, some 80 years since our founding, we continue this important work of bringing goodness, kindness and wellbeing into the world amongst those who suffer. We do this through the generosity and support of our CWS community. Today, we continue to represent the only, ecumenical aid and development organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand that is directly owned by and is accountable to the Church.



Since we began, New Zealand society has experienced change. Understandings of Christian faith have expanded, and the global diaspora has seen a growing diversity of religions being expressed⁸. Additionally, less institutionalized forms of spirituality have emerged both within and outside the church. Despite these changes, most kiwis continue to share the golden rule of “doing unto others as you would have them do to you”. This remains a constant anchor for humanity. Accordingly, concern for the welfare of those who are the most vulnerable stands as a critical moral and ethical value most New Zealanders share.

So much so, that since the 1940's there has been significant growth of nonprofit or civil society organisations who exist solely to deliver international aid and development. At the beginning of 2025 the peak body for our sector, the Aotearoa New Zealand Council of International Development represented around 90 member organisations who share similar goals and values. Collectively, our sector has grown from a revenue of 150 million NZD in 2018 to, 288 million NZD in 2024⁹. While this sum contributes generally to New Zealand productivity, far more importantly, it supports the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable around the world. Interestingly, while around only 32.3%¹⁰ of the New Zealand population

⁸ See Pio, E. (2014). *Work and Worship: Religious diversity at workplaces in New Zealand* AUT Faculty of Business and Law. New Zealand

⁹ https://www.cid.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Surveys/Members-Survey-Report-2024_Final-Smaller-version.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/census-data-nz-more-than-half-of-the-population-has-no-religion/YT2KJBSTQNBTPVDHJYHNALIZA/>

currently affiliate with formalized Christianity (church), more than twice that number (72%) perceive the Church adds value to society through its disaster and relief programmes¹¹. This suggests that alongside global need, as Kiwis we want to assist.

The primary partners of CWS today include the Anglican Church of New Zealand and Polynesia, the Methodist Church of New Zealand, the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, Christian Churches New Zealand and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Additionally, many of our supporters are not adherents of church communities, rather they share our values for the care and wellbeing of humanity, especially for those who are suffering.



CWS partners with the Action of Churches Together (ACT) Alliance centered in Geneva. ACT has over 150 member organisations across 127 countries all working to deliver aid and/or development. This partnership keeps us informed of fresh opportunities for service, but also with the latest thinking around best practice within the sector. CWS is also committed to continue finding opportunities for collaboration with other Christian organisations who share our values. We are also committed to partnering with a younger demographic; not only so they might assist in building awareness and participation in social action, but our desire is to see them lead, and have shared responsibility for decision making within the organisation.

Our goal is that together we might increase our impact in alleviating suffering, standing for justice, building peace, and enhancing life for those most vulnerable.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 talks of a “threefold cord”

We see strength in unity; value in ecumenism, synergy in collaboration

¹¹ <https://faithandbeliefstudynz.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/willberforce-report-2023-digital-2.pdf>

Our Hope

Hope and life for the world's most vulnerable

Our Calling:

Inspired by Christian values, CWS partners with all across Aotearoa who share Christian values of care for humanity.

We support local communities across Oceania and the globe so that as stewards of creation, together we build awareness, and we act on poverty eradication, injustice & peacebuilding.

Our Values



In Māori and English

Manaakitanga

Respect, empathy, generosity, & care

Mahi Tahī

Partnerships, building trust & working together

Whakauru

All humanity is sacred & equal

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Learning, being thorough & accountable

Pononga

Giving & receiving honestly & transparently

Hauora

Wholistic wellbeing - physical, mental, social, spiritual

Our Current Goals and Objectives

CWS was an early pioneer of locally led aid and development work. Rather than sending out 'experts' we have high confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the locals. Our partners know best the needs, aspirations, and priorities of their people, along with what solutions are likely to be most productive. Therefore, our focus is on getting as much financial resource to our partners so they can purchase local resources to help them realize their dreams for their future.

Due to this priority on what is sometimes referred to as a 'localisation' strategy, we place most of our efforts towards raising funds for use by partners. Therefore, our current goals lie in three key areas. We serve by building:

1. Strong local relationships in Aotearoa NZ
2. Strong International partners, and
3. Strong internal structures, systems, processes and finances

1) Strong relationships in Aotearoa NZ

We will earn support in Aotearoa by communicating compelling stories from our international partners detailing their hope, courage, and their impact amidst adversity.

2) Strong International partnerships

We will partner with trusted local organisations who share our values, and we commit to supporting them to achieve their goals.

3) Strong internal structures, systems, processes and finances

We will ensure all decisions and processes within CWS deliver the highest possible outcomes for the world's most vulnerable.



Our Current Activities and Priorities

The list below represents the work we are working towards. While much of our effort at the current time is strongly skewed towards building solid local relationships within Aotearoa New Zealand, our strategy and its associated programme is reviewed at the beginning of each year. This allows us to constantly adapt to the ever-changing developments that impact on CWS and on our partners in their work. As our domestic relationships strengthen in New Zealand and as the financial base of CWS grows, so too will our ability to increase our impact in addressing global poverty, injustice, emergency response and peacebuilding.

1) Strong Relationships in Aotearoa NZ

We will earn support in Aotearoa by communicating compelling stories from our international partners, detailing their hope, courage, and their impact amidst adversity.

To achieve strong relationships in Aotearoa NZ, we are committed to:

- a) Continuing to raise funds for poverty eradication. We will focus on developing awareness, profiling the work of our partners, and creating opportunities for churches and individuals to financially support our partners.



- b) Continuing to develop awareness of both natural and human emergencies around the globe where CWS or the ACT Alliance has partners. We will create opportunities for churches and individuals to financially support our partners working on global emergencies.
- c) Continuing to raise funds for climate action. Here we will concentrate on developing awareness, profiling the work of our partners towards advocacy around climate justice and their

programmes of building climate resilience. We will create opportunities for our community to financially support their initiatives.

- d) Focusing our international attention towards our closest neighbours in Oceania. We will develop awareness, profile the work of our partners, and create opportunities for our community to financially support their initiatives as our closest geographic neighbours.
- e) Building our profile with churches who are currently unaware of our work, amongst those outside communities of faith but who share our values and concerns for humanity, and amongst younger persons. This will be achieved through actively investing in our online presence. We will develop an intuitive and comprehensive webpage, social platforms, podcasts and a YouTube channel where we will develop awareness around international issues, especially those related to poverty, injustice, peacebuilding, and emergency response. We will also profile the work of our partners and create opportunities for our community to financially support their initiatives.

- f) Establishing a Youth Council who will take responsibility to build global awareness amongst younger people within Aotearoa. We will create opportunities for younger people to engage in social action along with providing mechanisms for younger people to lead and share responsibility for the organisation.



- g) Actively building rapport and collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in its aid and development initiatives across Oceania, SE Asia, and emergency response.
- h) Initiating a 'Major Financial Donor' project to inject capital into CWS to support its expansion.
- i) Actively building relationship with our denominational church partners through communication, reporting, and decision-making.
- j) Developing relationships with local church partners where we will develop awareness of global issues, profile the work of our partners, and create opportunities for financially supporting our partners
- k) Building stronger relationships with the Māori community, focused on shared partnership and participation.
- l) Building stronger relationships with the Pacific community of Aotearoa New Zealand, focused on shared partnership and participation, especially with respect to our programmes across Oceania.
- m) Exploring potential synergies and efficiencies achieved through active collaboration with church & faith-based organisations concerned for international aid and development. We will continue to facilitate the Churches Emergency Response Team.
- n) Enhancing our communications within the CWS community through newsletters and in-person regional meetings. We will use these platforms to develop awareness of global issues related to poverty, injustice, peacebuilding and emergency response. This activity will also include profiling the work of our partners and creating opportunities for financially investing in their work.
- o) Continuing to deliver the Christmas Appeal through churches and



the wider CWS community as our flagship programme. Here, we will develop awareness of global issues related to poverty, injustice, peacebuilding and emergency response, profile the work of our partners, and create opportunities for financially supporting their work.

- p) Continuing to deliver quarterly appeals to wider CWS community, where we will develop awareness of global issues related to poverty, injustice, peacebuilding and emergency response, profile the work of our partners, and create opportunities for financially supporting their work.
- q) Continuing to actively profile our bequest and regular giving programmes as the most effective means of supporting and strengthening the ongoing work of CWS.
- r) Refreshing the Gifted Appeal, ensuring it delivers a strong financial return, and acts as an entry point for supporters to join our community.
- s) Refreshing Operation Refugee, ensuring it delivers a strong financial return, and acts as an entry point for supporters to join our community.
- t) Conducting a refresh of all CWS communications ensuring they are inspirational and motivate concern for the world's most vulnerable.

2) Strong International partners

We will partner with trusted local organisations who share our values, and we commit to supporting them in achieving their goals.

To achieve strong international partnerships, we have committed to:

- a) Proactively developing current and new partnerships across Oceania as or closest neighbour.



- b) Continuing to evaluate the number of international partners we support, ensuring both they (and we) are focused, and have maximum impact in relation to the respective size of our organisation/s.
- c) Strengthening our relationship with international partners, including mutual listening, learning, sharing our stories, and our capabilities for mutual benefit.
- d) Collaborating with partners (as desired) to develop their capabilities to maximise their impact.
- e) Creating simple yet robust templates for partners to use when submitting funding proposals and reports.
- f) Developing simple yet robust processes for maintaining safety and security checks in our work with partners.
- g) Developing a role of International Volunteer Champions.



3) Strong internal structures, systems, processes and finances

We will ensure all decisions and processes within CWS deliver the highest possible outcomes.

To achieve firm structures, systems, processes, and finances we have committed to:

- a) Ensuring that greater than 70% of all funds received will be designated and used for the work of partners.
- b) Strengthening strategic relationships with partners such as the Action of Churches Together (ACT) Alliance and actively support their initiatives towards emergency response and advocacy for the world's most vulnerable.
- c) Annually reviewing and developing the CWS strategy, ensuring we remain agile and adaptive.
- d) Reviewing and developing a documented work plan each year that will deliver our organisational goals.
- e) Developing a detailed project plan to manage and monitor all communications with our CWS community.
- f) Ensuring we deliver a balanced set of annual financial accounts each year.
- g) Continually reviewing and developing CWS policies to ensure their compliance, relevance, and appropriateness.
- h) Introducing a 'quality' programme within CWS to ensure our operational efficiency, so that the maximum amount of the funds possible is forwarded to partners.
- i) Ensuring we continue to recruit and retain competent and diverse employees, church representatives, and independent trustees on the Board.
- j) Undertaking regular governance upskilling.
- k) Integrating our donor database, with our financial software, and our online communication tools to eliminate duplications.
- l) Ensuring all electronic data is safeguarded through cloud-based backup and that it remains confidential.
- m) Continuing to embed simple and robust systems and clarity of responsibilities for all operations.