



## THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA WORLD HUNGER PROGRAM

### PREAMBLE

*Because the Holy Spirit calls us to share in God's continuing care for all people and for the entire creation;*

*Because God asks us to love our neighbors as Christ loves us;*

*Because God places us in a global neighborhood, with neighbors near and far who suffer hunger and oppression . . .*

*Therefore, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America establishes a World Hunger Program.*

### OBJECTIVES

1. To provide relief and development assistance for those who suffer from hunger and injustices related to hunger in this and other countries. Maintain a disaster fund for response to international and domestic emergencies;
2. To foster the education of the members of this church to understand and confront the reality and underlying causes of hunger;
3. To advocate policies and actions for social and economic justice relating to hunger – with governments, business institutions, and structures of this church and its related agencies;
4. To encourage members of this church to practice responsible stewardship of their lives and their financial resources toward the prevention and alleviation of hunger;
5. To facilitate listening to and working together with those who have special awareness of the realities of food and hunger, including poor and hungry people in local and global communities and those who produce, process, and distribute food.

### ALLOCATION

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in order to sustain its World Hunger Program, establishes a continuing hunger appeal. It directs that funds be expended in the range of 25-30% within the territorial jurisdiction of this church and 70-75% in the other parts of the world.

Adopted at May 1987 ELCA Constituting Convention  
Revised at August 1991 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

## **GUIDELINES FOR ELCA WORLD HUNGER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

1. Activities supported by the ELCA World Hunger Program will relate to one or a combination of the Program's five objectives.
2. Priority shall be given to persons living in poverty, with special focus on:
  - a. people with the least resources for meeting their basic needs;
  - b. women and children at risk.
3. These activities shall relate to one or a combination of the following program areas:
  - a. **RELIEF**, which provides immediate access to food, shelter, clothing, medical supplies and care, and the means to deliver and sustain these (transport, storage, supplies, etc.) so that the basic needs of people can be met;
  - b. **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**, which leads to increased access to food and sustainable livelihoods through means such as sustainable agriculture, care for the environment, appropriate technology, adequate housing, jobs, primary health care and disease prevention, job training, child care, elder care, nutrition education, literacy training, sanitation, safe water supplies, below-market loans, and just land use and distribution;
  - c. **COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**, which brings men and women with common values, complementary interests and shared concerns together to build and maintain an environment that empowers all persons to obtain justice, affirm their dignity, and gain access to the goods of the earth; (Where possible these activities are congregation-based and help to overcome the irresponsible use of power in economic, social, and political arenas through a process that demonstrates a deep respect for the rule of law and democratic principles.)
  - d. **EDUCATION**, which recognizes the abundance of God's creation and addresses the causes, cures and elimination of hunger and poverty, highlights the importance of lifestyle stewardship; engages our members, and empowers synods, congregations, affiliated ministries and ecumenical partners to act through a variety of learning opportunities;
  - e. **ADVOCACY**, which works to overcome the effects and root causes of hunger and poverty through administrative, legislative and judicial actions in the public sphere, and through corporate actions in the private sphere.

4. These activities shall:

- a. give people with the least resources for meeting basic needs and women and children living in poverty opportunities for leadership in their own projects and participation in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation.
- b. promote global sustainability and environmental stewardship, including care of God's gifts of land, water, air and other resources. Environmental stewardship shall be an integral part of hunger-related development, education, and advocacy work.
- c. contribute to the transformation of individuals, families, groups and communities so that they may be more interdependent, secure, empowered, healthy and hope-filled.
- d. include provision for leadership training, apprenticeship, mentoring, and local self-reliance.
- e. include participation of community groups either ecumenical, interagency, or secular.
- f. have, whenever possible, some formal or informal connection with the ELCA, its synods, congregations, affiliated organizations, or ministries.

5. The ELCA Constituting Convention has directed that 25–30 percent of World Hunger Appeal funds are to be expended within the territorial jurisdiction of this church and 70–75 percent in other parts of the world (see page 1, Allocation).<sup>1</sup>

- a. International portion - Normally the World Hunger Program will expend 25 percent or less of available international relief and development funds for emergency relief and situations of chronic need and 75 percent or more for long-term development.
- b. Domestic portion – Normally the World Hunger Program will expend approximately one-third of available domestic relief and development funds to meet emergency needs.
- c. Fund-raising, administration and communication costs related to the World Hunger Program and Appeal will be covered from those funds available for use within the territorial jurisdiction of this church.

6. Consideration will be given to providing at- or below-market interest loans to participating recipients in both domestic and international communities where this form of financial partnership is perceived to be appropriate and empowering.

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<sup>1</sup>It is understood that this does not include Disaster Funds or other specifically designated monies.

## PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

1. World Hunger Program activities will address the immediate and long-term causes of chronic and acute hunger and poverty, such as malnutrition, lack of access to food, inadequate agricultural production systems, environmental degradation and environmentally-induced illness, racism, HIV/AIDS, insurmountable international debt, inadequate education, discrimination against and oppression of women, unemployment, excessive military spending, and displacement due to civil strife and war. These causes and the efforts to address them will guide this Church in developing its hunger education activities.
2. In planning and evaluating its activities, the Hunger Program will bear in mind the ELCA social statements 'Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All', 'For Peace in God's World,' 'Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice,' and other relevant social policy instruments of this Church.
3. The ELCA World Hunger Program and Appeal shall model responsible stewardship in all of their activities. All expenditures shall be clearly connected to Hunger Program guidelines, principles and assumptions.
4. Activities in the public policy arena will be non-partisan. Activities should not advocate for particular candidates, political parties, or ideologies. Advocacy for a particular policy or piece of legislation is encouraged when it complements the Hunger Program guidelines, principles and assumptions and ELCA social policy.
5. The ELCA World Hunger Program shall support peace efforts in chronic hunger situations involving civil strife or war.
6. Self-determination, respect, self-esteem, and sustainability shall be operative in both how the ELCA World Hunger Program works with requesting groups and how the groups themselves work toward solutions to their problems.
7. Persons supported by these projects shall be enabled to deal more effectively with social, political, and economic conditions in their society and overcome environmental situations that cause and reinforce poverty.
8. ELCA World Hunger Program funding assistance to local groups or projects will attempt to encourage participation of other groups in support of the project.
9. The ELCA World Hunger Program pledges open communication in a variety of forms to its membership and to the potential recipients of hunger-related grants in order to keep all informed about the availability and use of such funds.
10. The ELCA World Hunger Program is prepared to risk support for projects that are untested or non-traditional in order to facilitate creative thinking and new alternatives for long-term solutions.

Adopted 1988; revised 1989, 1991, 1992, 2001, 2006.