

HOPE AND ACTION - IN AN AGE OF DISRUPTION

DANCHURCHAID
GLOBAL STRATEGY
2023 - 2026

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[Nepal / Jakob Datt]



01. Introduction

We live in disruptive times. Fragility and displacement are on the rise and a rules-based global order and civil society space are under pressure. The climate, environment, and biodiversity crises are escalating, and poverty and inequality are worsening. At the same time, digitalisation, innovation, people's movements, and new types of partnerships bring enormous potential for change.

People, rights defenders, faith leaders, movements and civil society organisations are at the forefront globally and in Denmark, promoting rights, resolving conflicts, delivering humanitarian assistance, and driving sustainable development. Supporting these efforts, DanChurchAid – together with our partners in civil society, academia, and the private sector – connect, coordinate, and contribute to localised approaches, innovative sustainable solutions, and to ways of engaging the Danish public. Creating hope and promoting justice.

DanChurchAid's global strategy, *Hope and Action – in an Age of Disruption*, outlines an ambitious, bold, and innovative strategy for addressing the challenges facing the world of today and creating positive change for the world's poorest and people in need.

DanChurchAid is one of the largest and oldest humanitarian

organisations in Denmark with a track record of more than 100 years of working in the nexus between humanitarian, development and peace work. We were founded in 1922 by representatives of the Danish Evangelical-Lutheran Church who wanted to support victims of World War I. Today we have programmes in 20 countries and work globally through our active engagement in ACT Alliance – Action by Churches Together. DCA's church-based foundation and values still guide our engagement and moral compass. We work based on the core belief that all humans are created equal with inherent human rights.

This Global Strategy 2023-2026 has been developed in close cooperation with DCA's constituency, leadership, Partner Group, and staff across the organisation. The strategy covers DCA's work and priorities for the coming four years. The strategy sets the strategic direction and goals for our work globally and in Denmark based on the trends and challenges that impact life for the people we work with, and founded on our mission, vision and values, and our 100 years of experience. Furthermore, the strategy outlines how we ensure financial sustainability and stay fit for purpose as an organisation to deliver on our ambitious goals to save lives, build resilient communities, fight extreme inequality, and create engagement. ■



[South Sudan / Paul Jeffrey]

02. Mission, Vision, and Values

DanChurchAid supports the poorest of the world in their struggle for a dignified life and helps those whose lives are threatened. We provide humanitarian aid in disaster-stricken areas, long-term development assistance in poor regions and promote peace in fragile situations – to create a more equitable and sustainable world.

Our work derives from Christian values. We show active compassion, share with the world's poorest, and empower those in need. We act courageously when injustice is committed against people and when human rights are violated.

The situation of each individual is the starting point for our

work, with respect for human rights and equality. We engage with popular and political forces and seek to influence decision makers to improve conditions for the poor and marginalised. We work closely with faith-based and other partners to advance local leadership and break new ground in our partnerships to make the greatest possible difference in the world.

We show leadership and maintain our 100 years of tradition for hope and action. By innovating and testing new ways of engaging with volunteers, donors, and partners, we support people in poverty and distress to realise a better life and a just world. ■

Mission and Vision

DanChurchAid's mission, as stated in our statutes, is to empower the world's poorest and people in need in their struggle for a dignified life. This effort is based on a Christian world view of respect for human rights and the equal worth of all human beings. We deliver humanitarian aid and development assistance in close cooperation with churches and secular partners, and engage with people's movements and political powers to influence decision makers to improve conditions for the world's poorest at local, national, and global levels. We work to ensure that people enjoy equal rights and are treated equally. We assist people regardless of religion, political views, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age and physical or mental disabilities.

Our vision is a world without hunger, poverty, and oppression, in which popular and political powers constantly work strongly and actively for a just and sustainable distribution and use of the earth's resources.

Values

In DanChurchAid, we live through our four values, which are our compass at all levels of the organisation and guide the priorities, decisions and daily actions and behaviour of both management and staff.

Compassionate

We respect and welcome differences and are obligated to help others. We walk that extra mile with people in need and encourage dialogue whenever possible. We work hard to ensure that people have equal rights and are treated equally.

Proactive

We create positive change by taking action when needed. We create space for innovation and are constantly curious about new ways of working. We seek engagement with others to break new ground.

Responsible

We are transparent and accountable in all actions and create sustainable solutions. We inspire trust by leading by example with integrity. We consider the bigger picture and develop solutions that will provide sustainable and effective aid work.

Respectful

We respect the wishes and preferences of the people we help and act with fairness in all activities. We learn from our colleagues and partners to strengthen our organisation.

[Domiz Refugee Camp, Iraq / Jakob Dall]



03. Global Trends

The world we work in: Geopolitical disruption, democratic backsliding, and new alliances for change.

DanChurchAid's strategy is shaped by the world we work in. Approaching 2030 and the deadline for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, we are repeatedly reminded that positive change is possible when states, civil society, the private sector, and people work together to reach shared goals. Climate change has moved to the centre of the political and public conversation with immense potential for action and the creation of new, joint solutions. In the countries where we work, communities, civil society, and the private sector constantly advance smaller-scale progress, thereby strengthening food security, promoting rights, and making it possible for people to overcome poverty.

However, the world we work in is still grossly unequal. The Covid pandemic exposed multidimensional inequalities that shape our present and future – and call for reflection and action. Despite overall development gains, poverty and growing inequalities leave too many people behind and fuel conflict and displacement. If unchecked, the climate and environment crisis will exacerbate this even further.

Geopolitically, we are moving towards a situation similar to what we witnessed during the Cold War. We are experiencing war in Europe and millions of people are being displaced. The world is increasingly becoming multi-polar, leading to competition between the great and middle powers for resources and influence in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Closely linked to this, conflicts are becoming more complex, and we increasingly deal with proxy wars and private contractors with no accountability. Generally, respect for International Humanitarian Law is challenged. At the same time, the legal framework put in place in response to terrorism and global crimes to an increasing extent albeit unintentionally curbs humanitarian access and transfer of funds to people in need.

The ambition of a rules-based global order is under pressure, also in Europe where policies on migration, gender, LGBTQIA+

and civil society space in a growing number of countries run counter to the intended values and principles that Europe is setting out to promote globally. Democratic backsliding is thus a global trend and the women's rights we have taken for granted are yet again under assault. The role of Big Tech here – positive as well as negative – is constantly developing.

Aid priorities are increasingly influenced by domestic agendas while aid budgets do not meet growing needs. This situation amplifies the call for decolonialisation and localisation of aid and requires new players and partners to fill the financing gap and deliver on the SDGs. More than ever, international humanitarian and development players like DCA are challenged to demonstrate independence from state agendas in value-based and locally rooted engagement while maintaining a strong constituency to remain legitimate.

Investors, corporations, and consumers have meanwhile become stronger value-drivers, at times more principled than states. And people, human rights defenders, faith leaders and change movements across the world continue to mobilise for democratic change, for gender and climate justice and for sustainable development. A notion of global connectedness and global citizenship is on the rise, particularly amongst youth, globally and in Denmark, driven not least by the climate, environment and anti-discrimination movements and bringing immense opportunities for positive change.

In this global landscape, four interrelated challenges are of particular importance to DanChurchAid's strategy for the years to come.

Fragility and displacement is on the rise in an unstable world: Inequalities, governance failures, the climate and environment crises and disputes over (natural) resources trigger conflict, displacement, and humanitarian crisis, which particularly affect women, youth, and minorities. Violent and protracted conflict and war drive 80% of all humanitarian needs and leave mines and unexploded remnants which put lives and livelihoods of future generations at risk. A record number of people are forcibly displaced.

Millions of people still go to bed hungry every day while large populations of youth, not least in Africa, are aspiring to jobs and rights and migrate regionally and internationally, hoping for a better future, often risking their lives to do so. People increasingly seek opportunities and work in cities, and fast-growing urban and poor populations face needs similar to people in large, protracted refugee contexts.

The importance of innovative approaches to address humanitarian needs and ensure access while preventing conflict and building hope is obvious. This applies to rural as well as in urban settings.

The climate and biodiversity crisis is escalating in an unequal world: Approaching 2030, the “SDG clash” is becoming more and more evident: we have succeeded in generating overall growth, reducing extreme poverty, and advancing health and education (at least until the covid setback), but at the expense of climate change and biodiversity loss.

If not mitigated, the climate, environment and biodiversity crises will challenge life as we know it, exacerbate fragility, and trigger large-scale displacement and migration, with the poorest being affected the hardest. At the same time, food insecurity is one of today’s biggest challenges due to the way we produce and consume and to the dynamics and composition of global food markets, which makes them sensitive for example to conflicts. One third of all food produced globally is wasted.

We urgently need to find ways to produce and secure access to enough food for a growing population without negatively impacting climate and environment. We are basically challenged to rethink how we live, produce, consume, and waste and how we fight hunger and advance a sustainable development path so as to leave a liveable planet for future generations.

There is an imminent need for disrupting food systems to address food insecurity while promoting scaled up, climate resilient and low-carbon food production. This goes hand in hand with the need to secure sustainable jobs and livelihoods for people so far left behind.

Values and civil society space are under pressure in a digitalised world: As a result of a rules-based global order under pressure, space for civil society and humanitarian access is shrinking. Better equipped authoritarian regimes learn from each other and make it more difficult for local

and international civil society to operate due to legislation and sophisticated surveillance and control. As part of this challenge, counter-terror legislation and narratives are being misused (more and more pro-actively) to shrink democratic and humanitarian space.

Democracy and human rights backsliding impact women, girls, youth, LGBTQIA+ and ethnic and religious minorities the hardest, resulting in marginalisation and discrimination in basic service provision, persecution of ethnic and religious minorities and encroachment of freedoms of religion and belief. Youth, while organising and pushing for change, are also excluded from decision-making and opportunities in continuing patriarchal societies. Women’s participation in local and national decision-making, economic rights, and inclusion as well as sexual and reproductive health rights have not been progressing in the way we had hoped. On the contrary, we witness local and global setbacks. And in a digital age, women’s rights defenders are experiencing immense pressures offline and online.

Enhancing space by being even smarter in avoiding misuse of digital technology, developing flexible ways to reach people in need and finding the right balance between engaging with and challenging state structures in repressive contexts will be essential in the coming years. So will utilising the immense opportunities of digitalisation for the protection of rights, accountability and democratic participation.

Popular engagement and polarisation in a globalised world: Many Danes are becoming more engaged in global issues particularly with relation to climate and sustainability, food waste and anti-discrimination. Covid contributed to this sense of global connectedness. While many youth take to the streets, individuals, churches, consumers, the private sector and political actors seek other avenues to engage in fighting climate change and advancing the SDGs. At the same time, we witness increasing polarisation of public and political conversations, exacerbated by algorithm-driven media consumption. Globalisation critique, immigration fatigue and fear, and a growing questioning of human rights as a universal value, inform the world view and perceptions of part of the Danish population and political landscape, which poses challenges to engagement, fundraising and principled development policies.

Manoeuvring in a polarised public conversation – contributing to bridging the gap and staying relevant across divides – will be essential in the years to come. The answer is to engage Danes through opportunities of action that are not only relevant across

divides but also promote a sense of global connectedness. This in turn places a high demand on our ability to develop new and flexible opportunities for action.

While challenges are obvious, opportunities are also evident. The following trends offer opportunities for the realisation of DanChurchAid's strategy in the years to come.

People and civil society are at the forefront in promoting change locally and globally:

DCA's value-based local partnerships can support and protect these efforts and respond constructively to the call and need for localised approaches and a global shift of power in humanitarian and development work. Among others, partnerships with faith-based actors can serve as a catalyst. In a world of misinformation, trusted faith-leaders become even more important proponents of democracy, rights, gender equality and leaving no-one behind. In Denmark, due to our strong faith and value-based foundation, DCA is uniquely positioned to engage Danes (across age, geographical and political divides), our church-based constituency, popular partners, the private sector and political stakeholders in supporting and promoting a rules-based global order, the advancement of the SDGs in Denmark and globally, and in backing ambitious development policies. Deepening and widening our cooperation with Danish partners such as boarding schools, folk high schools and scout movements is a unique way to engage a greater proportion Danes, across political and social divides.

Innovation and cooperation across sectors are on the rise:

Innovative multistakeholder partnerships between civil society, research institutions and the private sector generate green and sustainable solutions that can be taken to scale, and reach and create hope for more people. New players, including investors, are entering the field and a growing understanding of the importance of locally led interventions and solutions is emerging. Breaking silos and mobilising resources across sectors have the potential to disrupt food and market systems in favour of the poorest, the climate and the environment, while blended finance models

combining institutional aid, private donations and market-based investments can take solutions to scale. DCA has been innovating our role as a bridge-builder and facilitator of meetings across sectors, and can secure local ownership, locally grown solutions, and development impact. In Denmark, a growing interest from private sector actors and consumers in advancing green partnerships to combat food waste and mitigate climate and environment impact provides exciting new opportunities for increased engagement.

Digitalisation brings huge opportunities for inclusion and rights promotion:

While we are only beginning to realise how digitalisation and Big Tech impacts world politics, public debate and essentially our democracies, we have also only just begun to explore the potential and opportunities for inclusion through a rights-based use of digital technologies. DCA has been digitalising for a while, and can leverage digitalisation's developing opportunities to promote rights, livelihoods and financial inclusion of traditionally excluded groups – not least women - and to reach the most marginalised in need of humanitarian assistance. In Denmark, new value-based partnerships with tech-players can contribute to innovation and facilitate dialogue on rights-based and democratic use of digital technologies.

Climate change creates global connectedness and fosters joint action:

Climate change and the biodiversity crisis has the potential to reshape the global development narrative: climate change is not an "us" and "them" proposition but impacts all of us. Climate change, sustainability and food waste link people, consumers, church-based actors, popular partners and the private sector in Denmark and our programme countries. Danes, especially youth, are actively seeking ways to make sustainable choices and looking for ways to support a green transition. This demands increased flexibility, as the youth increasingly support the "cause" rather than a specific organisation, and continuously look for meaningful opportunities for action in solidarity with people in need. Essentially this brings new and promising potential for engagement of the Danish public in support of the change DCA wishes to promote. ■

[South Sudan / Paul Jeffrey]



04. Fundamental Principles

DCA is a multi-mandated, faith-based, human rights-based, and partner-based organisation, which constitute our fundamental principles upon which we build our work. These fundamental principles are part of the statutes and define the core identity and legal mandate of DCA. They guide our work and provide DCA with a unique position to respond to multiple needs and create systemic and sustainable change at local, national, and international level.

Cooperating with faith-based and civil society organisations has been a fundamental part of DCA's *modus operandi* ever since our foundation. DCA sees locally led action in partnerships as the most legitimate and effective way of achieving our common goals. Being multi-mandated positions DCA to work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to achieve lasting and sustainable change. For DCA, promoting human rights is both a fundamental value, a methodology and an essential part of bringing about systemic change for the World's poorest and marginalised. As a faith and rights-based organisation, DCA holds a unique position for promoting human rights at policy, practice, and norms-changing level.

04.1. Multi-Mandated – for Lasting Change

DCA's multi-mandate allows us to move beyond traditional silos and integrate immediate humanitarian assistance, long-term development, peacebuilding, and advocacy efforts to create sustainable and lasting change. We create coherence, synergy and meet people's short and long-term needs as they evolve.

Our multi-mandated approach is conducted in close cooperation with church-based, other faith-based and secular partners and seeks to engage and influence decision makers to improve conditions for the worlds' poorest. Our multi-mandated approach enables us to effectively navigate in and respond to shifting contexts and situations i.e., from acute crisis to sustainable development, or the reverse, namely moving from development programming to crisis response. Our approach allows us to act with more flexibility and agility to crisis and fragility, and to integrate resilience building into humanitarian mine action and humanitarian responses while supporting transformation towards more just societies through peace interventions and advocacy. This includes a focus on aligning and coordinating work across our four

global goals and ensuring that programme approaches are anticipatory and adaptive, supporting both short-term and long-term needs of the poorest and marginalised groups and people affected by crisis.

In this strategy period:

- **We will strengthen an integrated programming approach across the triple nexus** through bringing our humanitarian interventions, development work, peacebuilding, and advocacy initiatives even closer together and bridge the gap between policy and practice at all levels ensuring long term impact and sustainability.

04.2. Human Rights-Based – for Just Change

Human rights are the foundation for all our work, while the human rights-based approach (HRBA) shapes all project and programme work. DCA has been a rights-based organisation for more than two decades and is well recognised for its rights-based programming. We implement HRBA through the PANEL principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Linking to Human Rights Law. Our approach to HRBA is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and UNDP's framework for implementing a Leaving No One Behind approach. In our humanitarian response we are guided by four humanitarian principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

The human rights challenges in today's world are immense. The international human rights conventions and a rules-based global order are widely challenged. Conflict and war undermine the most basic human rights of a large and increasing number of people. The need to build support for, and protect, the human rights of the world's most vulnerable and marginalised is bigger than ever. Human rights violations such as discrimination continue to be a root cause of poverty and marginalisation, calling for systemic change. At the same time, new social movements and the opportunities provided by tech for outreach, creative campaigning, documentation of human rights violations and direct dialogue with duty bearers offer new prospects for the promotion of human rights and international humanitarian law.

DCA's HRBA focuses on the needs, rights, and dignity of poor and marginalised groups such as displaced and vulnerable people, minorities including LBGTQIA+ persons, ethnic and religious minorities, Indigenous people, and people living with

disabilities, with a special focus on youth and women within all groups. Attention to non-discrimination and inclusion of those most at risk, including various minority groups, is also a key aspect of mainstreaming the protection principles which mirror the PANEL principles. Strengthening non-discrimination, inclusion, and pluralism in and through our work is a continuous focus.

The promotion and protection of human rights at local and national level is a core element of DCA's work and is supported by regional and global advocacy and by extensive stakeholder engagement and leadership. DCA focuses on women's rights, climate justice and securing space for civil society through the ACT Alliance, through relevant human rights mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, and through our Danish stakeholder engagement and media work.

DCA has a strong network of partners and many years of presence in the countries where we work, which enables us to undertake strong context analyses and map power structures even at community level. Thus we can identify the most marginalised rights-holders and the relevant duty bearers to work with also in contexts blurred by conflict, lack of state presence and parallel structures. In fragile contexts, DCA will strengthen protection mainstreaming to ensure that fundamental human rights principles are recognised and realised in programme implementation.

In this strategy period:

- **We will work to promote and protect a rules-based world order and push for progressive changes in national and international practice and legal frameworks.** We will strengthen our work with Linking to Human Rights Frameworks and Law through our multistakeholder approach and integrate and advance the locally led advocacy work of our partners into our Danish and global alliances and engagements.
- **We will strengthen our focus on combatting discrimination and promoting inclusion.** We will further sharpen our focus on identifying the specific risks of rights-holders based on their intersectional identity (gender, sexual orientation, faith/culture, ethnicity, age, disability/ability, political orientation) and strengthen our work to change discriminatory norms, values, practices, policies and laws.

- **We will enhance our focus on Tech for Human Rights** through particularly focusing on securing the civic space online and bridging the digital divide that excludes the poorest and marginalised. DCA will address the shrinking civic space online through a multistakeholder approach that invites civil society partners, state actors and tech sector actors to collaborate on addressing hate speeches and misinformation and by providing digital security support to human rights defenders.
- **We will strengthen focus on human rights in our Danish communication in our webpage, publications and in the media.** We will use positive and value-based case stories to communicate human rights issues to the Danish public and our supporters. We will ensure that human-interest stories respect the dignity and human rights of the people we portray.

04.3. Faith-Based – for Systemic Change

DanChurchAid is a faith-based organisation guided by Christian values and the belief that all humans are created equal with inherent human rights. This world view guides our international work, our engagement of the Danish public and our advocacy on behalf, and with, the world's poorest and people in need globally and in Denmark.

Our faith-based foundation implies an obligation to work with people of all backgrounds for a world with peace, justice, and care for the whole creation – led by hope in action for comprehensive transformation. DCA considers religion as one of the main drivers of change and recognises our responsibility to understand and engage with religious actors in our way of working and in who we work with. We recognise our lead and comprehensive experience in this field and work to inspire and support other actors, including donors, in developing their competence and policies, practices, and tools for faith actor engagement. We also recognise that our faith-based foundation and constituency give DCA legitimacy, moral weight, and a responsibility to engage in public and political conversations about international humanitarian and development issues, human rights and global cooperation.

Obstacles to rights fulfilment are complex. Systemic, sustainable change can only be achieved if changes to legal frameworks, policy and behaviour are rooted in people's

convictions, beliefs, and values. Where DCA works, most people have religious world views, and consequently faith actors are key for value formation, mobilisation, and behavioural change. Not least in fragile contexts, religious actors have key roles as first responders to crises with great contextual knowledge of who is left behind. These leaders have essential roles as local actors across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and can be both drivers of conflict and human rights violations as well as key actors in conflict prevention and peace building.

DCA has learned the strength of connecting faith actors in our programme work with faith actors in our Danish constituency – for mutual learning, challenging debate and engagement. This effect goes beyond ecumenical exposure; it is transformational and contributes to solid development and effectiveness of both the programme work and of the value formation and advocacy of our Danish constituency.

In this strategy period:

- **We will proactively engage faith-based actors in conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions.** We will increase engagement with local faith-based actors in promotion of gender justice and in developing and defending civic space.
- **We will foster strategic interaction and exchange between faith-based actors in our programme work and in our Danish church constituency** so they can strengthen each other in shaping and defending the values, practice and advocacy of rights, of equality and of participation, and in humanitarian-development-peace interventions leaving no-one behind.

04.4. Partnerships – for Global Change

Since DCA was established, working in partnerships with civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and churches has been at the core of our way of working. Today, DCA works together with a variety of local, international, and Danish partners within civil society, social movements, research institutions, the private sector, investors, and our Danish popular and church-based constituency. We act as a bridge builder and facilitator between stakeholders and across sectors – connecting the dots to secure engagement in Denmark and greater impact in our programme countries. We perceive partnerships based on shared values and trust,

accountability and respect and on mutual learning and capacity strengthening as a key driver of sustainable change.

DCA places a strong focus on securing locally led solutions through equal partnerships with local civil society actors, including faith-based organisations. We recognize the need for addressing power imbalances in our own partnerships and in the global aid architecture in general. As part of this, DCA will continue to perform a leading role based on consultation and listening – including both to complementary and critical voices – in advancing the localisation of aid and power, and in risk sharing between international and local organisations and donors in our programme countries and globally. We will advance flexibility and agility in support of local actors to promote rights, provide humanitarian assistance, and drive sustainable development. Working in and creating global alliances for change is part of this focus. Through DCA's active membership of ACT Alliance and local ACT Forums, we coordinate and promote joint action and solutions from the local to the global level. We also facilitate access for our local partners to engage in international coordination and advocacy.

DCA is increasingly engaged in facilitating innovative multistakeholder partnerships across sectors locally and internationally. To this end we bring together civil society, research institutions, private sector actors, donors and investors in developing joint solutions to address humanitarian needs, promote inclusive development and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. In this endeavour, DCA ensures locally led solutions and development impact together with our partners. We are now expanding our engagement with like-minded investors to advance blended finance models and mobilise risk-willing finance to take solutions to scale.

DCA's work and the realisation of our international goals is dependent on, and firmly rooted in, our strong partnerships with Danish church-based and popular partners, which ensure the engagement of thousands of Danes across the country and of all ages in bringing about positive change globally. DCA will strengthen our long-term partnerships with Danish church-based organisations, youth organisations, and educational institutions and build new partnerships with value-based partners, especially folk high-schools, and junior folk high-schools. Building on a sense of global citizenship brought about by the global climate and justice

movements, we will strengthen relations between partners in our programme countries and our Danish constituency, particularly youth. We will establish more flexible alliances and collaborations with relevant groups, linking to social movements. We will develop our relations with Danish private sector partners to mobilise even more consumers in local action for global change. In this way we will reach new segments and engage even more Danes in joint actions to reach our global goals and improve lives for the world's poorest and people in need.

In this strategy period:

- **We will strengthen local leadership and localisation among our civil society and faith-based partners.** This intention relates to our commitments to the Grand Bargain, the Charter4Change and Local-2-Global. We will support local actors' influence and participation in advocacy platforms, and advance innovative inclusive partnership approaches. We will avail resources for capacity strengthening and organisational development based on partners' needs. And we will increase direct financing to local partners.
- **We will develop and test innovative, flexible, and safe models of supporting and resourcing informal social movements and activists** in close cooperation with progressive back donors. Such models include DCA's Human Rights Defender Fund, small grant facility and grants via survivor and community-led response.
- **We will scale up innovative private sector and multistakeholder partnerships that are inclusive and locally led.** This approach will also apply in conflict and crises contexts. We will strengthen the financial sustainability of our interventions through innovative blended financing models.
- **We will create stronger relationships to existing partners and our church constituency in Denmark. We will expand the partner base** among new partners and link to social movements and forming multistakeholder partnerships. ■

Civil Society Partnerships

DCA partners with a range of civil society and faith-based organisations. We select partners with a mandate from or representing communities, groups of rights-holders and constituencies and who are practicing empowerment, participation, inclusion, representation of rights-holders and downward accountability. We place a specific focus on women-led and youth-led organisations,

Local faith-based organisations are central to this work. Faith-based organisations are locally embedded and often organise groups of women and youth – and are thus key to promoting localisation, youth engagement and women's leadership. Partnering with progressive FBAs is a strong starting point for dialogue where faith actors are part of the problem, for instance in gender justice, but where change is also unlikely without engaging them.

DCA also partners with informal social movements, activist groups, human rights defenders, and informal community groups, who increasingly play a role as change agents locally and internationally. Social movements, informal activist and community groups are often quite time-bound, event or issue-based, and typically are not registered legal entities. They challenge conventional and mainstream support modalities in the aid structure, including that of DCA, and require increased flexibility from our side.

In Denmark, our church-based and popular civil society partners form the core of our work to engage the Danish public in promoting positive change for the world's poorest and people in need, and to realise the SDGs.

Multistakeholder Partnerships

DCA is invested in building innovative partnerships across civil society, the private sector, research institutions and investors to promote sustainable solutions which can be taken to scale.

We promote inclusive, multi-stakeholder engagement and global green partnerships in favour of a more just and sustainable future for all, especially in relation to food systems, value chain development, climate adaptation, and sustainable energy. We connect our global and Danish work to promote ethical trade and responsible business conduct in local and global value chains from farm to fork.

Engaging the private sector and investors in promoting green and just transition through locally led responses is key to creating employment opportunities and decent jobs, especially for women and youth. DCA will promote long-term solutions through sustainable business models that can be scaled up through blended finance. We engage various market actors – from farmer groups to youth entrepreneurs, social enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), multinationals, tech companies, and financial institutions – to connect the local, national, global and Danish levels.

By involving research institutions, think-tanks, universities, and associations, DCA ensures evidence-based documentation and learning. This supports the technical implementation of projects, provides evidence for advocacy interventions, and is critical in developing and testing new approaches and solutions across sectors.

The ACT Alliance and Global Connectedness

DCA is an active ACT Alliance member and will continue to support national ACT Forums and ACT globally. The ACT Alliance is a unique global platform for members with shared values, beliefs and visions for promoting sustainable development, human rights and facilitating cooperation at national and global levels.

DCA is also engaged in other faith or non-faith-based networks and alliances with whom we share common goals. These include the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, civil society and UN platforms, INGO or NNGO forums, the CHS Alliance, Climate Action Network, World Resources Institute, ICVA, VOICE, International Campaign to Ban Landmines etc., as well as trade- and business associations and unions. DCA is committed to including local partners in relevant and influential networks and alliances.

THEORY OF CHANGE

DanChurchAid

Who we are:



What we do:

Engage	Support	Innovate
Fund	Empower	Learn
Research	Advice	Advocate
Connect	Implement	Respond
Train	Facilitate	



Change agents:

Individuals / Communities And CBO's / Danish public / Multilateral organisations and agencies / Governments, civil servants and politicians / Human Rights defenders / CSO's and NGO's / Religious and moral leaders / Businesses



The problems we address:

OUR WORLD IS FRAGILE: Geopolitical disruption, democratic backsliding, and people in the streets.

Fragility and displacement on the rise in an unstable world.

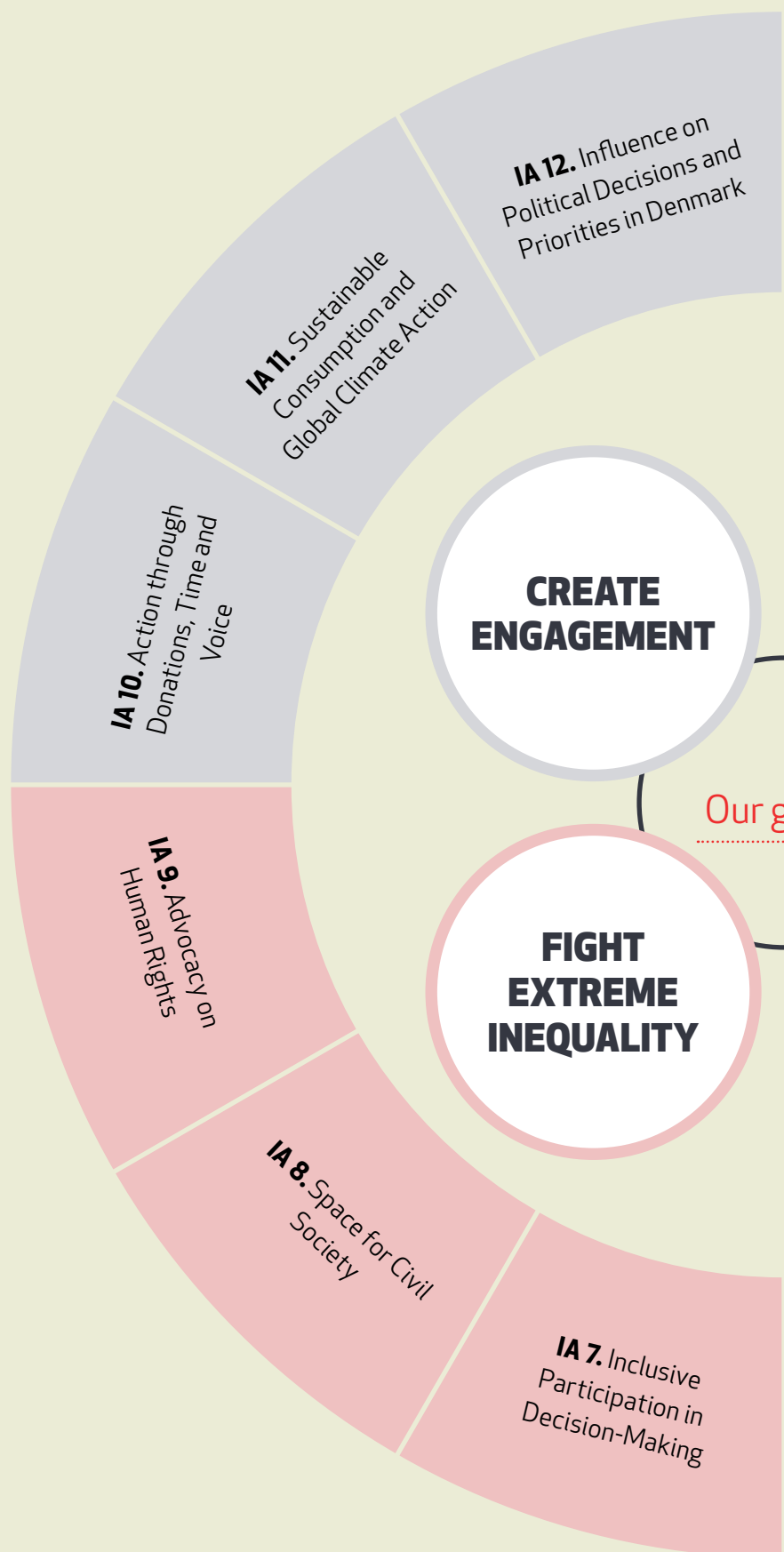
The climate and biodiversity crisis escalating in an increasingly unequal world.

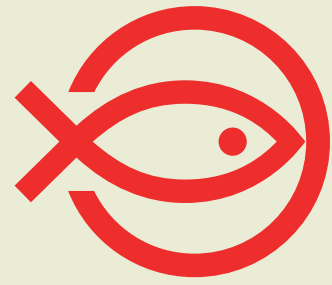
Values and civil society space under pressure in a digitalised world.

Globalisation, its downside, and public engagement in an increasingly polarised world.



Intervention areas
we will support and
contribute to:





>> Our vision:

A world without hunger, poverty, and oppression, in which popular and political powers constantly work strongly and actively for a just and sustainable distribution and use of the earth's resources.

[Uganda / Jjumba Martin]



05. Global Goals

DCA operates in a complex, fragile and ever-changing world where conflict, climate related disasters, pandemic(s), poverty, extreme inequality and pressure on human rights and democracy cause suffering and form barriers to opportunities for the World's poorest and people in need. In many places climate change is now a 'threat multiplier' placing significant pressure on access to natural resources and triggering conflict, displacement, and fragility. Meanwhile, shrinking civic and humanitarian space, urbanisation and migration add complexity to humanitarian, development and peace work. Yet innovation, digitalisation and popular engagement of global and Danish citizens bring immense opportunities.

In this context, over the next four years, DCA will continue to pursue our four ambitious Global Goals: Save Lives, Build Resilient Communities, Fight Extreme Inequality, and Create Engagement.

Our Global Goals are closely interconnected and enable us to work flexibly and adaptively across contexts. We are multi-mandated, working across the Humanitarian-Development-

Peace nexus while bringing people, diverse partners, and other actors together to realise our goals. DCA's international work thus promotes long-term solutions from the earliest stages of a humanitarian crisis, introduces prevention measures in development contexts, and supports emergency response when needed. We align interventions with the aim of reducing short-term humanitarian needs and supporting conflict prevention and peace efforts while simultaneously investing in recovery and long-term development. We address structural barriers and engage and advocate with policy makers for sustainable and just change. In Denmark, we work to engage Danes and our popular and private sector partners in supporting the realisation of our international goals and in achieving the SDGs.

In this way, our interventions – globally and in Denmark – are mutually supportive and reinforcing in addressing the multiple needs and rights of the people we work with while enhancing sustainability, long-term impact, and positive change for the most marginalised and poorest in the world.

DanChurchAid and The Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs create a common global framework that DCA uses to leverage work with relevant partners and the Danish public. The SDGs form a common agenda and a mobilising framework for DCA's engagement work with youth and public-private partnerships, both in Denmark and globally. DCA considers the SDGs and human rights as interconnected. SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and 16 (Peace and Justice and Strong Institutions) underpin our cross-cutting commitments and emphasise that advancing gender equality and human rights is key to realising the SDG commitment of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB). At the same time, DCA's multistakeholder approach to sustainable and locally led change connects to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). DCA has a unique role in linking SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by promoting solution-oriented partnerships and enabling conditions along the food value chain to be more inclusive, sustainable, and locally led – all the way from "farm to fork".



05.1. Save lives

Goal: *Individuals and communities affected by conflict, crisis, and displacement are protected, have the resilience to prevent, withstand and recover from shocks, and live dignified and peaceful lives.*

Trends

Violent conflicts and protracted crises today drive 80% of all humanitarian needs. Many conflicts and natural disasters are exacerbated, or even caused, by climate changes which increase the number and severity of e.g., cyclones, flooding and droughts and trigger conflict over natural resources. A record high number of people are displaced with limited opportunities for a prosperous future.

Meanwhile digitalisation keeps bringing new opportunities for reaching the most marginalised through the use of tech and mobile solutions, e.g. enabling cash transfers which facilitate dignified and more efficient aid provision while linking to local market structures. In an age of misinformation and pressure on humanitarian access, faith-based and community-based actors are becoming even more important actors and negotiators who can build trust and secure access to the most marginalised.

Key Learning

DCA increasingly experiences the need to strengthen integrated approaches in crisis contexts that embrace humanitarian action, longer-term development, and community aspirations for durable peace. In this regard, DCA acknowledges the need to scale up conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts in support of SDG 16 (Peace and Justice and Strong Institutions).

Integrated approaches in crisis contexts also entail linking protection approaches with livelihood and employment opportunities for communities affected by crisis and displacement. DCA over the years has proved itself as an innovative operational frontrunner on cash programming and financial inclusion, with a particular focus on women. We have experienced how innovative livelihood and food security interventions, responsible business conduct and market-based solutions have supported early recovery as soon as the humanitarian situation allowed, and in the longer term resilient communities were built which are less prone to disasters. Likewise, we have advanced the linking of humanitarian mine action with land rights

and livelihoods interventions turning mine fields into agricultural fields.

In most emergency contexts, we experience that humanitarian access is increasingly restricted and human rights and civic space are under severe pressure. Faith actors and community-based organisations often prove to be key to securing access and protection and for Leaving No-One Behind. Further, DCA has been instrumental in moving the localisation agenda forward through initiatives such as the Charter4Change and Local2Global.

Long Term Changes of DCA's Work

Humanitarian response and protection:

Vulnerable and displaced people are safe and withstand shocks and crisis (LTC 1)

DCA supports efforts of local civil society organisations and communities to prepare for shocks and crisis that prevent them living dignified and peaceful lives. This includes community-led preparedness, anticipatory action, and early-warning – strengthening the capacity to withstand and survive shocks and crisis when they strike.

DCA's immediate humanitarian interventions are people-centred and to the largest possible extent are built on multi-purpose cash and voucher programming linked to local markets, and on promoting community-led response to crisis by strengthening people's agency. DCA together with other ACT alliance members will continue to spearhead the development of innovative and digitalised methods for cash transfers and advocate for and implement group-cash transfers. Here DCA stands on a strong platform of survivor and community-led responses (SCLR).

Protection mainstreaming and specific protection approaches are areas that DCA will strengthen considerably in this strategy period. This includes a particular focus on applying contextually adapted strategies to address constraints faced by women and girls, improve psychosocial wellbeing, victim assistance (VA), and prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV) through improved risk management. As part of its protection activities, DCA will continue to undertake emergency survey and clearance of explosive remnants of war (ERW) and Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and thereby provide access to essential infrastructure and improve people's abilities to cope with the effects of armed violence.

Early recovery and conflict prevention:

Communities in fragile contexts are self-reliant and enjoy peaceful co-existence (LTC 2)

DCA will increasingly scale up peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts and link this to our work with climate adaption, e.g., where scarcity of land and water are a cause of conflicts. Here innovative livelihood opportunities, market-based approaches, and job creation, particularly for youth and women, will support early recovery, social cohesion, and peacebuilding while strengthening economic empowerment and financial inclusion of marginalised groups, particularly women.

Through capitalising on DCA's long engagement with faith-based organisations and faith leaders, we will strengthen support to local faith actors and communities encompassing a wide range of activities that largely seek either to prevent violent conflict, foster social cohesion or to facilitate peaceful dialogue and processes of reconciliation.

DCA will enlarge its humanitarian mine action activities in urban and rural areas through surveys and clearance of explosive remnants of war and will conduct explosive ordnance risk as well as address weapon and ammunition management (WAM) where applicable. In this manner access to land will be provided and opportunities for socio-economic development and livelihoods strengthened.

Advocacy on crisis and humanitarian issues:

Government institutions, non-state actors, international organisations, private sector, and civil society organisations promote and adhere to localisation commitments and international law in conflict and crisis (LTC 3)

DCA will continue to promote and accelerate local leadership and robust local organisations in all contexts in which we work. In achieving this at both national and global level, DCA will continue engaging donors, institutions, networks, and local organisations in advancing the localization commitments through processes like Grand Bargain.

Together with our civil society partners we will engage duty-bearers locally and internationally in promoting rights, protection, humanitarian access, civic space and respect for International Humanitarian Law. Through Danish value-based alliances, the ACT Alliance, and other global networks like International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL- CMC) and VOICE, we will raise concerns related to violations of IHL, accountability and the promotion of a rules-based global order and the advancement of UN article 1325 with international duty-bearers. We will involve the private sector and in particular Danish companies on agendas linked to responsible business conduct, human rights standards, and the principle of Leaving No-One Behind.

Strategic Focus

In this strategy period:

- **We will strengthen our protection work.** This work includes mainstreaming as well as specific protection interventions designed and delivered based on the specific constraints faced by women, men, boys and girls, and the opportunities that are available to them. We will align and incorporate protection approaches and human rights principles of diversity and inclusion to support communities in improving their protection and psychosocial wellbeing.
- **We will systematically integrate community cash grants and other innovative and community-led responses as part of our cash programming.** Linking these responses to the SCLR approach and leaving implementation of humanitarian project interventions in the hands of a selected group of people or the community ensures the further strengthening of local leadership of humanitarian interventions.
- **We will strengthen our conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts.** We will include conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm, and engage local actors, including faith actors, to identify and address the drivers of violent conflict. We will connect conflict prevention and peacebuilding with our climate work, particularly in fragile contexts where climate change has pushed conflicts that may be mitigated by adaptation measures for the most vulnerable.

Intervention Areas and Activities in support of 'Save Lives'

Humanitarian response and protection (IA 1)

- Support civil society partners, communities, and government institutions in building disaster preparedness, early warning systems and reinforce local capacities for anticipatory rights-based actions in crisis response.
- Strengthen protection approaches, incorporate diversity and inclusion practices, and enhance integration of DCA's human rights-based approach. Promote risk mitigation related to Gender Based Violence, psychosocial wellbeing, Emergency Survey and Clearance, explosive ordnance risk education, and support communities in identifying their own solutions to their protection through the SCLR approach.
- Support delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance that meets people's basic needs through cash programming, non-food and other essential items and services. >>

Early recovery and conflict prevention (IA 2)

- Do No Harm: Integrate conflict sensitivity and conflict prevention into relevant interventions.
- Support local actors, inclusive of gender, age, and diversity, to address drivers of violent conflict and contribute to social cohesion and peacebuilding efforts.
- Remove the threat of explosive remnants of war (ERW) through survey and clearance and through improved weapons and ammunition management (WAM) to ensure economic, social and health development free from constraints imposed by the risk of ERW contamination.
- Contribute to sustainable and inclusive, decent livelihoods and job creation for the displaced, refugees and host communities. Hereunder, strengthen women's social empowerment and financial inclusion through community skills training and access to financial services and markets.

Advocacy on crisis and humanitarian issues (IA 3)

- Promote the localisation agenda and commitments to enhance local leadership by local actors, inclusive of diversity, in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, policy dialogue, and decision-making. Leverage partners' engagement in international mechanisms and policy dialogue with third states, European policymakers, and through memberships in alliances and networks.
- Support evidence-based advocacy to strengthen adherence to IHL and IHRL by duty bearers, including non-state armed groups and private sector actors. Engage Danish and global stakeholders, including political actors, the private sector and opinion-formers, in advancing localisation, and promoting and protecting a rules-based global order.



05.2. Build Resilient Communities

Goal: *Individuals and communities have adapted to climate change and enjoy resilient livelihoods, are included in green and sustainable food and market systems, and benefit from policies in favour of climate justice and environmental protection.*

Trends

The climate, environment and biodiversity crises are exacerbating fragility, and risk triggering large-scale displacement and migration. At the same time, food insecurity is one of the biggest challenges of today due to how we produce and consume and how global market dynamics influence food prices. Solutions are needed to secure available, accessible, adequate and quality food for a growing population without negatively impacting the climate, environment, and human rights in local and global supply chains. DCA must adapt to and mitigate climate change through a people centred approach.

Innovative multistakeholder partnerships between civil society, research institutions, public institutions, investors, and local and international private sector can disrupt food and market systems in favour of the poorest, the climate and the environment. New players are entering the field and a growing understanding of the importance of locally led solutions is emerging. In Denmark, there is a growing interest in advancing green partnerships to link combating hunger, reducing food waste, mitigating climate, and reducing environmental impact. CO2 compensation brings new opportunities for engagement of Danish consumers and companies, which can directly positively impact people in DCA programme countries.

Key Learning

There is an inherent challenge and dilemma in how we can develop scalable solutions for small scale farmers to combat food insecurity while at the same time producing food in a manner that protects climate and environment. We have experienced how innovative multistakeholder partnerships can scale up locally led solutions to increase productivity and introduce new crops and products while addressing food insecurity and climate change. We have also experienced a strong potential in developing green value-chains for securing sustainable jobs and livelihoods for people normally left

behind. And we see great potential in scaling up certain forms of market-based agroecology solutions. Balancing SDG 1 (End Poverty), SDG 2 (No Hunger), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Sustainable Development) in an inclusive and sustainable manner is an area to be further developed and explored.

Youth in particular are motivated to engage and explore new solutions. Combining support to youth entrepreneurship with financial inclusion and digital literacy has generated new and exciting opportunities not only in rural areas but also in urban settings.

We need to continue the role of being an advocate and a bridge builder for innovative collaborations between partners and across sectors to ensure local ownership and locally grown solutions that contribute to lasting positive impact in both fragile and more stable development contexts.

A growing global and Danish public political awareness of the need for climate action create avenues for influence. Assuming a leading role within the ACT Alliance and strategic engagement with Danish allies has brought tangible and effective policy results underpinning our goal.

Long Term Changes of DCA's Work

Disaster risk reduction and climate resilience:

Vulnerable and displaced people anticipate and adapt to climate and environmental stressors and shocks, engaging in a sustainable and regenerative use of resources (LTC 4).

DCA will continue to support communities in enhancing community resilience to climate change and promote climate adaptation, solid risk management, and risk reduction strategies. Parallel to this, we will support access to land, the restoration and sustainability of ecosystems through a wide range of community-based approaches for sustainable natural resources management (including agroecology, agroforestry, water management, biodiversity and forestry restoration) taking the various needs and opportunities of communities into account.

To further increase our focus on climate change mitigation, we will support communities to engage in innovative

initiatives to improve ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, and support sustainable energy and low-carbon market systems.

Resilient livelihoods linked to markets and food systems:

Vulnerable and displaced people are resilient and actively engaged in economically and environmentally sustainable food and market systems (LCT 5)

DCA will expand its activities to include more work in urban areas in both fragile and more stable contexts. Here, we aim to create and expand livelihood opportunities that stimulate employment and inclusion in green and sustainable food and market systems. This initiative will be undertaken with a clear focus on supporting small-scale entrepreneurs, women, and youth, especially in the informal sector. In the rural setting, we will expand support to agricultural and sustainable food systems for improved food security through for example upscaling of pro-poor agricultural practices that build on agroecology principles and sustainable energy use and developing and scaling innovative solutions addressing food security through climate resilient and low-carbon production methods

We will prioritise support to pro-poor digital solutions that alleviate digital illiteracy. We will support enhanced financial inclusion of marginalised communities through access to financial and social services such as savings, loans, social protection, and insurance systems. To sustain these efforts, we will support communities and partners that pioneer and invest in market-based solutions and new types of blended financing models in multistakeholder partnerships. DCA will serve as bridge builder between local, global and Danish stakeholders, thus ensuring local ownership and promoting responsible business conduct and green livelihoods especially for women and youth.

Advocacy on resilience, including business & human rights:

Government institutions, international and national organisations, the private sector, research institutions and civil society contribute to implementation of global, national, and local instruments that strengthen just climate and environmental policies, protect human rights, and promote responsible business conduct (LTC 6)

DCA will strengthen our advocacy work to promote and influence just climate policies and environmental action as well as gender and youth inclusiveness in sustainable food and market systems. DCA's advocacy work will increase support to youth, faith and community-based organisations,

environmental activists, and natural resource rights movements at local, national, and international levels. We will support advocacy efforts to reform formal and informal structures to promote equal access to productive and natural resources, accountable and inclusive governance of natural and productive resources, and adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

We will emphasise support at the local level, but we will also work at national and global levels through alliances. We will build on and further develop our effective leadership on global climate advocacy within the ACT Alliance and our close cooperation with and within the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to promote implementation of just, national, and global climate policies and financing. In this we will include a continued focus on climate adaptation and on the loss and damage agenda. We will engage Danish and global stakeholders in policy initiatives and partnerships that advance adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as mobilising risk-willing blended finance to deliver on the SDGs.

Strategic Focus

In this strategy period:

- **We will strengthen innovative green solutions and mobilise resources to develop pro-poor food and market systems.** We will do this through dynamic multistakeholder partnerships and blended finance models promoting locally led solutions and working in favour of the poorest, the climate and the environment. We will strengthen the capacity of small-scale producers and local partners on environmental restorative practices and market-based approaches. To underpin these initiatives, we will promote responsible business conduct through human rights and environmental due diligence in the design of project and business models as well as through local and global advocacy efforts.
- **We will expand our activities in urban areas.** We will support the creation and expansion of livelihood opportunities that stimulate employment and inclusion into green and sustainable food and markets systems, linking rural and urban parts of the value chain.
- **We will support communities to enhance financial inclusion.** We will increase access to financial services, including savings, loans, and insurance systems, especially for women and youth, and support initiatives that pioneer digital solutions and innovative entrepreneurship.

Intervention Areas and Activities in support of 'Build Resilient Communities'

Disaster risk reduction and climate resilience (IA 4)

- Enhance community resilience to climate change and promote climate adaptation, solid risk management strategies and preparedness for emergency response.
- Restore and improve sustainability of ecosystems through community-based natural resource management measures to improve ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration.
- Support sustainable energy and low-carbon market systems.

Resilient livelihoods linked to markets and food systems (IA 5)

- In rural and urban settings, create and expand livelihood opportunities that stimulate employment and inclusion into green and sustainable food and local markets and food systems, with a focus on small-scale producers, entrepreneurs, women, and youth.
- Promote pro-poor digital solutions and improve financial inclusion of marginalised communities through access to financial services including savings, loans, and insurance systems.
- Strengthen social resilience of marginalised communities through access to social services and protection, and support to social cohesion and capacity strengthening including life skills.
- Promote food security by exploring innovative multistakeholder partnerships and promote enabling conditions for just transition through responsible business conduct and agroecology principles and practices in local and global food value chains.

Advocacy on resilience, including business and human rights (IA 6)

- Support advocacy of youth and equal rights movements, faith-based and community-based organisations and other strategic partners to ensure just climate policies, environmental action and gender and youth inclusiveness in sustainable food and market systems.
- Support local and national environmental defenders in their advocacy for local climate agendas.
- Support reform of formal and informal structures and mechanisms globally, nationally, and locally that promote equal access to productive and natural resources, accountable and inclusive governance and enforce business and human rights.
- Engage Danish and global stakeholders in policy initiatives and partnerships that advance adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, implementation of the Paris Agreement and FAO agroecology principles, and mobilise risk-willing blended finance to advance sustainable development. These efforts include continued climate advocacy leadership within the ACT Alliance.



05.3. Fight Extreme Inequality

Goal: *All individuals know, recognise, and claim human rights and basic freedoms, have the space and safety to organise and influence decisions affecting their everyday lives and enjoy democratic, accountable governance in just and equitable societies.*

Trends

The global economic inequality is unprecedented. Intersectional discrimination based on gender, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other categories is driving exclusion from economic participation and political influence. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated existing inequalities, impacting women and youth the hardest due to drastic increases in violence and loss of jobs and income. Democratic backsliding, shrinking civic space and polarisation have been global trends for decades. The role of big tech – negative and positive – in this is constantly developing.

Human rights defenders and change movements continue to mobilise against democratic backsliding and human rights violations, often using access to new digital platforms as a gateway to coordinating and advocating for progressive and real change. In fragile and repressive contexts, faith-based actors are often amongst the last actors standing in defence of human rights and civic space.

Key Learning

DCA has learned that addressing and changing power structures demands a multilevel and adaptive approach in support of SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace and Justice and Strong Institutions). This approach contributes to systemic and transformative change by addressing the norms, practices, policies, and legal frameworks that underpin extreme inequality. Changes in laws and policies mean little to people if they are not enforced and if they are not anchored in people's beliefs and convictions. Furthermore, change in people's attitudes and practices is only achievable if supported by formal, powerful institutions and legal frameworks.

Empowerment of rights holders to claim their rights and demand accountability from authorities is closely linked to a need for income and to resilience and protection from serious threats and risks. E.g., women's economic empowerment can lead to increased self-esteem and meaningful participation at household, community, and political decision-making levels.

Access to safe digital platforms and tools can enhance rights promotion, protection, and accountability work. Furthermore, DCA has witnessed how reduction of GBV and other risks can lead to enhanced participation and increased space to claim one's rights.

Long Term Changes of DCA's Work

Inclusive participation in decision-making:

Marginalised and vulnerable individuals, households, and communities know, own, and claim their rights and assist others to claim their rights, and influence decisions to respond to their needs and protect their rights (LTC 7).

To counter intersectional discrimination and extreme inequality, DCA will support the capacity and agency of vulnerable and marginalised groups, including women, girls and youth, and protect and promote their rights and dignity. DCA will continue engaging with women's and human rights organisations, faith-based actors, men and boys and broader communities to challenge norms, practices and policies standing in the way of equality.

We will support the participation and leadership of women, youth and marginalised groups in local and national governance structures, in the economy, and in monitoring equal service distribution in the fight against economic and social inequality.

DCA will address digital inequality and improve access of vulnerable and marginalised groups to information by enhancing digital literacy and promoting the use of technology to foster democratic participation and reduce existing inequalities and risks.

Space for civil society:

A diverse and strong civil society represents marginalised, vulnerable, and displaced people and holds moral and legal duty bearers to account (LTC 8).

DCA will promote space for civil society by supporting the resilience of partners and faith actors against crackdowns on civic space, restrictive NGO-laws, illegitimate use of criminal and antiterror legislation, surveillance technology etc. We will engage with relevant international mechanisms and build multistakeholder alliances that promote civic space as an enabler for sustainable rights-based development and just transition

We will innovate our extensive, flexible support to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and social movements. This includes physical and digital security, psychosocial support, and effective risk management. DCA will scale up the focus on women HRDs, who face additional risks, online and offline.

DCA will support efforts to fight corruption and hold states accountable for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable groups at local, regional, and national level. This includes strengthening community and civil society capacity to conduct effective human rights monitoring and documentation and local and national advocacy against discriminatory laws, service provision and practices.

Advocacy on human rights:

Government institutions, international organisations, private sector, and moral duty bearers protect civic space and safe digital participation and adhere to human rights (LTC 9).

DCA will engage with both legal and moral duty-bearers to hold them accountable and influence them by raising awareness and building their capacity to take constructive steps in response to calls for improving rights adherence, accountability, and equal service distribution. As part of this effort, DCA will engage with faith-based actors in advancing the rights and inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups and thus foster social cohesion, address GBV and advance women's and girls' economic, political, social, and sexual and reproductive health rights.

Building on DCA's leading role within the ACT Alliance, DCA will leverage partners' rights documentation and access

to international duty-bearers and will support civil society engagement in international human rights mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review and other processes such as CEDAW and PaRD. We will mobilise Danish stakeholders and value-based alliances in support of rights protection in our programme countries and in efforts to promote digital rights and the democratic use of tech.

Strategic Focus

In this strategy period:

- **We will scale up our focus on women's civic and political rights.** This includes support to organisations and movements who work for women's participation in decision-making at all levels, efforts to improve equal and gender-sensitive policies and service distribution, and the protection of women's rights defenders and their democratic participation online and offline.
- **We will promote respect for human rights through our engagement with formal and moral duty bearers in conflict and crises contexts as well as in peacebuilding.** We will promote safe spaces for people to claim their rights in fragile settings.
- **We will scale up and innovate our support to partners and human rights defenders experiencing shrinking civic space in repressive contexts.** We will be flexible and adaptable in our way of providing financial, technical, psychosocial, and political support and protection. We will support digital security and resilience and combat misinformation and hate speech.

Intervention Areas and Activities in support of 'Fight Extreme Inequality'

Inclusive participation in decision making (IA 7)

- Support capacity, knowledge and agency of marginalised and vulnerable individuals, households and communities and their ownership of rights that enable them to defend and claim their rights.
- Prevent and respond to harassment, violence, and discrimination against marginalised and vulnerable individuals through addressing individual and collective discriminatory norms, values, perceptions, and practices.
- Provide flexible support to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) that includes physical and digital security, psychosocial support, and effective risk management.
- Reduce digital inequality and improve access to trustworthy information for vulnerable and marginalised groups through digital literacy and digital financial inclusion.
- Support individuals and communities in monitoring equitable and transparent distribution of resources, including service provision delivered by governments, and support for pro-rights religious value formation.

Space for civil society (IA 8)

- Support local actors and organisations to be autonomous, inclusive, vibrant, professional, accountable and transparent, and capable of representing rights-holders against poverty, inequality, and vulnerability.
- Upgrade innovative support to informal civil society and social movements through access to digital platforms, peer-to-peer mentoring, capacity sharing, locally led advocacy hubs and learning networks. >>

- Promote human rights and democracy digitally, including online participation and online duty-bearer dialogue, as well as protect rights-holders against online misinformation, digital surveillance, hate speech, digital repression, manipulation and harassment.
- Support local actors' human rights monitoring and documentation of discriminatory laws, service provision and practices.

Advocacy on human rights (IA 9)

- Engage religious actors and human rights organisations in advancing rights and inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups to fight discriminatory and harmful norms and practices to enable inclusive participation, social cohesion, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.
- Promote space for civil society by addressing restrictive NGO-laws, illegitimate use of criminal and antiterror legislation, cyber laws, and support documentation and local actors' participation in international human rights mechanisms and engagement with international duty-bearers.
- Ensure that human rights are protected in the digital space and in technological ecosystems that combat repression and silencing of rights-holders.
- Promote the integration of rights protection in national law, legal frameworks, and national budgets to combat discrimination and ensure equal access to resources and services.
- Engage Danish and global stakeholders, including political, the private sector and opinion-formers, in advancing respect for a rules-based global order, human rights, and democratic principles in programme countries.



05.4. Create Engagement

Goal: *Danish individuals, partners, and stakeholders engage in meaningful action, sharing values and supporting DCA's global efforts to save lives, build resilient communities and fight extreme inequality.*

Trends

It is evident that the Danish public, popular and church-based organisations and companies are highly motivated to engage and show compassion for people in need and support positive change for the world's poorest - if given tangible avenues for action. The mass mobilisation of support for victims of the war in Ukraine is the latest example.

The fight against climate change and the need for sustainable development in Denmark and globally are issues high on the Danish public and political agenda and which are expected to remain so. Danes are actively seeking ways to make sustainable choices and are looking for ways to support a green transition at home and abroad. The younger demographics in particular are involved in and motivated by the global climate justice movement. This supports a notion of global citizenship and challenges traditional development narratives: climate change is not an "us" and "them" proposition but impacts on all of us. The same is the case for other prominent global equal rights movements, particularly related to women's rights and anti-racism. Covid-19 further contributed to a feeling of global connectedness across demographics. This brings new opportunities for engagement of Danes in global humanitarian and development issues.

Danish NGOs are becoming more professional, resulting in an increasingly "saturated" engagement- and fundraising market. Generally fewer Danes engage in volunteer work, and DCA finds it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteers for longer periods of time. However, the younger demographics are highly motivated to engage in specific issues and causes on a more ad-hoc basis. This requires speedy and flexible opportunities for engagement of young people.

Key Learning

As a Danish NGO with an international mandate DCA builds on 100 years of engaging the Danish public and our church-based constituency in joint action in support of the world's poorest. As a result, DCA enjoys strong legitimacy with Danes, which places us in a unique position to engage broader parts of the Danish public in our work to save lives, build resilient

communities and fight extreme inequality worldwide as well as in realisation of the SDGs.

Our engagement builds on shared values and long-lasting, equal partnerships. Cooperation with volunteers and church-based and popular partners is deeply rooted in our culture and in our values and is vital to our uniquely broad popular engagement and outreach in all parts of Denmark.

Specifically, we are well suited to engage Danes in fighting food waste and recycling clothes through our Wefood and second-hand shops, thus creating solutions that connect SDG 1 (end poverty), 2 (no hunger) and 12 (responsible production and consumption) in Denmark and globally. DCA engages thousands of volunteers of all ages all over Denmark in tangible action in support of the realisation of our international goals, communicating a clear link between local action in Denmark and our global efforts to fight poverty, extreme inequality, and climate change.

DCA speaks with authority, legitimacy, and moral weight due to our long history of global action, broad-based popular engagement and due to our faith-based foundation. This gives us the opportunity to speak with an even stronger public voice. We have learned how important it is to work systematically with and seek synergies between political advocacy, strategic involvement of stakeholders and the media so as to influence the legal frameworks, policies and practice underpinning the realisation of our international goals. This approach will be even more important for DCA going forward.

Long Term Changes of DCA's Work

Action through donations, time, and voice:

Individuals, partners, and political stakeholders in Denmark act together with DCA and contribute donations, time, and voice in solidarity with the world's poorest and the realisation of DCA's international goals (LTC 10)

DCA has a long history of engaging with the Danish public and our church-based constituency in support of people in need and the world's poorest in their struggle for a dignified life. As the largest Danish faith-based humanitarian and development NGO, we have an obligation to increase the attention, knowledge, and engagement of the Danish public and our constituency in our long-term, sustainable development, humanitarian action and global justice issues.

We will continue to strengthen and deepen our public engagement to realise our international goals by linking our communication with tangible opportunities to act together with us. Specifically, we seek to relate to the everyday life, needs and interests of our private donors, volunteers and partners by offering relevant and timely choices of action, for example a financial donation, time, or voice.

We will focus on widening and deepening our strong Danish partnerships. We will strengthen relations with existing partners and expand our partner base by creating partnerships with new types of partners and alliances allowing us to engage with new segments, especially young people and families not traditionally engaged in development issues. We acknowledge that young people are key agents of change, therefore we seek to connect young global citizens across cultural, social, religious and geographical divides to change attitudes and generate action in support of the SDGs and positive global change.

Working with volunteers is key to DCA's work of developing meaningful and relevant actions of engagement and of connecting Danes in local actions with global impact. We will therefore explore and widen the potential of local volunteer activities by strengthening their knowledge and their relations to DCA projects around the world.

Moreover, we wish to consolidate and further strengthen DCA's position as one of the most well-known and respected humanitarian and development NGOs in Denmark.

Sustainable consumption and global climate action:

Individuals and partners engage in sustainable consumption and global climate action together with DCA in Denmark (LTC 11)

Being a leading sustainability actor in Denmark, DCA will increasingly engage our constituency, Danish consumers, private sector partners, and political stakeholders in developing solutions and action campaigns for sustainable consumption and climate action in favour of the world's poorest. Through our Wefood and second-hand shops we will promote sustainable use of the world's resources and engage volunteers, consumers, and private sector partners in fighting hunger and in promoting a just, green transition globally.

We will expand our second hand and Wefood activities, increasing turnover and offering Danes more opportunities for action on sustainable consumption and emphasising the clear link between local and global action.

Through innovative and action-oriented solutions, we will further strengthen our collaboration and initiatives with

DCA's constituency, volunteers, Danish popular partners, private sector partners and other stakeholders to promote local action solutions to global challenges, thus engaging the Danish public in delivering on the SDGs and promoting a sense of global citizenship.

Influence on political decisions and priorities in Denmark:

DCA engages with Danish stakeholders and partners to influence political decisions, priorities, and action in Denmark in support of our engagement work, a rules-based global order, the Sustainable Development Goals, and realisation of the Paris Agreement (LTC 12).

DCA will engage Danish strategic stakeholders, partners and our constituency in promoting political action and legal frameworks that contribute to ambitious and principled development policies, the realisation of the SDGs in Denmark and globally, address climate change and promote a rules-based global order. DCA engages with key decision makers (in Parliament and relevant ministries) in our efforts to enable the right framework conditions for realising our global goals.

We engage our church-based constituency, private sector actors, civil society, research institutions, and other strategic alliance partners in value-based alliances to promote these shared agendas. We engage in critical, but constructive, dialogue with Danish businesses, investors and public institutions to increase action on responsible business conduct and supply chains, especially in the food sector.

Strategic Focus

In this strategy period:

- **We will further develop our existing work with Danish church-based and popular partners and volunteers to increase relations with them and strengthen ties to our constituency and the link between our engagement activities and our international work.** This focus will include development of new types of partnerships and more flexible activities for volunteers to engage new segments of the Danish public.
- **We will engage Danes through campaign activities and develop corporate partnerships on sustainable consumption and production with clear links to our international work.** Through our Wefood and second-hand shops we will enable action in Denmark that supports sustainable development globally.
- **We will strengthen knowledge of DCA and our work** by presenting and communicating powerful stories from our programme countries and meaningful actions and by having a clear voice in debates on value-based politics. ■

Intervention Areas and Activities in support of 'Create Engagement'

Action through donations, time, and voice (IA 10)

- Develop a strong and dynamic volunteer environment in DCA that will remain attractive and accessible to the individual throughout all stages of life. Develop new volunteer activities that will differ in intensity, structure, and capacity to reflect new trends within volunteering and to support the world's poorest in new creative, inclusive and flexible ways.
- Create stronger relationships to existing partners and DCA church constituency in Denmark. Expand the partner base among new partners and link to social movements and form multistakeholder partnerships
- Link DCA communication work with opportunities to act, and thereby strengthen and deepen public engagement to support DCA with donations, time, or voice. This will relate to the everyday life, needs and interests of our private donors, volunteers and partners and offer them flexible, relevant, and timely choices of action.
- Offer a coherent experience to the Danes and partners who choose to act with us, gradually expanding and deepening our relationship and the understanding of our work in the world.
- Develop and diversify our fundraising strategies and initiatives while creating economic opportunities by increasing co-financing through collaboration with foundations and partners.

Sustainable consumption and global climate action (IA 11)

- Improve food and waste management through increased growth in second-hand and retail turnover.
- Develop communication and campaigns highlighting the link between sustainable local action and our global efforts to promote climate mitigation and adaptation in areas most affected by global warming.
- Develop new flexible volunteer activities within sustainable consumption to attract new and younger segments and create engagement among existing volunteers to promote behavioural change and act as "agents of change".
- Show-case good practices linking Danish consumers with local initiatives, advancing farm-to-fork initiatives and narratives.

Influence on political decisions and priorities in Denmark (IA 12)

- Increase strategic political dialogue across political divides supplemented by strategic press and media efforts.
- Continue to develop and explore strategic alliances with stakeholders and individuals across sectors promoting shared values and agendas.
- Strengthen and find new ways of engagement and inclusion of DCA constituency and social movements in agenda-setting and advocacy activities.
- Engage in critical, but constructive, dialogue with Danish businesses, investors, and public institutions, and use multistakeholder alliances to increase action on responsible supply chains, especially in the food sector.

[Kenya/Bax Lindhardt]



06. Cross-Cutting Commitments

DCA will strengthen gender equality, youth engagement and climate and environmental sustainability as cross-cutting commitments across our work in Denmark and globally.

These commitments are important building blocks in reaching our global goals and achieving the SDGs. They are also strategic areas we wish to strengthen even further in the coming years. Working with these cross-cutting commitments is not new to DCA. However, we have in recent years seen pushback on women's rights, further marginalisation of youth and women globally due to crises such as COVID-19, and a climate and environment crisis escalating at the cost of the world's poorest and people in need. This calls for continued and increased focus.

DCA will mainstream and strengthen our focus on gender equality, youth engagement, and climate and environmental sustainability across our programming and our partnerships with civil society, the private sector and research institutions as well as in our national and international communication and value-based alliances with global and Danish stakeholders. When relevant, we will implement specific stand-alone interventions to advance our commitments.

Advancing the cross-cutting commitments is closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Our ambitious commitments will strengthen our efforts to mobilise young

women and men as key actors of transformative change locally and globally, build resilient communities, ensure sustainable and locally led humanitarian response and advance human rights, gender justice and climate justice.

06.1. Gender Equality

Women's rights are under increasing pressure globally. Despite positive developments in some areas, in all our programme countries women remain economically and socially marginalised. Women's rights defenders are under immense pressure offline and online. Crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate disasters, conflict and large-scale displacement pose immediate threats to women and girls who face grave risks and rights violations. At the same time, women play a crucial role in humanitarian crisis and resilience building, often as 'first responders', but are left out or on the margins of decision-making and leadership spaces.

DCA has worked on gender equality for decades. We promote systemic and sustainable change through working with diverse partners and stakeholders and at multiple levels. A key focus is to support the social, political and economic empowerment of women by securing financial inclusion and skills building, and by enhancing women's ability to claim their rights and engage in politics and decision-making. DCA's approach to gender programming and

mainstreaming addresses underlying gendered inequalities and power imbalances. It is transformative, and central to this is engaging with local faith actors as agents of change and facilitating alliances and dialogue between faith actors and secular stakeholders, such as feminist organisations. Furthermore, our gender programming includes a strong focus on working with men as essential change-agents and applying a gender responsive approach to our work in fragile contexts and conflicts. Through these diverse interventions we challenge harmful social norms, traditional practices and discriminatory legal frameworks while supporting women to be socially and economically empowered and in control of their own lives and bodies.

DCA applies an intersectional approach and addresses gender inequality in connection with other interrelated causes for discrimination and marginalisation. We integrate a focus on gendered risks, including those related to gender identity and expression and violations against LGBTQIA+ individuals.

In this strategy period, DCA will strengthen mainstreaming of gender equality across all programmes combined with dedicated gender programming. The aim is to accelerate gender equality across sectors, prevent violence against women, girls and other vulnerable groups, challenge gendered power imbalances, and enhance the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls.

In this strategy period:

- **We will scale up our focus on women's economic empowerment.** We will support female entrepreneurs, provide access to business opportunities, skills building, leadership training, financial inclusion, value-chains and markets. We will link this closely to enhancing women's meaningful participation in decision-making and promoting women's economic and social rights. Introduction of digital tools and digital solutions designed to accommodate and address context-specific gender inequalities will be important entry points for action.
- **We will empower local women-led and women's rights organisations and women's rights defenders.** By supporting the capacity of civil society organisations and individual activists, we will support women and young girls to accelerate their leadership potential, claim their rights and address gender-based violence. We will address and challenge the norms, traditions and power imbalances that underpin gender inequality and discrimination, and empower women and girls to influence decision-making, design responses, and engage in coordination processes across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.
- **We will promote female role models.** We will engage female ambassadors within business, sports and culture as

solid role models and thought leaders within climate action, a rules-based global order and innovative partnerships, and strive to connect such role models from Denmark and countries where we work, for joint engagement. We will communicate case stories and campaigns with strong female activists, local leaders, entrepreneurs, decision-makers, human rights defenders and role models within sustainable development.

06.2. Youth Engagement

Youth movements across the world mobilise and unite in calling for gender justice, anti-racism, climate justice and sustainable development. Young people possess enormous potential for advancing sustainable economic growth and resilience and can – given the right possibilities – play a decisive role in creating positive societal change. However, youth unemployment is a huge constraint and burden to sustainable development of communities, and may lead to increased poverty, armed violence, conflict, displacement and unsafe migration.

DCA engages youth at various levels in Denmark and globally. We mobilise young people as drivers of change and support them in influencing decision-makers. We will push for voice, space, and influence of young people in formal and informal decision-making processes and governance structures. We will ensure that youth perspectives, skills, resources and innovations are included in efforts for a just and sustainable development.

In Denmark, we engage youth in meaningful action in support of DCA's work for the world's poorest and people in need. In our international programming, DCA actively engages youth in our work to promote human rights, combat climate change and promote sustainable livelihoods. A significant part of our youth work is firmly anchored within a market-based approach that supports sustainable solutions and benefits vulnerable and marginalised youth, including refugees and displaced people as well as their host communities. This work links youth, particularly young women, to markets, business development services, employment and income opportunities and seeks to rebuild youth agency as well as their coping mechanisms and self-reliance. In parallel we bring youth from diverse backgrounds and affiliations together to strengthen peer exchange and foster social cohesion and resilience.

Recognising the potential of youth as agents of change and thought leaders, youth engagement remains an important cross-cutting priority for DCA.

In this strategy period:

- **We will increase our focus on creating sustainable jobs and livelihoods for young women and men.** We

will stimulate informal and formal jobs, income, and entrepreneurship opportunities for youths in urban and rural areas, and across humanitarian and development contexts. To cater for and unleash the innovative mindset of young people, we will collaborate with strategic partners and multistakeholder alliances to promote solutions for youth entrepreneurship and employment, including support to digital business solutions. This includes green initiatives with private sector partners and financial institutions.

- **We will strengthen youth participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.** Recognising that youth are both victims and parties to violent conflict, we will strengthen our engagement with young people as positive change agents and promoters of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
- **We will strengthen partnerships with youth organisations and social movements** in Denmark and in the countries where we work. We will continue to promote peer exchange between youth in Denmark and in the countries where we work (offline and online) to engage youth on solutions to challenges related to climate change and environment, shrinking civic space, protection of human rights and growing inequality and poverty. We will continue our strong collaboration with Danish youth organisations and educational institutions, and will engage Danish youth in meaningful actions through innovative approaches, dialogue and relation building, campaigns and communication to change attitudes and behaviour in support of the SDGs and our global goals.

06.3. Climate & Environmental Sustainability

Climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation have increasing and devastating effects on vulnerable and poor communities and are increasingly recognised as a threat multiplier for international peace and security. At the same time, the climate and sustainability agenda bring opportunities for reframing the development narrative and combining local, global and Danish efforts to address climate change, secure climate justice and advance the SDGs.

DCA has been pioneering the advancement of climate adaptation and greening efforts in the countries where we work and the engagement of Danes and Danish stakeholders in sustainability efforts in Denmark. DCA supports poor and vulnerable communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change by taking a climate risk informed approach, ensuring humanitarian and emergency responses to climate induced disasters, disaster risk reduction and linking to long term climate change adaptation and resilience building measures. DCA increasingly integrates mitigation measures

focusing on sustainable energy and carbon sequestration through tree planting and other nature-based solutions. Given the accelerating climate crisis and the evident interconnections with other environmental challenges, we seek to address climate change, fragility and conflict holistically and with integrated responses. At the same time DCA is engaging the Danish public, private sector, and political stakeholders in supporting the fight for climate justice and promoting sustainable consumption. This includes our Wefood stores, fighting food waste, our second-hand shops all over Denmark and ambitious climate partnerships with Danish companies. In this way we link local and global action.

In this strategy period:

- **We will advance our climate and environmental sustainability work – including in fragile contexts and crisis.** We will mainstream climate and environmental action across our work with a particular focus on fragile contexts, crisis and conflict. We will integrate analysis of current and future climate-related risks informed by science and data, and local and traditional knowledge, in the design and implementation of our preparedness, response and recovery interventions. We will systematically assess the potential impacts of our interventions on the environment, biodiversity, and climate change and identify locally appropriate solutions that avoid negative impacts and address the interactions between climate, biodiversity, ecosystems and social systems. We will strengthen support to address loss and damage for vulnerable communities, including support to resettlement, recovery and safe migration.
- **We will strengthen and scale-up global green partnerships.** We will strengthen Danish, local and global, green partnerships, climate partnerships and agreements, and value-based alliances with private sector, research institutions, civil society, church leaders and opinion-formers. We will advance political and public support for constructive action in response to climate change and environmental degradation.
- **We will position ourselves as a key partner for Danes who are seeking solutions and ways to act on sustainability and climate change.** We will use communication and campaigns to promote sustainable action by Danish consumers, companies and the DCA constituency in our Wefood stores, second-hand shops, and climate campaigns. We will highlight the clear link between sustainable local action and our global efforts to promote climate mitigation and adaptation in areas most affected by global warming. We will show-case good practices linking Danish consumers with local initiatives, advancing farm-to-fork initiatives and narratives. ■

[Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh / Tine Sletting Jakobsen]



07. Geographic Focus

DCA is present in poor and conflict-ridden countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Currently we have strategic, longer-term presence in 20 countries. These are countries or areas which are either low on the UN's Human Development Index, on the UN's list of Least Developed Countries, and/or on the World Bank's list of fragile countries and host communities.

In addition, DCA has an obligation to respond to sudden and severe emergencies outside priority countries, including in Europe and the Americas. This will typically be with other ACT Alliance members who are already active in or near the area of the emergency.

Additional factors are considered when DCA engages in a new country:

Inequality: Poverty levels and the human rights situation in a given country will remain fundamental criteria defining where DCA engages. DCA will work in countries with opportunities to facilitate a more just development, address root causes of severe poverty, promote equal rights for all and enable civic and political space.

Presence, experience, and competencies: DCA values long-term presence and stability of engagement to work with a rights-based approach and achieve a greater impact, not least in our effort to strengthen competent and sustainable civil society organisations. This approach also allows DCA to understand the context, build strong partnerships, and attract and retain competent staff. The physical presence of DCA in a country is also a strategic advantage enabling fast response to changing humanitarian needs.

Conflict, protracted crisis, and displacement: DCA will always consider responding to a major humanitarian crisis. A decision on whether and how to respond to an emergency in a country where we have no prior presence will depend on factors such as our added value and ability to respond, or the availability of funds. We remain committed to working in countries with humanitarian crises (the humanitarian imperative) and people living in extreme poverty ('leave no one behind'). As a multi-mandated organisation, our country portfolio will represent a fair balance between the

two. However, an increase in the scale of the programmes responding to humanitarian crisis is likely, given the unprecedented humanitarian needs globally.

Security and political space: DCA will consider carefully how to engage in countries with high levels of insecurity. When we do engage, we will design and follow specific implementation models based on humanitarian principles and will sometimes incorporate remote implementation with local partners. A severe degradation of the security situation could be a trigger for DCA to disengage from a country for a shorter or longer period. In view of the increasingly difficult operational context in many countries and DCA's engagement to promote human rights and counter shrinking space for civil society and human rights defenders, a scenario where a DCA office would be closed by a country authority cannot be excluded. We may decide or be forced to close a country programme but continue to work with partners to support local civil society and their important work. Alternatively, we may conduct part of the activities remotely.

Availability of funding, donor policies, requirements and priorities may also influence the choice of countries in which DCA decides to work. DCA's four-year (2022-2025) Strategic Partnership Agreement with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) provides a foundation for strategic cooperation and policy dialogue as well as important, long-term and secure funding, which allows flexibility in DCA's choice of country engagement. In addition, we will continue to broaden and diversify our donor and funding base to secure long-term country presence. In situations where funding is decreasing over several years and eventually becomes inadequate to ensure a meaningful and cost-efficient presence, DCA may decide to withdraw from that country. This will, however, depend upon the ultimate rationale for our presence in a country, and thus the situation will always be assessed on an individual basis.

In this strategy period: **DCA will expand its presence in the Sahel region**, while the recent humanitarian and mine action response in Ukraine will continue for the entire strategy period. ■

[Iraq / Jakob Dall]



08. **Fit for Purpose**

To be successful in delivering on the four global goals, our commitments and creating sustainable positive change in collaboration with partners, communities and donors, DCA needs to stay relevante, efficient, and accountable to the highest professional standards, and be able to respond and adapt to changes. We manoeuvre in the complex context on a sound foundation of strong procedures and risk management and by constantly seeking to strike the right balance between preparedness, flexibility, quick decision-making, risks and compliance to our own and external requirements.

DCA depends on principled leadership and staff to guide initiatives in a manner consistent with our core values and based on learning from our activities and processes and from the people who make up the organisation. We have a constant focus on reducing our environmental footprint.

As we implement together with partners and promote localisation, we are equally committed to supporting our partners in becoming 'organisations fit for purpose'.

08.1. **Organisation and Structure**

The ambition of localisation of aid, the shrinking civic space, and the increase in restricted humanitarian access call for communities and other local, first responders to have a stronger role in the delivery of humanitarian aid and development assistance. At the same time, donors' increasing compliance systems and changing aid modalities require solid compliance systems and complex policies and procedures. These apparent opposites call for new and agile modes of operation and will challenge and change the way aid organisations are organised. Technological development and digital systems, solutions and tools equally pose new opportunities as well as threats.

DCA is a strong and robust organisation with a dynamic structure to match trends and changes. The headquarters provides support to a number of country offices and an increasing number of field offices while also supporting partner organisations and community groups. To reflect the complex contexts we operate in, we foresee a more diverse

organisational setup across our offices in the future, which can be a mix of decentralised and centralised structures, and of direct implementation and working closer to partners and communities.

Development in society at large, increasing donor requirements, and growth in our activities and volume place greater demands on our digital systems and solutions. Solid management information on finance and programme implementation based on valid data is becoming more and more pertinent. At the same time, our systems must secure our data and protect our staff and partners at all times and thus our digital solutions must be reviewed and updated continuously.

In this strategy period:

- **We will continue to review and critically reflect on our organisational setup and adjust it based on contextual change and actual needs.** We will challenge internal structures and procedures to reinforce agility and efficiency and evaluate new ways of working.
- **We will further develop our business systems and solutions with a view to streamlining and optimising operations. We will strengthen our IT infrastructure** with a focus on data security and compliance, and **work with digitalisation** in relation to our partners and programmatic support work.

08.2. Competences and Capacity

Operating in rapidly changing contexts requires highly skilled staff who can navigate and manage complexity and paradoxes. The ability to attract and retain strong leaders and a diverse workforce is key to remaining relevant and competitive and meeting the challenges of tomorrow.

DCA will continue the journey where all managers will obtain a leadership diploma which will provide us with a common leadership language, joint understanding and good

practice, and will build on our organisational values and core narrative. Such qualification will help us become visionary in a diverse organisation navigating in a globally challenging environment. It will allow us to share and learn from experience and practice, and focus our attention to inspire, motivate and create. We will be more attentive to the welfare and aspirations of our staff, supporting them to contribute towards the success of the organisation.

DCA's competent and talented staff are the most important assets of the organisation, and necessitate consistent effort to continuously attract, recruit, and retain. Attractive work conditions with a good work-life balance, an inspiring work environment, meaningful tasks and job influence are all important for staff wellbeing and motivation. DCA has embarked on an organisational change of culture to advance Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) in DCA. Being an attractive, inclusive, and bias-conscious workplace where staff thrive, also renders DCA's mandate credible and legitimate, adds a competitive edge, and is expected to drive innovation and creativity.

In this strategy period:

- **We will continue to develop our leadership approach to nurture relational, inclusive, and trust-based leadership globally,** and deepen the professional practice of leadership excellence.
- **We will strengthen recruitment and retainment of staff by being an attractive workplace** with a good work-life balance, influence, meaningful tasks, and reasonable work demands.
- **We will advance a diversity, inclusion and belonging (DIB) agenda as a strategic imperative to the organisation,** by being an inclusive and bias-conscious workplace.

08.3. Risk Management

Operational, reputational, financial and personal safety risks

faced by civil society and other humanitarian actors are increasing due to the increasing complex political and security dynamics in the contexts in which we operate, the worsening shrinking civic space and growing compliance requirements.

Building on years of experience, DCA has a strong risk management system in place to mitigate the increased contextual, programmatic and institutional risks DCA faces. This is supported by trained staff and comprehensive assessments to ensure an appropriate and timely management of the risks. Adhering to our Safety and Security Duty of Care Policy, DCA's risk management offers professional risk mitigation to all staff and partners, ensuring that they can do their jobs safely. To ensure DCA's continuing growth in both operations and funding is managed effectively, it is important that this growth is accompanied by an appropriate maturity level of DCA's risk management system. DCA will maintain a proactive and balanced approach where risk management adds value to strategic and operational decisions and where risks are managed in a timely and proportionate way.

In this strategy period:

- **We will continue to strengthen our risk management system** including applying balanced and efficient risk management and decision making to our operations through developing processes for identifying, analysing, prioritising and mitigating risks to the organisation, its staff, and partners at various levels – contextual, programmatic and institutional.

08.4 Quality Management and Accountability

National and international laws and regulations such as data protection and anti-money laundering and counter-terror legislation, and high demands on quality and compliance from a broad range of donors supporting DCA's work, put pressure on the work we do and influence the way we work. It is important to live up to external and our own quality and accountability standards, and in doing so commit ourselves

to downward accountability while not transferring risks to the partners and people we support.

DCA's Quality Management and Accountability Framework enables us to deliver on our global strategy, our international commitments and internal and external donor requirements. The framework ensures the high quality of DCA's programme and project work, where policies, procedures and guidelines set the direction and guide staff in implementing the strategy. DCA's financial management and control systems and procedures build on principles of segregation of duty, defined roles and responsibilities, and the firm implementation of checks and balances. Together with the DCA Procurement Manual this approach ensures strong focus on efficiency leading to high value for money for all DCA supported activities.

DCA commits to the Charter for Change (C4C) and Grand Bargain (GB) and is certified against the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). It is key for DCA to remain accountable towards people who are affected by poverty, disasters, conflicts or other crises. Maintaining and further developing systems and mechanisms such as complaints handling systems, whistle blower mechanisms, employment satisfaction surveys, employment development reviews and partner feedback systems all serve to ensure transparency, accountability and alignment to DCA's organisational values.

All staff are required to sign the Code of Conduct and take mandatory e-learning modules (e.g., Anti-Corruption, Complaints Handling, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, Human Rights, Child Safeguarding, and Risk Management etc.).

DCA's Quality Management and Accountability system is strong and achieves high scores in due diligence processes and reviews by auditors and consultants assessing DCA. At the same time, DCA's quality and compliance commitments continue to grow, increasing the rules and regulations that

need to be managed and adapted to. This requires careful assessment of how to adapt proportional and appropriate measures to ensure agility and the best use of resources.

To remain accountable towards partners, the people we support, and other stakeholders, it is important to continue to strengthen our documentation system in terms of collecting only relevant and necessary data, taking compliance measures into consideration.

In this strategy period:

- **We will ensure compliance in a proportionate and appropriate way to adapt to challenging operational contexts and changing risks** while at the same time ensuring alignment to standards for quality management and accountability.

08.5. Innovation

Organisations continuously need to innovate and find new and better ways to operate to ensure that the solutions and the funding can address the needs, challenges and complexities we face. Technology can provide access and improve effectiveness and efficiency, while multistakeholder partnerships can drive innovation and challenge current models and logic.

Innovation is prominent in DCA's core narrative and is a key component of our organisational value of being 'Proactive'. Innovation helps DCA to effectively respond to changes and maximise opportunities for increased outcome and impact. The pipeline of innovative project ideas developed across the organisation has proven to be an effective instrument for driving innovations from bottom-up levels, based on which sustainable scaling efforts in DCA's programming and in innovative partnerships is pursued. DCA's innovation framework is based on the four principles of alignment, breadth, impact, and scale, which integrate innovation into all layers of the organisation. DCA will continue to apply a systematic

approach to identify, test and scale innovation across projects, contexts and operational functions.

In this strategy period:

- **We will explore and provide innovative solutions to the challenges civil society face when exposed to and using new and emerging technologies**, and stand in the frontline of tech, human rights, and democracy.
- **We will drive innovation across the organisation and with our partners in Denmark and internationally** with a particular focus on the work of our engagement department and support units.

08.6. Learning

Increasing complexity and changing contexts require strong analytical skills, organisational and individual adaptability, and the ability to acquire new skills and learn from experience. This effort is needed to remain relevant and ensure the most appropriate decisions, solutions and interventions at any given time.

DCA will continue to strengthen knowledge sharing and cross-organisational learning in Denmark and globally. Learning from experience and sharing knowledge through various learning loops is critical to strengthening the quality and impact of DCA partnerships, project and programme design, innovation and accountability as well as processes and operations. Learning takes place throughout the organisation and with partners and other stakeholders through a variety of activities, interactions and processes, which reflect and capture lessons learnt and best practice.

DCA has learned that meaningful onboarding and upskilling of staff is key to learning and performing as an organisation. Training and capacity development are carried out through innovative learning solutions including analogue, digital and hybrid training, mentoring and reflection opportunities, with strong support from the DCA

Learning Lab and Fabo platform. To ensure continuous learning, DCA will strengthen its focus on learning at all levels of the organisation so that it is easy for staff to find appropriate learning opportunities and for line managers to follow and support this learning.

In this strategy period:

- **We will develop a more systematic approach to learning from our processes, partnerships, projects and programmes in Denmark and globally** to advance our four global goals by strengthening the collection, documentation and use of data and results across the organisation.
- **We will ensure that relevant learning opportunities for DCA staff are more easily accessible.** We will be better able to track the learning that happens in the organisation – at unit level as well as organisation-wide. This will ensure that we create more relevant learning opportunities for staff as well as improve how DCA can report on its learning in the future.

08.7. Environmental Sustainability

The public demand for sustainable and responsible business conduct and increasing opportunities for developing strong business cases for sustainability constitute a strong argument for engaging in renewable energy, green investments, carbon compensation, nature-based solutions and climate commitments.

DCA will actively promote and contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future in line with the SDGs, the Paris

Agreement, and the post 2020 global biodiversity framework. However, while DCA has been compensating carbon emissions from international flights from our headquarters and has an internal Climate Policy, much is still to be done and achieved by further mainstreaming climate and environmental considerations into the operations of the organisation.

DCA has a moral obligation to reduce our environmental footprint and is committed to walk the talk. Based on our greenhouse gases emissions baseline, we will make changes in our internal practices and operations, and monitor, report, reduce and compensate our emissions both in Denmark and internationally.

DCA is committed to integrating climate and environmental considerations at all levels of the organisation, and to enter partnerships with relevant stakeholders who can contribute with relevant knowledge and networks. We will foster dialogue about climate change and environmental protection among staff as well as with partners, donors and suppliers to facilitate the necessary changes in culture, practice and investments, and to develop tangible and ambitious action plans to contribute to a more green, resilient and sustainable development.

In this strategy period:

- **We will reduce and compensate our carbon footprint** through Green House Gases accounting and management, including a baseline for emissions and monitoring and reporting of results for accountability, as well as developing strategies for reduction and compensation for CO₂ emissions. ■



09. Financial Sustainability

The funding market for International NGOs faces increasing competition and a decline in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). This situation is exacerbated by a shift towards national interests with respect to trade, migration and security, or earmarking of funds for climate or humanitarian purposes. At the same time, private sector actors, including trusts and foundations, are getting involved in the humanitarian sector – as funders, supporters, and implementers. This brings further competition but also opportunities for new partnerships. In Denmark, competition for private donations is increasing, while public support tends to favour single issues that engages and touches people.

DCA strives towards a healthy, long-term financial development and growth to ensure a higher level of efficiency, flexibility and impact, because long-term financial robustness and sustainability increases DCA's ability to reach the world's poorest.

As we implement together with partners and promote localisation, we equally support the financial sustainability of our civil society partner organisations.

Our financial indicators focus on turnover, surplus, solidity and liquidity. Aiming for the right balance will enable a continuous and robust financial development of DCA while also allowing for unforeseen events and costs.

In this strategy period, DCA will be committed to meeting the following financial targets:

- Turnover increases by an average of 5% per year during the period
- Yearly surplus is 1% of annual turnover
- Solidity ratio is at least 25% by the end of the period
- Liquidity ratio is at least 130% by the end of the period

Financial Effectiveness and Robustness

Improving DCA's cost-effectiveness at both Headquarter (HQ) and Country Offices (COs) is a prerequisite for ensuring the required investments in resource mobilisation, investment in capacity and prioritisation of investments in innovation. During the previous strategy period, DCA built and

implemented cost management systems that have allowed us to enhance robustness and effectiveness and have also contributed to high growth. We have a fair distribution of costs between donors, and a balanced expenditure to the benefit of our partners and programmes. These efforts will continue. In this strategy period, **DCA will continue to implement measures that allow the monitoring of resource allocation and use.**

Strategic Donor Composition

DCA has a diversified group of partners and donors to our programmes, which includes a variety of governmental agencies such as the Danish MFA, the EU, USAID, NORAD, SIDA and FCDO, as well as a wide variety of UN agencies, private foundations and, not least, the Danish public. We will have a focus on maintaining strong and trustworthy partnerships with our supporters and donors. In this strategy period, **DCA will strive to achieve accreditation and funding from the Green Climate Fund and other climate donors.**

DCA will grow our funding from the Danish public and strengthen cost recovery for our engagement work in Denmark in corporation with partners and foundations. This growth will enable us to invest in new forms of engagement and at the same time allow us to make strategic use of the funds provided to reach greater impact. In this strategy period, **DCA will have a strong focus on balancing our funding composition to reach our key financial targets in the next four years.**

Innovative Financing for Development

Another core part of our strategy is our proactive approach to diversify funding and attract funding for innovative solutions. DCA will seek to strengthen the financial sustainability and scale of our interventions, for example in value chain and green livelihood projects, through new alliances with private sector partners, financial service providers, foundations, crowd funders, institutional donors and impact investors. In this strategy period, **DCA will develop and test blended finance mechanisms in the field of impact business and investments.** ■

Abbreviations

ACT	Action by Churches Together
C4C	Charter for Change
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCA	DanChurchAid
DIB	Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EU	European Union
FBA	Faith Based Actor
FBO	Faith Based Organisation
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
GB	Grand Bargain
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HQ	Headquarters
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRD	Human Rights Defender
IA	Intervention Area
ICBL-CMC	International Campaign to Ban Landmines - Cluster Munition Coalition
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
INGO	International Non-governmental organisation
IT	Information Technology
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LTC	Long Term Changes
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental organisation
NNGO	National Non-governmental organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PANEL	Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Empowerment, Linking
PaRD	Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development
SCLR	Survivor and Community-Led Response
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAid	United States Agency for International Development
VA	Victim Assistance
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WAM	Weapon and Ammunition Management





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