

Annual report 2025



Pastor Ana Ruth García, founder and director of Ecuménicas, with two young volunteers in the Honduran capital Tegucigalpa. In May 2025, Ana Ruth was awarded the Per Anger Prize for her work promoting the rights of women and girls in Honduras.

The Per Anger Prize – the Swedish Government’s international prize for human rights and democracy – is awarded annually to a person or organisation that has worked to defend human rights in their home country.

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Act Church of Sweden, 751 70 Uppsala, Sweden

givarservice@svenskakyrkan.se

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A testing year with strong outcomes

2025 was a highly eventful year for both Act Church of Sweden and our partners around the world, all of whom have been hit by the severe cutbacks in US aid. The UK, France and Germany have also reduced their aid budgets, with the UK making a 40 per cent cut in favour of defence spending. This comes at a time when the transatlantic alliance between the US and Europe has come under significant pressure due to the actions of the US administration.

While this global turmoil has led to a fall in revenue for many of Act Church of Sweden's partners, they have continued their work on both life-saving and long-term development initiatives.

Together with other members of ACT Alliance, Act Church of Sweden continues to develop practices that empower communities to initiate, monitor and manage their own development work, in an ongoing drive to place more of the influence and decision-making powers in the hands of those most affected.

It is encouraging to see women increasingly adopting a leading role in analysing needs, making decisions and pursuing joint development work. When local communities are able to access resources and disburse them according to their own priorities, women gain real influence on issues that were previously often bound by patriarchal structures, and thus their organisation, visibility and scope for action are enhanced.

In 2025, we were also able to train the spotlight on our work to strengthen the rights of women and girls, not least when our partner Ecuménicas and its founder, the pastor and theologian Ana Ruth García, were awarded the Swedish Government's most distinguished human rights accolade, the Per Anger Prize.

In September, I had the honour of joining Ana Ruth in Honduras to see the vital work she and her team are doing to give young girls a better future. Conducted jointly with fundraising foundation Radiohjälpen and national broadcaster SVT, the trip resulted in four hard-hitting films that were broadcast

on the Swedish TV programme Go'kväll. Act Church of Sweden has an excellent partnership with Radiohjälpen, in a close relationship that we value highly.

We ended the year with an amazing Christmas fundraising campaign that broke records and raised over SEK 60 million to fund the work of Act Church of Sweden. This shows just how engaged the nation's parishes and individuals are with Act Church of Sweden as a key organisation for international aid and cooperation. Buoyed by the superb outcome of the fundraising, we enter 2026 with confidence.

Together, we are empowering people to redefine their own future.



Erik Lysén
Director Act Church of Sweden

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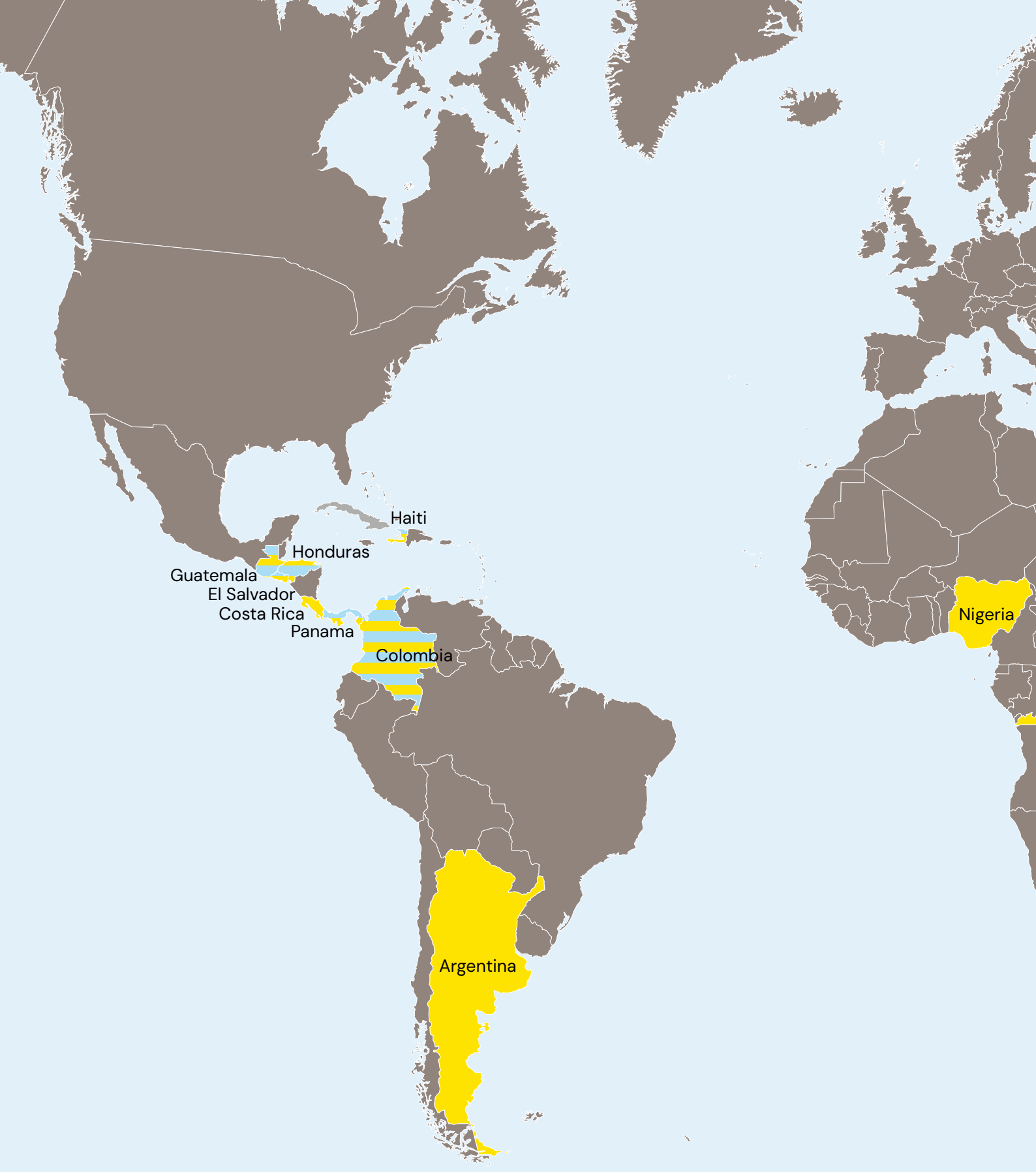


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Together under the same sky

2025 saw Act Church of Sweden implement around 240 actions in 39 countries:

- disaster response in 33 countries
- long-term development cooperation and church cooperations in 27 countries.



Ukraine

Lebanon
Cyprus
Israel
Palestine

Syria

Iraq

Afghanistan

Pakistan

Bangladesh

Myanmar

Philippines

India

Thailand

Sri Lanka

Ethiopia

Somalia

Uganda

Kenya

DR Kongo

Tanzania

Malawi

Zimbabwe

Eswatini

South Africa

Egypt

Sudan

South Sudan

For every person's right to a dignified life

Act Church of Sweden works with disaster response, long-term development and global advocacy. Together with churches and partner organisations worldwide, we fight against poverty, oppression and injustice. Act stands for acting and transforming faith into action, while always focusing on people's equal dignity and rights.

Act Church of Sweden has a 150-year history, with origins in Church of Sweden Mission and Church of Sweden Aid. Our international work with mission and diaconia is largely dependent on the commitment in our congregations, which is an expression of our belonging in a worldwide fellowship.

Upholding human dignity is central to our Christian faith. All people have the same value and rights and should have the power and opportunity to change their lives and communities. Our work is grounded in our identity as a church and our faith in a God who

walks with those who are silenced, living under threats or in a vulnerable situation. Part of our mission is to take action against power structures that hinder individuals from living full lives, regardless of whether these structures exist in society, the church, or in development cooperation.

Act Church of Sweden's work is based on theology, while being conducted in line with established norms in international aid.

Our work is gender-integrated and human rights-based, meaning that gender equality is always a crucial

starting point, and human rights must be actively upheld. Therefore, we focus on participation, non-discrimination, empowerment and accountability. We work in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, and are guided by the Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda.

Act Church of Sweden's governing values

Faith as a driving force

Faith provides us, our sister churches and partners around the world with inspiration, courage and strength. Together we stand up for people who are silenced or living under threat or in poverty, as well as for that which promotes life and gives hope for the future.

The integrity of the Creation

In God's Creation all life is interdependent. As humans we are responsible for the stewardship of the Creation. The Creation, including the long-term survival of humanity, is being threatened by the current impact of humans on our planet. Act Church of Sweden wants to work for sustainable development, with nobody left behind and people taking responsibility for their lifestyle and impact on nature, the climate, and the environment.

Human rights

Every person has the right to a life of dignity and human rights, as expressed in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights conventions. Each individual, without distinction, is entitled to all rights.

Empowerment and participation

We believe in people's inherent ability and power to take action. Participation is fundamental to the ability of all individuals to play a key role in their own development and in that of society.

This is why Act Church of Sweden works for the empowerment and meaningful participation of groups and individuals, particularly those who live in vulnerable situations.

Democratic space and organisation

When people join forces and organise, they are better able to further their interests and call for their rights – with one voice. Act Church of Sweden therefore has a core focus on increasing levels of organisation and strengthening civil society organisations.

Accountability

In order to protect, respect and realise human rights, states and other actors, including religious actors, need to be held politically, normatively and legally accountable for their actions. People's ability to demand accountability forms an essential part of human rights-based efforts and a democratic society.

Ecumenical approach

Part of the identity of Act Church of Sweden is ecumenical and inter-religious cooperation with other churches and faith-based organisations. Together, we share faith, mission and experiences, bringing different skills and resources to the work on humanity's great challenges: peace, justice and the integrity of the Creation. The ecumenical approach guides all our programmes.



Act Church of Sweden believes in the power of working together locally, regionally and globally. We are part of a worldwide community, and our identity as a church is a part of our strength.

Local actors are a strength

Act Church of Sweden is driven by the conviction that development is lasting and sustainable when it is owned by the people affected by it, who live in and understand the local context. That is why we cooperate with local churches, other faith communities, and organisations worldwide. Our theory of change focuses on how faith-based actors can contribute to people living in just, sustainable and democratic societies. Our methods are firmly grounded in both human rights and our theological interpretation. This allows us to work holistically to strengthen the long-term capacity of individuals and communities to manage change and continue to develop.

We work to shift power and resources to local actors – those whose lives are impacted by economic, legal, religious, and political systems, locally and globally. True long-term change and a just world can only emerge when people have the power to transform their lives and communities.

Being a religious actor is a strength in contexts where religion and religious leaders have power and influence over people's values and societal norms. Local actors are also present before, during, and after a crisis or disaster, enabling us to respond quickly and sustainably in humanitarian situations.

Global networks

As part of the Church of Sweden, Act Church of Sweden is a member of the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. We are also a member of the ACT Alliance, which stands for Action by Churches Together. This provides us with good opportunities to influence the churches' common theological reflection and serve as a powerful voice in the UN system and other key forums for addressing peace, human rights, and climate issues.

The Lutheran World Federation operates on behalf of the United Nations in various refugee camps worldwide, while the ACT Alliance consists of churches and church-related organisations in over 130 countries. These partnerships allow us to respond swiftly to disasters and cooperate effectively on long-term development.

New regional offices

Act Church of Sweden is an integral part of the Church of Sweden, and the international department coordinates its work at the national level. In 2025, the international department embarked on a major restructuring. The regional presence has been strengthened with the establishment of regional offices in Kampala (Uganda), Bogotá (Colombia) and Amman (Jordan), staffed with local employees. At the same time, the workforce in Uppsala has been reduced and the partner-focused work has been shifted across to the regional offices. The international department employs approximately 115 staff members in total, who work on issues such as development aid, church cooperation, advocacy, engagement and fundraising.

The main goal in establishing regional offices is to position ourselves closer to our partners, enabling us to further strengthen cooperation and create better conditions for the promotion of local ownership. The restructuring will continue in 2026, when we also will establish a regional office in Bangkok (Thailand).

How Act Church of Sweden is governed

The Church Synod and the Church Board are the highest decision-making bodies when it comes to the operations of Act Church of Sweden. The Church Board also appoints an International Council of 13 members to coordinate and develop the international work. A global reference group, comprising representatives from our partners and networks, supports the Council's work.



Working with our partners around the world, we promote the right of all people to live in dignity.

Change and impact in five focus areas

The work of Act Church of Sweden is based on five focal areas: Disaster Response, Livelihoods and Climate Justice, Gender Equality and Health, Peace and Democracy, and Faith and Learning.



240 projects
have received funds in 2025

Disaster Response

War, famine and natural disasters shatter the lives of millions of people every day, and behind every number is a human being – one who has the right to security, support and a dignified life.



Thanks to our cooperation with local partners around the world, Act Church of Sweden can quickly mobilise and act when a disaster strikes. Also, our identity as a church gives us a unique opportunity to reach out and start rebuilding what has been destroyed, together with actors from different religions.

When it comes to rebuilding communities and boosting their resilience in the face of future crises, it is essential that the people affected are the ones making decisions on how to make best use of the support.

Livelihoods and Climate Justice

We protect the Creation and defend the right of all people to live in dignity, with basic security, gender equality and climate justice as essential tenets of a sustainable world.

Together with local churches and partners, we work to improve people's opportunities to make a living for themselves. At the same time, we call on those in power to recognise the right to social security and climate justice globally. Being able to provide for themselves through their work boosts people's self-confidence and their hope for the future. The general aim is to ensure that people living vulnerable lives, marked by poverty and climate emergencies, have access to fair and sustainable livelihoods.



Gender Equality and Health

We work to enable all people, regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, to live a life of dignity. Sexual violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are examples of abuses that affect structurally vulnerable groups, many of whom are also denied education and healthcare, which is something we want to change. Every individual has the right to decide over their own life and body.



Act Church of Sweden works with religious representatives and partners around the world who stand up for gender equality and everyone's right to health and security. Religious actors and representatives often have power and influence over what is considered right and wrong in a society, giving us unique opportunities and a particular responsibility to drive positive change.

Peace and Democracy

Act Church of Sweden works with local actors around the world to strengthen human rights, and to build trust and peace. Violence and human rights restrictions are a major problem globally, with people being prevented from making their voices heard through direct physical violence and by means of unjust structures. In many places, people's rights are being restricted due to their sex, ethnicity, religion, or other forms of discrimination.

Every person is loved by God and holds the same value and rights. This is why we work to defend people's rights, for example, by providing training to prevent domestic violence or by protecting human rights defenders who are under threat.



Faith and Learning

In many countries, religious leaders exert great influence over people's lives and daily routines. Faith and spiritual beliefs can be used to guide, liberate, and provide comfort; but unfortunately also to oppress, stigmatise and legitimise violence. In today's polarised world, it is essential to reclaim faith as a source of life, care and community.

A crucial aspect of this work is the theological education and development of religious leaders. Act Church of Sweden, aims to support theology that promotes inclusion, justice and respect for human rights. In particular, we encourage theological education and reflection that seeks to enhance the influence and leadership role of women. The Faith and Learning focus area also addresses freedom of religion and belief, as well as interfaith cooperation to combat oppression and advocate for human rights.



Photo: Josefin Casterbyrd/Ikon

The work of Act Church of Sweden is underpinned by a strong commitment in the parishes, associations of parishes and dioceses. It is this local engagement that allows our vital work around the globe to continue.

Objectives and working methods

The overall objective of Act Church of Sweden is "People living in just, sustainable and democratic communities, backed by global solidarity and based on human rights " Our contribution takes the form of four strategic approaches:

Mobilisation

We build upon the commitment and agency of individuals in pursuit of global solidarity, mobilising resources to address fundamental issues of human equality and rights, the integrity of the Creation, international justice, and peace.

Capacity building

By engaging in dialogue and mutual learning with partners and rights holders, we support processes in which people, organisations and societies as a whole release, strengthen, create and maintain capacity over time.

Collaboration

As a church, we are part of a worldwide fellowship that sees us work with churches and organisations all over the world. By contributing to platforms for exchange and dialogue, we promote cooperation and coordination locally, regionally and globally.

Advocacy

We help achieve change by conducting long-term policy dialogue and opinion forming to influence political decision-making processes, attitudes and social norms locally, regionally and globally.



Bahati Irangunda Hakizimana, a qualified construction worker, has helped build homes for others who, like him, fled the conflict in DR Congo.

Locally led humanitarian actions

Via our local partners, Act Church of Sweden is on the ground before, during and after a disaster. Together, we save lives, alleviate suffering and boost the resilience of communities.

Support for those living with war in Ukraine

The full-scale war in Ukraine continued to hit its people hard in 2025, but the 57 community-led programmes supported by Act Church of Sweden managed to reach 51,210 people across the country.

One of the actions was to restore bomb shelters, giving people somewhere safer to hide during airstrikes. A large number of activities also focused on psychosocial support, such as art therapy, to give people the tools to process their trauma.

Training programmes were another key initiative, with courses in first aid and other practical skills improving the readiness of civilians to act in emergencies. Food and other items were also distributed to help households that were lacking basic necessities.

Alongside the locally led actions, Act Church of Sweden worked with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

to repair 221 bomb-damaged apartments in Kharkiv, allowing numerous families to return to their homes. Psychosocial support was also included in the collaborative actions with the LWF, which offers training for teachers and adults around children, and organises recreational activities for families, combined with basic mental health education, so that families can become stronger together.

Clean water, improved security and support for the most vulnerable people in DR Congo

The humanitarian situation remained very difficult in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) throughout 2025, due to fighting between rebels and government forces. Through the ACT Alliance, Act Church of Sweden has worked to improve the protection of particularly vulnerable groups and create better living conditions for displaced families within the country and

in neighbouring Uganda and Tanzania.

This has led to 4500 people, both refugees and host communities, having access to clean water through the construction of a water pipeline almost three kilometres long. People have also been trained to operate and maintain the water system, while information campaigns on safe water handling have reached a further 451 people, with a view to reducing the risk of waterborne diseases.

A total of 1,080 people in particularly vulnerable situations, including people with disabilities, have gained access to essential mobility aids, and 131 simple homes have been built for displaced people. This latter action involved giving refugees and people from host communities the financial support necessary to build homes, giving hundreds of people a roof over their head while generating income and increasing participation within the local communities.

Infrastructure and training in Haiti's complex crisis

Haiti is engulfed in one of the world's most complex crises, as it suffers armed violence, political uncertainty and severely limited social services. However, Act Church of Sweden and our partner organisations were able to implement a range of meaningful actions in 2025.

Locally-led initiatives have led to infrastructure upgrades across the country, including improvements to a five-kilometre road serving a community water well, which has also been brought back into use. Thousands of people now have better access to clean water. In addition, erosion control measures have been put in place, reducing the risk of accidents and flooding, while making it easier for people to get to schools, markets and medical facilities.

To ensure the enduring effect of these actions, 19 people have been trained in the management and maintenance of road and water infrastructure.

In another project, solar panels have been installed where communities identified a need for them, while vocational and agricultural training courses have been held as part of various micro-projects initiated by local people.

Local communities lead improvement work

Act Church of Sweden increasingly supports locally led initiatives where the communities themselves identify



Photo: Josefin Castenyl/Kron

In 2025, Act Church of Sweden continued to support locally led initiatives in locations across Ukraine. As in previous years, the focus has been on building up the capacity of local organisations and groups to respond to needs as they arise.

tify and implement projects tailored to their needs. The people living in vulnerable situations are the ones who know their needs best. As evidenced in our work together in 2025, Act Church of Sweden's support for local

initiatives has helped save lives and improve people's wellbeing. It has also fostered inclusive and solution-focused collaborations, while strengthening the long-term resilience of communities in the face of ongoing crises.

More examples of outcomes in Disaster Response:

- When major earthquakes struck Myanmar and Afghanistan, Act Church of Sweden worked with partners to provide cash, clean water, basic equipment, shelter and counselling to help affected families cope in the initial aftermath and start rebuilding their lives.
- Act Church of Sweden continued to provide life-saving support to people suffering displacement and protracted crises, for example in Bangladesh, Syria and Palestine, through efforts to provide food, healthcare, shelter, education and better living conditions in vulnerable areas.
- In countries affected by natural disasters and violence, such as South Sudan, Act Church of Sweden and our partners provided rapid assistance in the form of clean water, hygiene, shelter, psychosocial support and cash assistance to ensure that people were able to access the most basic necessities.
- Act Church of Sweden contributed to the development of Sweden's humanitarian strategy for the period 2025–2029 by sharing knowledge and experience from local partner organisations. This work also brought the needs and perspectives of the most vulnerable to the fore in designing the strategy.



48 disaster responses have been supported in 2025.



Archbishop Martin Modéus with Eunice Jerop of the LWF during a visit to the refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya in September 2025.

Initiatives for children with disabilities in refugee camps

Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya is one of the largest in the world, housing people who have fled conflict zones such as Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan and DR Congo. Many have lived here their whole lives and recently the pressure on the camp has increased, with many new arrivals living in difficult conditions.

In September, Archbishop Martin Modéus visited Kakuma, where he witnessed the devastating conse-

quences of aid cuts, including reduced food rations for the displaced people.

"It is such a painful experience to see the enormous suffering that so many people are living with," says Archbishop Modéus.

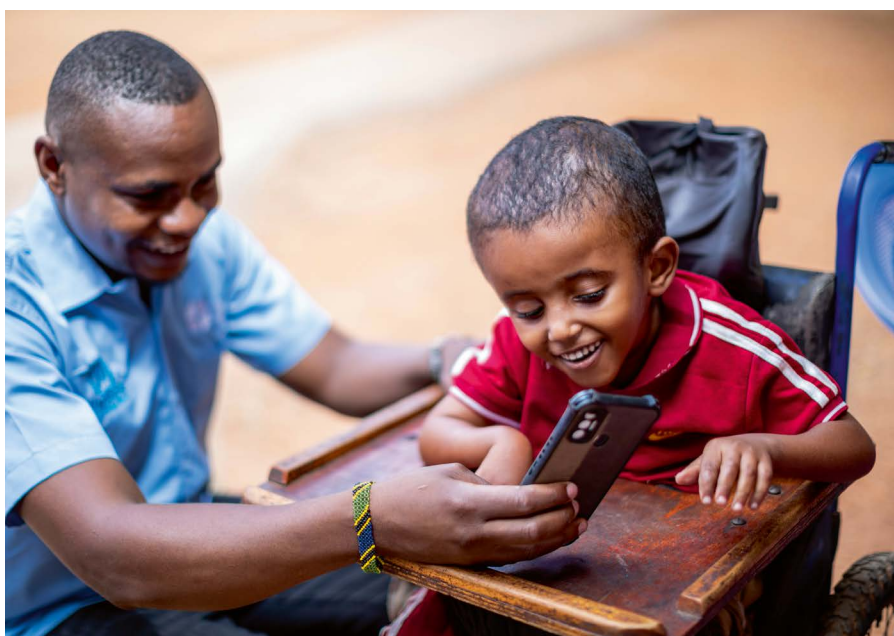
The Archbishop also saw how the work of Act Church of Sweden and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is making a positive difference in people's lives.

These actions focus in particular on schooling for refugee children and young people, not least those living with disabilities. Alongside the provision of aids to ease everyday life and enable school attendance, essential work is being done on changing norms and attitudes towards children and young people with disabilities.

"I have seen firsthand the amazing help that people are receiving thanks to contributions by donors and organisations. There is a clear emphasis on people's value and dignity, giving those with disabilities the chance of a life as part of the community – this in a society that has traditionally been very negative towards people with special needs," he says.

Act Church of Sweden's collaboration with the LWF in Kakuma forms part of a regional project named ARISE, which supports child refugees living with disabilities in Kenya, South Sudan and Somalia. In 2025, 428 teachers have been trained in how to adapt their teaching to children with special needs, 540 people have participated in group discussions aimed at preventing violence against children, and in South Sudan alone, over 8,500 children with disabilities have been able to attend school thanks to the project.

Photo: Josephin Castenryd/Ikon



Erickson Magonza works as a special needs teacher for children with intellectual and physical disabilities in one of the refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya.

Humanitarian aid in the world's biggest crisis

In 2025, the war in Sudan evolved into the world's largest humanitarian crisis, with 14 million people displaced and over 30 million needing humanitarian aid. The situation is rooted in a struggle for control of natural resources and a coup against an autocratic president. The fact that different foreign actors support the opposing parties – the Rapid Support Forces and the country's official army – has prolonged and aggravated the suffering of the civilian population.

Act Church of Sweden's advocacy work has a strong emphasis on raising awareness of forgotten humanitarian crises such as the war in Sudan. Through regional networks Act Church of Sweden works for peace in the country. We also call on Sweden and the EU to put pressure on the warring parties.

We run humanitarian efforts through ACT Alliance to support people affected by the war. Focus areas include cash distribution, rehabilitation of water systems and prevention of gender-based violence. It is also important to consider people's mental health in severe conflicts, which is why psychosocial support is another of our priorities.



Photo: Osman Saif/ACT Alliance/Ikon

The work to support people affected by the war in Sudan is making a difference. Over a six-month period in 2025, more than 60,000 people benefitted from support, including vital access to clean water and sanitation.

In 2025, 16,424 internally displaced people in Sudan received financial support to purchase items they themselves identified as needed. More than 10,000 people have also benefitted from

psychosocial help. In total, the various humanitarian efforts carried out by Act Church of Sweden, together with partner organisations, during the year have reached over 200,000 people in Sudan.

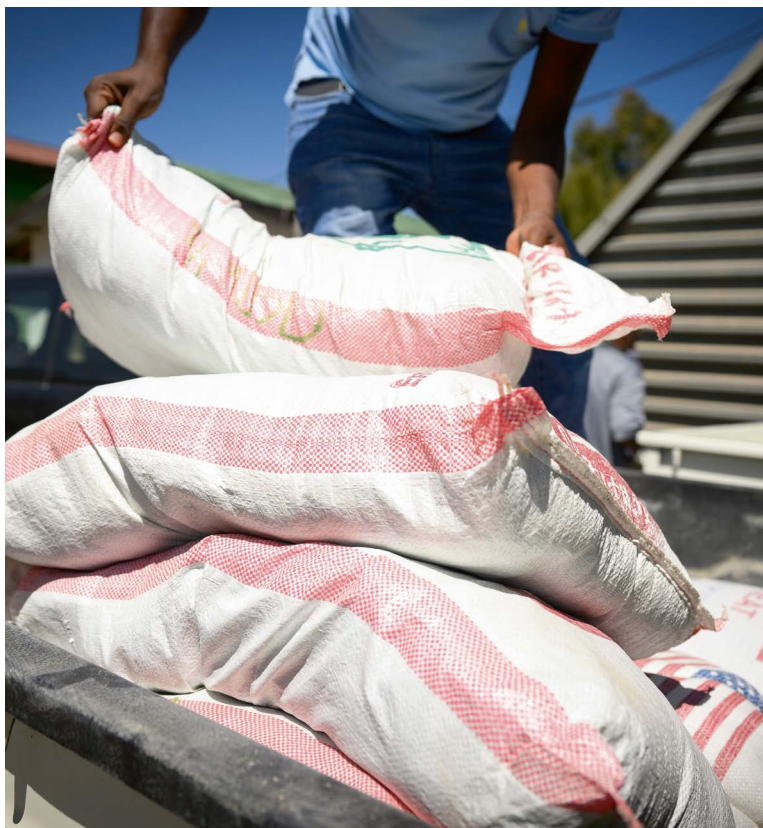


Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

ACT Alliance's Rapid Response Fund

ACT Alliance's Rapid Response Fund is a mechanism by which Act Church of Sweden contributes to the disaster response work of local ACT Alliance members around the world. The fund enable local organisations and churches within the alliance to respond quickly to disasters.

In 2025, we contributed to 16 operations in 14 countries through the fund, covering Pakistan, Colombia, Syria, the Philippines, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and more. The mobilisations came in response to various types of disasters, from floods, heatwaves and landslides to armed conflicts. Such support might include the distribution of food, water and cash, but also psychosocial support, which is a prioritised speciality of the local organisations.

Many of the local organisations supported by the Rapid Response Fund are Christian Councils – organised partnerships of churches within the countries concerned. In 2025, this was the case in Nigeria, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, for example.

Local ownership for sustainable livelihoods

Act Church of Sweden is working for fair and sustainable livelihoods in locations facing poverty, vulnerability and the climate emergency. In collaboration with local churches and partners, we support people's ability to provide for themselves and push for those in power to take responsibility for the right to social security and for the global climate.

Small-scale farming promotes sustainability

In Uganda and Kenya, the pilot project Innovative Finance for Improved Livelihood (IFIL) is being run in cooperation with We Effect and financial institution Oikocredit, to support small-scale farmers. Training, organisational development and tailored loans make cooperatives and farms better equipped to increase their production, revenue and resilience, with a particular focus on sustainable farming practices and women's empowerment.

2025 saw 30 businesses supported and over 360,000 farmers reached, a quarter of whom were women. These initiatives have enabled investment in new equipment and helped more women to take up leadership roles.

Local crisis management

Act Church of Sweden supports community-led initiatives to strengthen people's livelihoods in Intibucá, Honduras, where poor infrastructure and extreme weather make communities particularly vulnerable.

Together with our partner organisation Las Hormigas, we work with the method *supporting community-led crisis response (sclr)*, whereby the villagers themselves identify their needs and plan and implement their own actions. This strengthens the local



Photo: Magdalena Vogt/Icon

These five women are members of a farming cooperative in Uganda and participants in the IFIL pilot project to support small-scale farmers.

capability to manage crises and build sustainable development. Villagers have renovated schools and school kitchens, improved water systems and created allotments, resulting in safer schools, clean water and more nutritious food for over 1,050 people.

Clear voice for justice at COP30

In 2025, the Church of Sweden participated in its fifth consecutive UN Climate Summit, this time COP30 in Belém, Brazil. As part of the global ecumenical delegation, Act Church of Sweden pushed three key issues: decarbonisation, fair climate finance and gender equality in climate action. The delegation highlighted the need

for greater climate justice in exchanges with both Swedish and international decision-makers, and in several discussions Andreas Holmberg, Bishop of the diocese of Stockholm, stressed that the climate crisis is an existential challenge that requires political courage and concrete action.

Although limited progress was made on decarbonisation and financing, a new nine-year action plan on gender equality was adopted. The Church of Sweden's presence helped to raise the profile of our partners' testimonies on the climate emergency and to reinforce the case for international cooperation on climate justice.

More examples of outcomes in Livelihoods and Climate Justice:

- Human rights and climate rights defenders in Latin America extended their influence through protection initiatives and new advocacy spaces, with Act Church of Sweden opening doors to key climate forums.
- Smallholder families in Ethiopia improved their livelihoods due to higher harvests and land restoration. This was achieved with funding from Act Church of Sweden, adapted to local needs, and through regular dialogue between project staff and local communities on the ground.
- Women in and around the refugee camps in Jordan have secured their livelihoods through new cooperatives, training and practical support – made possible by Act Church of Sweden working with local actors.
- Local communities affected by mining in Southern Africa have been empowered to take a stand against environmental damage and corporate abuse. With the support of Act Church of Sweden, they have successfully pressed mining companies for tangible improvements and built regional solidarity in the fight for social and economic justice.



38 actions
in Livelihoods and
Climate Justice have
been supported in 2025.

Livelihoods and climate resilience in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable places in the world when it comes to climate change, with Rohingya refugees and locals alike having to live with recurring cyclones, floods and landslides. In this challenging environment, Act Church of Sweden is working with a local partner to improve both climate adaptation and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

In 2025, 2,000 tree seedlings were planted in two refugee camps to reduce erosion and increase climate resilience, while at the same time 400 people took part in vocational courses in areas such as sewing, fishing net making and hairdressing. In addition, 55 women received in-depth training in running a small business, complemented by cash grants to boost household incomes.

At the centre of the project were 60 community-led micro-projects, where residents themselves identified needs and took action such as repairing



Photo: Susanna Olivir/Ikon

Heavy rains and hurricanes bring down houses, roads and bridges in Bangladesh. Act Church of Sweden has supported a tree planting project to prevent soil erosion. Shabnum Mustary and Mohammed Noman work on the project.

bamboo bridges, roads and slopes, and building simple drainage solutions to prevent erosion and flooding. These initiatives improved safety and accessibility, while also promoting local ownership and stronger social cohesion.

Combining climate adaptation with financial support and local engagement, the project helped to establish more secure and resilient communities in one of the world's most challenging humanitarian environments.

Climate justice education centre in the West Bank

In the West Bank, Act Church of Sweden supports the Environmental Education Center (EEC), set up by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. We are working together to promote environmental and climate justice, greater biodiversity and long-term peace in both Israel and Palestine, a key part of which is highlighting the impact of the Israeli occupation on the environment and natural resources of Palestine.

The EEC spreads knowledge about biodiversity, and environmental and climate issues as it engages with children, young people and teachers, while also empowering young people to become active agents of change in their communities. One example is a project that takes children out to survey bird species – an activity that sparks interest in birdwatching and deepens empathy for other living creatures.

In September 2025, Act Church of Sweden invited three representatives from the EEC to Sweden, including the centre's founder Simon Awad. The visit allowed important voices from the West Bank to be heard and increased



Photo: Magnus Aronsson/Ikon

At the Environmental Education Center in Beit Jala, children get to join in with a local bird survey – an activity that fosters curiosity and boosts empathy for nature.

the understanding of how the political situation in Palestine is affecting both people and the environment. The visiting delegation also highlighted the links between environmental degradation and human rights and the need to strengthen the protections for environmental defenders.

The programme included meetings with Members of Parliament, the Palestinian Ambassador, Bishop Andreas Holmberg, and the Church of Sweden's climate ambassadors. The delegation also gave well-received lectures at the

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and Uppsala University. The visit ended by walking the pilgrim trail in Årike Fyris nature reserve, Uppsala, where the delegates were able to follow the work of the nature educators and try their hand at birdwatching.

The strong level of engagement generated by the advocacy visit shows how Act Church of Sweden can create meaningful forums for bringing our partner organisations' important environmental and rights issues to a wider Swedish audience.

Gender equality is life-changing

Act Church of Sweden has a long-term commitment to ensuring that everyone can live in dignity and safety, free from sexual violence and other abuses. Working with local churches and partners, we change norms and reinforce rights, creating environments where people can take control of their own lives and bodies.

Self-help groups promote gender equality

In India, Act Church of Sweden is working with the Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) in urban slums to strengthen the rights of girls and women, and improve access to healthcare and education. The work is rooted in self-help groups where women organise themselves around issues of livelihood, safety and participation.

47 new groups were created in 2025 and support was given to 161 existing groups. With training and support, more women were able to register their citizenship, obtain ID documents, open bank accounts and take out group-based loans. Women's health rights have been strengthened in collaboration with local health centres, and more children are attending school thanks to the more secure livelihoods of their families. In total, the actions reached 14,446 households, equating to around 60,000 people.

Progress in the fight against female genital mutilation

In Tanzania, we are continuing the fight against female genital mutilation, a form of abuse that affects millions of girls

and women. Religious leaders play a crucial role in changing deep-rooted norms, and Act Church of Sweden is working with the Christian Council of Tanzania to raise awareness of the consequences of female genital mutilation.

2025 saw 6,900 people receive education on children's rights and domestic violence, while local collaborations saved 71 girls from female genital mutilation. 17 former practitioners have chosen to abandon the practice and are now working to stop it.



Sandhya Jagulia attends a women's group in India, where she learns about her rights and receives financial support. Using an investment grant of SEK 1,300, she has now started a business selling clothes.

Testimony from brave women is helping to break the silence and inspire more people to protect girls from abuse.

Women active in decision-making processes

In Myanmar, Act Church of Sweden and local partners are focusing on strengthening democratic structures and creating inclusive communities in which women and men participate on equal terms. Training sessions and workshops encourage women to take part in decision-making processes, while men are engaged as allies in gender equality work.

In 2025, over 2,800 people (2,182 women and 643 men) joined the courses and workshops on female leadership, gender discrimination and the promotion of equal rights, which has led to many more women actively participating in local decision-making.

Photo: David Weston/Ikon

More examples of outcomes in Gender Equality and Health:

- Children in the Philippines exposed to online exploitation are now better protected, as local organisations use a new legal framework to report abuse and demand accountability – work strengthened by Act Church of Sweden's support for capacity building.
- Female sex workers in and around Ugandan refugee camps took a leading role in providing psychosocial support following targeted capacity building interventions, with Act Church of Sweden supporting a local women's rights organisation to reach those most vulnerable.
- Girls at risk of female genital mutilation in Tanzania is better protected as the national strategy against the practice was adapted to methods developed by faith-based actors, work that Act Church of Sweden has long supported.
- LGBTQIA+-led organisations in Eastern and Southern Africa increased their political influence, as joint advocacy led to solid progress. With the support of Act Church of Sweden, the network was able to build alliances and bring inclusive language into key UN processes.
- Women, young people and SRHR defenders in East Africa had their issues raised in the Swedish political sphere after Members of Parliament encountered their work – made possible by Act Church of Sweden generating contacts and packaged information material.



45 actions
in Gender Equality
and Health have been
supported in 2025.

Preventive work and support for young people in Honduras

Honduras has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Latin America, often as a result of rape. Pregnancy in adolescence comes with major medical risks and serious social consequences – many girls leave school, are shunned by their parents and face limited life chances. Vulnerability is highest in rural and marginalised areas, where violence, poverty and lack of access to education and health care are a fact of life, and the country's blanket ban on abortion makes the situation even more dangerous.

In summer 2025, Act Church of Sweden's local partner Ecuménicas launched a new project to prevent teenage pregnancies and improve maternity care for pregnant young people in vulnerable areas. To date, 100 birth and baby kits have been distributed, alongside educational initiatives on mental health, self-care and family planning.

Ecuménicas has now received international recognition for its work promoting the rights of women and



Photo: Jasper Klemmesson/Icon

Pastor Ana Ruth García, founder and director of Ecuménicas, with two young volunteers in the Honduran capital Tegucigalpa.

girls in Honduras over more than a decade. In May 2025, the founder and director, Pastor Ana Ruth García, was awarded the Swedish Government's leading human rights accolade, the Per Anger Prize, following a nomination by Act Church of Sweden. During her visit to Sweden, Ana Ruth met

the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Archbishop of the Church of Sweden, Members of Parliament, students and parishioners, with whom she shared testimonies about the vulnerability of girls in Honduras – but also about the courage and resilience of the feminist movement driving the work forward.

Mentor mothers give children a better start in life

It is more than 40 years since Swedish missionary Ingrid le Roux and her South African colleagues began making health visits to families through the Mentor Mother Programme, and now the method is being employed by Act Church of Sweden's partners in South Africa, Eswatini, Egypt and Ethiopia. Women are trained as mentor mothers in areas where many families live in poverty and lack access to basic maternity and child health services. The mentor mothers visit families, identify malnutrition and diseases, and make referrals where necessary.

In 2025, the South African organisation Philani continued to expand its network of small community clinics in shanty towns, where mentor mothers and nurses carry out basic health checks, vaccinations and tests, making care more accessible and relieving the pressure on public services.

There were 275 active mentor mothers in Cape Town and the Western Cape in 2025, and the Cape Town Department of Health also asked Philani to extend its Mentor Mother



Photo: Joseph Casteryd/Icon

Mentor mother Phumla Wengu on a home visit to Ntombisiwe and her seven-month-old son in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Programme to a new area of the city. 70 health workers previously employed by the government are now being trained in the method and will work within Philani's operation.

The work of the mentor mothers continues to play a crucial role in

improving children's health and giving them a better start in life, as proven in extensive research showing that child malnutrition is half as common in areas where mentor mothers are active, compared to similar areas with no such intervention.

Local defenders of human rights

Promoting a just peace and democracy is one of our core missions as a church. Working with local partners, in 2025 Act Church of Sweden continued its active drive to strengthen human rights, build trust and promote democracy, particularly in communities subject to armed conflict.



Photo: Miriam Magdalen Alum/LWF/ikon

The Mothers' Union is an organisation within the Anglican Church that is conducting out-reach work in the Palorinya refugee camp in the Moyo district of northern Uganda.

22,000 voices break the silence

In 2025, Act Church of Sweden's partner played a crucial role in Zimbabwe's sensitive process of collecting testimonies about the Gukurahundi massacre of the mid-1980s. Our partner has employed education, psychosocial support and dialogue to build trust and enable 22,000 people to tell their truth about abuses long shrouded in silence. This work contributes to reconciliation and a common way forward for the country.

Pilot project for a more secure future

Many indigenous communities in

Guatemala are being evicted from land they have lived on for generations. Logging, mining and large construction projects creating conflicts where the government often remains passive. Working with the Jotay cooperation programme, Act Church of Sweden is seeking to defend people's rights and empower these communities to develop strategies for survival.

In 2025, for example, a pilot project was launched in which the forcibly displaced Mayan community of Pan-chisivic received financial aid to create better living conditions for themselves. 28 solar panels and the same

number of water tanks mean that over 150 people now have access to electricity and clean water. In addition, 57 women and girls participated in weaving workshops – combining therapy with preservation of cultural heritage.

Cross-border peace project

In South Sudan, repeated conflicts have displaced millions of people. Many have sought refuge in Uganda, with tens of thousands of people in and around the reception centres living with a severe lack of resources and livelihoods.

In 2025, Act Church of Sweden supported a cross-border peace project in these settlements, aimed at supporting local peace actors, providing training in conflict management and creating forums for cross-border dialogue with a view to promoting peaceful coexistence. This included a major peace conference in Kajo-Keji in August, attended by 73 people from various ethnic groups. Local groups were also given training in psychological first aid and stress management, while the Mothers' Union reached 340 people via its peace promotion and counselling work over the year. Through counselling and peer support they now contribute to increased security for the most vulnerable. Safety and security of the most vulnerable people.

More examples of outcomes in Peace and Democracy:

- Young people in local communities in Colombia were able to continue to participate in safe human rights and peace trainings despite a difficult security situation, thanks to Act Church of Sweden's support for local security structures.
- Trade union activists in Myanmar received greater international protection when the International Labour Organization (ILO) took action against the military junta – a breakthrough made possible by Act Church of Sweden's long-standing support for documentation and advocacy.
- LGBTQIA+-led organisations in Eastern and Southern Africa increased their political influence, as joint advocacy work generated tangible progress. With the support of Act Church of Sweden, the network was able to build alliances and introduce inclusive language into key UN processes.
- Young people in Eastern Africa consolidated their role as peacebuilders through clubs, entrepreneurship and climate action in a regional effort supported by Act Church of Sweden.
- Palestinian communities under occupation were able to continue documenting and reporting abuses despite the ongoing war, as Act Church of Sweden secured funding to enable our partner B'Tselem to continue its independent reporting.



60 actions

in Peace and Democracy have been supported in 2025.

Solidarity and presence in Israel and Palestine

The situation in Israel and Palestine has been extremely difficult in 2025, with serious and repeated violations of international law. While a fragile ceasefire agreement was reached between Israel and Hamas last autumn, violence, forced displacement and settlement expansion have continued, and indeed escalated, over the past two years, in both Gaza and the West Bank.

Advocating for international law

In 2025, Act Church of Sweden continued to stand up for peace and human rights through our advocacy work to uphold international law and protect the civilian population in Israel and Palestine. Demonstrations, delegations and political dialogue helped to focus attention on Sweden's responsibility for a just and peaceful solution to the conflict.

Activities for children in Gaza

Dar al-Kalima is one of Act Church of Sweden's Palestinian partners operating inside Gaza. The organisation is building long-term community resilience through its educational and cultural efforts for young people.

Their education centre in Gaza provides a safe environment for children to express themselves through art and creativity, something that is particularly important when living in a war zone.

In 2025, Dar al-Kalima's psychosocial programme reached 14,850 children, who attended various meet-ups, group activities and art clubs. These contexts provide children with both meaningful recreation and the opportunity to process their experiences of the war. Dar al-Kalima organised several art exhibitions in 2025 to bring the children's personal stories and messages to the community.

Protective presence in the West Bank

Act Church of Sweden supports Rabbis for Human Rights in their long-term work to promote human rights, social justice and peaceful coexistence in Israel and Palestine. Rooted in Jewish morality, with a broad cross-section of rabbis from different Jewish denominations, the organisation acts, among other things, as a protective presence for vulnerable



Photo: Dar al-Kalima/Ikon

One of Dar al-Kalima's activities in Gaza, called "They are still making art", is about empowering children to process their trauma through creativity. Since the project began in autumn 2025, 187 children have participated, giving them a chance to play, create and receive professional support.

Palestinians in the West Bank.

In 2025, Rabbis for Human Rights brought together a large number of Israeli and foreign volunteers to visit communities in the West Bank, with a view to preventing violence and documenting abuses by Israeli settlers and military forces against Palestinians. The violence has increased sharply in recent years, and the work of Rabbis for Human Rights has therefore intensified considerably during the first half of 2025. New field coordinators were appointed for Masafer Yatta and the Bethlehem area, and they are now working with the existing coordinators in Nablus and the Jordan Valley. Together with established networks on the ground, Rabbis for Human Rights offered a round-the-clock presence in communities threatened by settler violence.

Running from January to March, the "Planting Justice 2025" campaign saw over 400 volunteers plant and donate 1,000 olive seedlings, in a drive to reaffirm Palestinian land rights and deepen ties between Israelis and Palestinians.



Photo: Hanna Soldat/Ikon

On 22 October 2025, 23 civil society organisations held a demonstration in Odenplan, Stockholm. Over the course of ten hours, demonstrators read out the names of Palestinian and Israeli children killed in the war and called on the government to act in defence of international law.

Faith as a force for change

Act Church of Sweden combats discrimination, fosters women’s leadership and protects freedom of religion and belief by means of theological education and engagement with religious leaders. We also work on knowledge sharing and interfaith cooperation to ensure that faith is a force for care, community and justice.

Interregional conference on queer theological education

A regional collaboration is underway in Latin America aimed at countering religious fundamentalism. Working with the Faculdades EST research centre in Brazil, Act Church of Sweden is seeking to strengthen the status of feminist theology, gender studies and religious studies.

As part of this work, an interregional conference on queer theological education was held in Brazil in August 2025, bringing together theologians from Africa and Latin America. With support from Act Church of Sweden, the delegates were able to share their experiences of discrimination, faith and resistance. The conference resulted in a publication on contextual queer theology and provided researchers with in-depth tools to combat gender-based violence using faith- and community-based methods.

Stronger cooperation between Christian communities in Pakistan

The rise in extremism and hostility towards minorities in Pakistan is putting Christians at risk, and the same time, the churches are divided and find it difficult to present a united front.

In 2025, 45 leaders from different denominations participated in

seminars on bridging divides and working together for peace and justice, organised by Act Church of Sweden’s partner, the Christian Study Centre. In addition, 20 people received theological education concerning gender equality, democracy and interfaith dialogue – knowledge that makes them open to participating actively in society and facing questions of Christian faith with confidence and respect.

Gender equality in family law

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land is the only church in the Middle East that

enshrines gender equality in family law. This legal framework is the culmination of years of hard work on spreading knowledge and awareness of the importance of gender equality.

Act Church of Sweden supports the church’s theology-based efforts to improve, implement and raise awareness of gender equality in family law. 2025 saw continued work to reform the church’s legal system and update the law. Their work on family law has made the church an important advocate for gender equality in Palestinian society, with civil society and Palestinian policy-makers seeking to draw on their expertise.



Photo: Daniela Zondagh/Icon

Act Church of Sweden and our partner organisation Inclusive and Affirming Ministries (IAM) hosted the Pan-African conference “Imagining a Queer Africa” in May 2025, aimed at creating a common platform for activists, researchers, religious leaders, cultural practitioners and community organisers.

More examples of outcomes in Faith and Learning:

- The peace work of local theologians and community actors in Ethiopia has been enhanced through training that links theology to human rights and local accountability, with Act Church of Sweden as a partner providing methodological support.
- Feminist theologians and activists in Latin America have gained a stronger voice through regional gatherings and courses that assembled women from across the region to discuss strategies to combat fundamentalism and gender-based violence, with support from Act Church of Sweden that has promoted stronger networks, theological development and visibility.
- Women and marginalised groups in religious contexts in India have been empowered to challenge unequal religious norms and pursue gender equality issues through dialogues and study groups supported by Act Church of Sweden, together with local faith leaders and civil society organisations.
- Sabeel’s Palestinian Liberation Theology study groups and ecumenical activities have strengthened Palestinian Christians and local communities in Israel and Palestine as they pursue justice, inclusion and non-violence. Act Church of Sweden supports this work, which creates safer spaces for the voice of civil society to be heard in the increasingly limited social sphere.



29 actions

in Faith and Learning
have been supported in
2025.

Imagining a Queer Africa – a Pan-African conference on faith, love and identity

Act Church of Sweden and our partner organisation Inclusive and Affirming Ministries (IAM) hosted the Pan-African conference “Imagining a Queer Africa” in South Africa in May 2025. The aim was to create a common platform that brought together activists, researchers, religious leaders, cultural practitioners and community organisers from across the African continent. Over 60 delegates from 17 countries attended, many with their own LGBTQIA+ experiences, giving the conference a deep-seated perspective on faith, identity and justice. Act Church of Sweden was involved in both the planning and the implementation and had three representatives attending.

The discussions revolved around how gender, love and identity in modern Africa are shaped by colonial norms and how queer theological perspectives can contribute to liberation and change. The conference developed strategies to help address resistance, strengthen rights-based advocacy and deepen networks between faith-based and human rights actors.

In a particularly powerful moment, the first memorial lecture at the conference honoured Imam Muhsin Hendricks for his pioneering work to



Photo: Daniela Zondagh/Ikon

Marlow Newman-Valentine, Programme Manager at IAM, pastor Ecclesia de Lange, Director of IAM and Professor Charlene van der Walt, Act Church of Sweden, urge the room to be courageous in taking collective action.

promote LGBTQIA+ rights, rooted in the teachings of Islam. This came just 100 days after he was murdered for his work.

The conference clearly demonstrated the power of bringing together actors working at the intersection of faith, justice and queer liberation, resulting in deeper collaboration, new

theological tools and stronger fellowships for the continued work towards inclusive societies and faith communities in the region.

As one of the delegates put it: “This conference affirms that faith and queer identity can coexist and challenge harmful narratives that have long existed in our communities.”

Pastoral care strengthens communities in Tanzania

Act Church of Sweden supports Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), a centre run by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), and in 2025, the centre continued to build up the capabilities of the church and wider society within pastoral care, mental health and social support.

Participants who have completed their CPE training are clearly making a difference in their local communities, offering services such as professional counselling and conflict management in hospitals, prisons and other vulnerable environments.

Sixty-five participants graduated in 2025, and they have since supported people in crisis, worked on processing trauma, championed the rights of



Photo: Nsubili Mwalipopo/Ikon

Prince Hiiti, Monica Mahoo, Jane Nyagawa and Archiboldy Lyimo from Clinical Pastoral Education in Moshi, Tanzania.

people with disabilities and offered psychosocial support during disasters. All this enhances the care provided by both the church and civil society,

ensuring that people in vulnerable situations receive more responsive, present and professional guidance from faith-based actors in Tanzania.



Photo: Josefin Casteryd/Ikon, Magdalena Vogt/Ikon and Hanna Soldal/Ikon



One humanity under the same sky

The engagement and donations of private individuals, congregations and other donors have enabled Act Church of Sweden to continue working for every person's right to a life in dignity in 2025. Together we raised SEK 228 million!

In 2025, many individuals, parishes, companies and institutional donors have helped to achieve an incredible feat of fundraising, with over 150,000 people choosing to donate to Act Church of Sweden over the year. Our monthly donors provided over SEK 37 million in long-term support, while donations from the public totalled SEK 57 million and bequests a further SEK 24 million.

With a growing level of engagement, fundraising by congregations also increased in all areas during the year. Collections, grants and fundraising activities together generated almost SEK 88 million, up 14 percent

Tinde Carlbrand Photo: Josefin Casteryd/Ikon



on the previous year, when income from the same types of fundraising was SEK 77 million. The largest increase came from collections and grants, with parishes and dioceses giving 28 million in grants and raising almost 32 million in collections.

This year, Act Church of Sweden has partnered with all 13 dioceses to further boost engagement for the worldwide church in the parishes. This collaboration gives the dioceses an opportunity to employ a staff member to promote the cause of Act Church of Sweden, with a full focus on supporting parish engagement. Positive



SEK 228 million

raised in 2025.

results have already been achieved in terms of engagement with the work of Act Church of Sweden.

"As a church, we are called to stand up for everyone's equal worth and to do what we can to safeguard the creation. The fight for human rights and strong development cooperation is currently being called into question. However, we are building on a history that does not change with the wind, but stands firm in the knowledge of what is right and just. And so we continue to build the movement and raise funds – because everyone has the right to live in dignity," says Tinde Carlbrand, Head of Fundraising and Engagement at Act Church of Sweden.

Photo: Henrik Berglund/Ikon



Taking action in the Lenten Campaign

Under the title “From your hands to where the action lands”, the Lenten Campaign 2025 focused on people’s courage to act in the face of disasters and crises. At a time of aid cuts and declining global solidarity, we as a church are seeing incredible engagement in the parishes and dioceses of Sweden. A total of SEK 35.6 million was raised, providing vital funds in an increasingly tough international aid climate.

The engagement took many forms, from cold-water dips and cheese sales to digital collection boxes, auctions and galas. As evidence of the growing interest in digital fundraising channels, over a hundred private fundraisers were launched via the digital platform, where individuals could create their own collection box for Lent and donate to the campaign.

SEK 35.6 million in 2025

(SEK 36.7 million in 2024)

Photo: Magdalena Vogt/Ikon



Record-breaking Christmas fundraiser

The Christmas fundraiser 2025 emphasised the importance of spreading hope and light in a time of turmoil and uncertainty, with the church’s mission to stand up for peace and hold on to the vision of a healed world coming into sharper focus than ever. Around a quarter of the world’s population currently lives in areas affected by conflict, and Act Church of Sweden works in many of those places where the need is greatest.

This year’s “Shine a light in the darkness” campaign set a new fundraising record, with SEK 60.8 million in donations. This striking figure was made possible by the committed engagement of congregations across the country, together with generous contributions from individuals and businesses. Many people also chose to donate to the campaign’s digital candle lighting, as a result of which 16,300 digital candles were lit as a symbol of peace and hope.

SEK 60.8 million in 2025

(SEK 54 million in 2024)

Photo: Fredrik Bengtsson/Ikon



Världens Barn – Making childhood possible

Världens Barn (Children of the World), Radiohjälpen’s (Radio Aid) biggest fundraising event, is run by SVT and Sveriges Radio P4 in partnership with 13 Swedish organisations, including Act Church of Sweden. The fundraiser runs all year round, with the campaign peaking in late September and early October.

In 2025, Act Church of Sweden received support for three projects. For many years, the campaign has supported initiatives to improve inclusion for children with disabilities living in refugee camps in Kenya, South Sudan and Somalia. Support was also given to a project in Pakistan that seeks to improve the physical and mental health of Afghan refugee children and young people, along with funding for a project in Gaza, where art therapy and psychosocial activities help children to process traumatic experiences.

FUNDRAISING AND ENGAGEMENT

Red line for Gaza

On 18 June, an estimated 15,000 people dressed in red gathered in central Stockholm to demonstrate in support of the civilian population in Gaza. In wearing red clothing, the participants were drawing a red line through Stockholm, symbolising the line long since crossed in Gaza.

The event was organised by Act Church of Sweden, Oxfam Sweden, the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, Amnesty Sweden and the Olof Palme International Center. Together, we mobilised a wide range of organisations from Swedish civil society, trade unions and faith communities, with one common message: the Swedish Government must act more forcefully to protect the civilian population in Gaza and stand up for international law.



Photo: Josefin Casterby/Ikon



Photo: Magdalena Vogt/Ikon

Candles for peace at Stockholm Central Station

In late November, Act Church of Sweden held a candlelit vigil for peace at Stockholm Central Station. Visitors were able to light both digital and physical candles, with strong take-up of the digital option. By the end of the week, almost 4,000 candles had been lit for peace, and by the end of January the total had reached 16,300.

The programme on the stage attracted many passers-by, with appearances by Archbishop Emeritus KG Hammar, several choirs and singer Annika Wickihalder, whose performance brought the whole station to a standstill. Radio station P4 Stockholm paid us a visit, and we were able to have many enriching conversations with people at the station – a chance to be a church in the thick of everyday life. The joint initiative with Stockholm Diocese raised awareness of Act Church of Sweden's work, boosted engagement and provided a reminder that light and hope can flourish even in times of turmoil.

Turn Debt into Hope – a global campaign for debt relief

The current debt crisis is depriving many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America of resources to invest in health, education and climate change mitigation. Running from Epiphany 2025 to Epiphany 2026, the global petition "Turn Debt into Hope" called for the cancellation of unjust debt and reforms to the global financial system. The Swedish part of the campaign was run by Act Church of Sweden, Caritas, Diakonia, PMU, the Swedish Mission Council and the Christian Council of Sweden.

A total of around 230,000 names were collected globally. In addition to serving as an advocacy drive, the campaign provided an opportunity for public education on an overlooked crisis. The Swedish part of the campaign also specifically drew a link between the debt crisis and the climate crisis.



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

The Akelius Foundation matched all donations made in December

In autumn 2025, Act Church of Sweden was invited to participate in the Akelius Foundation's donation matching campaign, which involved the foundation doubling donations received by Act Church of Sweden between 1 and 31 December 2025.

Under this scheme, in 2026 the Akelius Foundation will give SEK 38.6 million towards Act Church of Sweden's aid work for people displaced by the war in Sudan, whether in Sudan itself or in neighbouring countries.

Monitoring and quality assurance

Act Church of Sweden works with partner organisations in line with established international quality standards for humanitarian aid and development cooperation. Our work is based on the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), the Istanbul Principles, the Humanitarian Principles, and the Sphere Standards and their associated guidelines. We also follow Swedish guidelines through Giva Sverige (the Swedish Fundraising Association) and Swedish Fundraising Control. As part of our quality work, we have goal-oriented programmes, complaints response mechanisms and other mechanisms that underpin accountability and transparency.

Act Church of Sweden is externally audited according to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), an international quality standard that sets criteria concerning quality, accountability and continuous improvement in humanitarian aid and development cooperation. We carry out several

types of monitoring throughout the year to ensure that our actions are implemented effectively and responsibly. These include goal-oriented programmes with systematic results monitoring, an established complaints response mechanism, a code of conduct for staff and elected officials, and guidelines on anti-corruption, child safeguarding and other key issues.

In order to monitor and measure the development of our activities, we continuously collect and compile data. One method we take as inspiration for this work is Outcome Harvesting, a method that enables us to compare various progress indicators, analysing both our performance and outcomes in relation to our long-term objectives. It also allows us to identify areas where we need to develop and improve.

We have robust internal control systems and undergo regular external audits of both our finances and our

operations. To ensure accountability and quality, we maintain a close dialogue with our partners. The focus is on developing effective accountability mechanisms and on ensuring transparency and rigorous scrutiny of our own and our partners' activities.

The purpose of Act Church of Sweden's complaints function is to receive and handle complaints relating to activities carried out by Act Church of Sweden itself or jointly with partners. The complaints function received 19 new complaints in 2025, compared with 16 in 2024. Of the 19 complaints submitted, ten fell outside the remit of the function. In most of these cases, the complainant was referred to other church entities such as parishes, associations of parishes or dioceses. The nine cases under the remit of the complaints function all concerned the work of international partners.

Photo: Charlotte Pedersen/Ikon



Our commitments to quality and accountability are:

- Working with a human rights-based approach
- Working in a gender-integrated way
- Working towards ecological sustainability and climate justice
- Working in partnership and reciprocity
- Working in an open, transparent and participatory manner
- Providing effective, results-based, relevant and conflict-sensitive support
- Working on complaints, safeguarding and anti-corruption
- Being a learning organisation
- Providing support and skills development for staff
- Complying with Act Alliance's principles for good organisational practice, requirements from Giva Sverige and Swedish Fundraising Control, as well as the principle of public access to official records.

Control of our fundraising activities

Act Church of Sweden

- has a '90-account' (registered fundraising account), regulated by Swedish Fundraising Control, providing donors with a clear guarantee that they are donating to a serious and responsible organisation.
- is a member of Giva Sverige, whose work focuses on secure donations, quality assurance, training, skills development and advocacy group policies, with an emphasis on the ethical, transparent and professional governance of non-profit organisations.
- holds Tryggt Givande (Secure Donations) certification, as issued to organisations that comply with Giva Sverige's quality code. This confirms the quality and professionalism of the organisation, and certifies that its fundraising is secure, ethical and transparent.

**tryggt
givande**
givasverige

90 SVENSK
KONTO INSAMLINGS
KONTROLL

How the money was used

Act Church of Sweden's total revenue in 2025 was SEK 390 million. Here we report on where the money came from, how it was spent and how we ensure that every krona makes a difference.

Revenue

Funds raised from individuals, parishes and businesses remain our largest source of revenue, with institutional grants from Sida and the EU, national funding and other donors completing the picture. Together, this funding enables us to respond quickly to disasters and promote long-term work for security and change.

Donations

Gifts from private individuals, such as single donations, monthly donations, memorial and tribute collections and bequests, and donations from companies constitute a key element of our funding.

Collections, grants and fundraising activities

Collections, grants and local fundraising activities in the parishes provide stable funding for work with partners worldwide. The engagement of the parishes is a major driving force behind our international work.

Institutional funding

This item consists of grants from Sida, the EU and other government institutions such as the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency and the Swedish Institute. These grants finance larger programmes, projects and actions within development cooperation and humanitarian aid programmes, projects and operations.

National funding

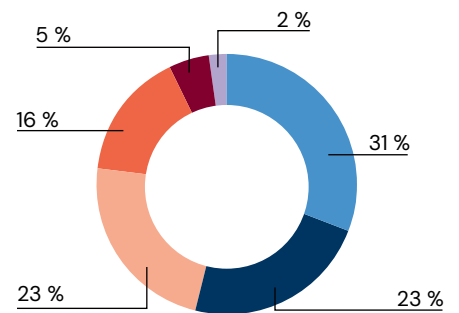
National funding consists of funds from the Church Board. These funds are used to run our international work in a strategic, sustainable and quality-driven way.

Radiohjälpen, funds and foundations

This includes grants from Radiohjälpen and Världens Barn, as well as contributions from external and internal funds and foundations. This money is often targeted at specific projects, such as child-focused initiatives, humanitarian aid or groups in particularly vulnerable situations.

Other

Other revenue includes sales in the Church of Sweden's online shop, exchange rate gains and various small grants.



- Donations SEK 120 million (31 %)
- Collections, grants and fundraising activities SEK 88 million (23 %)
- Institutional funding SEK 88 million (23 %)
- National funding SEK 65 million (16 %)
- Radiohjälpen, funds and foundations SEK 20 million (5 %)
- Other SEK 9 million (2 %)

Costs

Most of our funds were used for long-term development cooperation, church cooperation and humanitarian aid. A significant part of our revenue also went towards disaster response, as well as our information and advocacy work in Sweden and globally.

Development cooperation, church cooperation and humanitarian aid

This covers the bulk of our activities – all the work carried out jointly with our local partners, sister churches and networks, including support in protracted humanitarian crises. The costs include grants to partners – the largest item – staff in partner collaborations and the running of our regional offices.

The item also covers our contributions and grants to global ecumenical partnerships, such as the Lutheran

World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the secretariat of ACT Alliance. These strengthen our common voice on issues of peace, justice and human rights. Moreover, they make our development work more impactful and enable us to respond quickly to humanitarian crises.

Disaster response

This category covers our humanitarian work through the Human Rapid Response Programme. This work is about saving lives and meeting urgent needs, for example through the provision of food, cash, shelters, psychosocial support and access to water and sanitation. Working with local partners and the ACT Alliance enables us to reach large numbers of people, even in the most challenging locations. The funds

are used where the need is greatest and where a quick response can make a major difference. We are able to mobilise support almost immediately through the Rapid Response Fund.

Information and advocacy

Information and advocacy are a core part of Act Church of Sweden's mission and should not be confused with administration. This category includes work to influence decision-makers on issues such as development policy, climate, gender equality, human rights or social security, as well as the cost of informing, mobilising and engaging people in Sweden.

It also encompasses production of the website and information material, plus salaries for staff working on policy development and advocacy at na-

Regional distribution

Act Church of Sweden works with local partners in several regions around the world. These long-term relationships enable us to be present wherever the vulnerability is greatest and promote change wherever the inequality is deepest.

The breakdown includes costs for both long-term development cooperation and humanitarian aid.

Africa

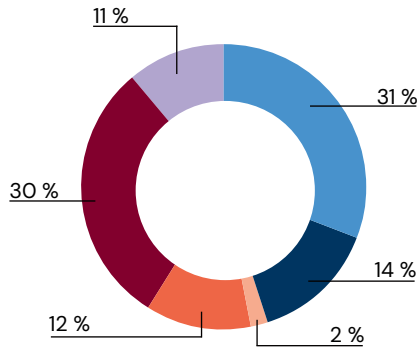
Act Church of Sweden has a long-standing presence in Africa, with over 40 partner organisations in 13 countries. The work is carried out through two regional programmes, and also includes support for theological education and humanitarian aid.

Asia

Act Church of Sweden works with 24 partner organisations in Asia to promote gender equity, religious freedom and safer communities. Extending from Afghanistan to Indonesia, the work includes both development and humanitarian responses to climate-related disasters, inequality and the oppression of minorities.

Europe

In Europe, we work to promote peace-building, human rights and humanitarian



- Africa 31 %
- Asia 14 %
- Europe 2 %
- Latin America 12 %
- Middle East and North Africa* 30 %
- Global 11 %

efforts in conflict zones. We support people affected by the war in Ukraine and contribute to peace initiatives in Cyprus, through our ecumenical partners.

Latin America

We support 19 partner organisations in Latin America that work to promote peace, human rights and gender equality, particularly in Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras. Our partners play an important role in societies defined

by violence, inequality and political restrictions, supporting people who are displaced and vulnerable.

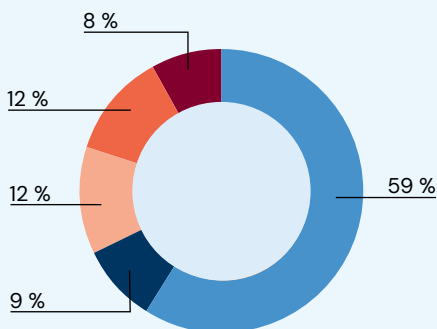
Middle East and North Africa

In the Middle East and North Africa, Act Church of Sweden works with around 30 partner organisations in some of the world's most conflict-prone areas. The work focuses on strengthening civil society, increasing resilience and safeguarding human rights, especially for women, young people and refugees.

*In 2025, a one-off amount of SEK 22.5 million was paid to the Lutheran World Federation, funded by the national level. The money will go towards a multi-year project to provide affordable housing in East Jerusalem for Christian families.

Global

Act Church of Sweden contributes to global ecumenical collaborations through the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and the ACT Alliance. These partnerships are a vehicle for joint work on issues that require global collaboration, such as peace, gender equality, climate justice and theological education. We support, among others, the regional functions of the Lutheran World Federation and ACT Alliance's Rapid Response Fund for humanitarian crises.



- Development cooperation, church cooperation and humanitarian aid SEK 269 million (59 %)
- Disaster response SEK 45 million (9 %)
- Information and advocacy SEK 54 million (12 %)

- Fundraising costs SEK 53 million (12 %)
- Administration SEK 35 million (8 %)

tional and international level. This work sees us helping to strengthen public opinion in favour of global justice and to bring the experiences of our partner organisations into political discussions in Sweden, the EU and the UN.

Fundraising costs and administration

Act Church of Sweden has fundraising costs of 12 per cent and administra-

tion costs of 8 per cent. This means that 80 per cent of the funds raised go directly into our work, a level well below the 90-account threshold. We are constantly striving to be as efficient as possible, so that the funds can be used where they are most needed. 20 per cent is therefore spent on ensuring that the funds are being used correctly, and invested in

activities that generate more revenue, such as fundraising campaigns. This includes controls and anti-corruption work to reassure donors that their donation is being put to proper use.

External donors

