

Gender Justice: Achieving just and equitable power relations for all

2017 update



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Cover image: Deacon Elineide Ferreira de Oliveira stands in her church in Ariquemes. She is on the frontline of the fight against gender-based-violence in Brazil, and runs the Casa Noeli dos Santos safe house – the only church-run safe house in Brazil.

Photo: Christian Aid/Tom Price

Christian Aid is a Christian organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We are part of a wider movement for social justice.

We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes.

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Foreword to 2017 strategy update

Christian Aid first launched its gender strategy in July 2014. We set ourselves ambitious three-year objectives to inspire us and measure our progress against. Since then, Christian Aid has made much progress towards fulfilling these objectives. Internally, a culture of gender justice is emerging. Induction training on gender justice is required of all staff and we have a dedicated team of gender and inclusion experts, supported by a global network of over 40 gender focal points.

In *Of the Same Flesh*, we developed our theological rationale for gender justice and we have used this as a basis to help initiate a worldwide faith movement for gender justice called *Side by Side*. The potential of this movement to challenge and change the discriminatory social norms that lie at the root of gender inequality is increasingly recognised by development actors and faith institutions.

Our projects, policies, humanitarian action, campaigns and communications are increasingly ensuring they are sensitive to gender and how it intersects with other forms of exclusion. In every country where we work, the scale and impact of work on gender justice has increased. We were at the forefront of the successful campaign to ensure that the new Sustainable Development Goals had a specific goal to end gender inequality and that all other goals had gender sensitive targets to them.

However, there is still much more we can do for gender justice, both within Christian Aid and in partnership with others, to realise a world of just and equitable power relations between all people.

Whilst our original thinking about how we think gender justice for all can be achieved remains valid, over the last three years we have gained a deeper understanding of the complexity of how gender intersects with other inequalities – and this refreshed strategy reflects that understanding.

This strategy also reflects both the progress we have made in the last three years, the changing world and the challenges that still lie ahead. We have retained objectives for women and girls that require continued emphasis, but where our thinking has evolved or significant progress has been made we have revised our priorities for the remaining year. A more in-depth review of Christian Aid's achievements towards achieving gender justice will be carried out in 2017, and will inform our Gender Justice For All strategy 2018–2020.

In publishing this refreshed strategy we also reaffirm and renew our commitment to prioritising gender justice, especially for women and girls, throughout the organisation and in our work.



Loretta Minghella
Chief Executive of Christian Aid

Executive summary: Gender Justice for All

Our vision is to end poverty, and in our corporate strategy *Partnership for Change*, we identify three main goals which will help us to achieve this:

- Ensure just power relations
- Ensure equity and sustainability
- Ensure resilient and thriving societies

Gender injustice is rooted in unequal power relations and the most pervasive gender inequality is between women and men. Gender injustice violates human rights, constrains choice and agency and negatively impacts upon people's ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development and humanitarian relief.

Unless we can help create just and equitable relationships between women and men of all ages and diversities, we will be unable to achieve equitable, sustainable, resilient and thriving societies.

Gender justice is, therefore, at the heart of Christian Aid's work.

We also recognise that inequalities intersect and create complex disadvantages that compound gender injustice and poverty. We therefore take an inclusive and intersectional approach that enables us to address how inequalities, such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, class, religion, caste and disability, intersect with gender inequality and perpetuate poverty.

Through our inclusive approach we can tackle barriers to gender justice that are global, and internal to Christian Aid, in a way that is targeted, sustainable, transformative and 'leaves no one behind', as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.

To this end, we continue to focus our work on challenging patriarchy and promoting the empowerment of women and girls, with recognition that men can also be adversely affected by patriarchy and ideals of 'masculinity'. We also seek to broaden our understanding of gender to include, where relevant, transgender and minority genders, who face increased violence and exclusion.

Our vision is of gender justice for all: of a renewed world where all people, regardless of gender, can live alongside one another in mutually empowering relationships; are empowered to pursue their human rights and fundamental freedoms; and are valued as equal and active participants in the social, political, cultural and economic wellbeing of their households, communities and societies.

As well as global barriers to gender justice, we recognise that there are also internal barriers within Christian Aid to overcome.

'Our being made "male and female" is a gift of God, and should be experienced as joy for humankind. When gender becomes a weapon of oppression then something is badly wrong.'

- Theology Advisor, Christian Aid, 2015

This paper outlines our approach and strategy for overcoming barriers to achieve gender justice – a world of just and equitable gender power relations – centred around five main commitments:

1. We'll place gender justice at the centre of Christian Aid to ensure that all staff possess the necessary commitment, technical capacity and resources to make a significant contribution to gender justice.
2. We'll build capacity of faith groups so they can play a more distinctive role in achieving gender justice through securing the dignity and rights of women and girls, men and boys, with focus on the most marginalised groups, such as those with multiple and intersecting identities that render them particularly vulnerable.
3. We'll raise awareness of gender justice and intersecting inequalities among supporters, private sector and church partners in the UK and Ireland, inspiring and resourcing them so they can engage in meaningful and lasting action to promote gender justice.
4. We'll promote gender justice as a core issue in global development policy and action, and demonstrate how we are making a significant contribution through our partners to achieve gender equity across sectors.
5. We'll demonstrate that we are making a significant contribution towards a reduction in gender-based discrimination and violence, and specifically in changing social norms that promote or condone it.

1. Defining the problem: broken relationships

The discrimination or subordination of one gender by another is a global issue that is negatively affecting the social, political and economic development of every country in the world. It undermines Christian Aid's own theological understandings that all people are of equal and unique value and worth, and are 'of one flesh'. It is also counter to the fundamental tenet of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world is the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.¹

What does gender justice mean at Christian Aid?

The term 'gender' refers to socially constructed norms, roles, attributes and opportunities, associated with biological sex in a given context. Gender is not fixed and can change over time, and varies amongst different cultures, societies, ages and classes.

Gender is rooted in power relationships that shape choices and opportunities in every sphere of life and at every level from household to global.

Patriarchy is an overarching power structure that reproduces gendered social norms in a way that, for centuries, has left women and girls disproportionately affected by poverty. In order to see change towards gender justice, therefore, empowering women and girls, and redressing the power relationship between women and men, is crucial.

However, although our work is primarily concerned with women and girls, gender inequality isn't a 'women's issue'. Men can also be specifically disadvantaged and suffer from the damaging effects of social norms around what it means in different cultures to be a 'man', and transgender people and other minority gender groups are often socially excluded, disadvantaged and face violence because of their gender identity. (See figure 1, p8).

How a person understands and expresses their gender identity and how their gender is perceived by others continues to be highly politicised, the source of secular and theological debates, and sometimes the basis of violent discrimination and social invisibility.

Moving towards understanding gender as a spectrum allows us to go beyond redressing only power relationships between women and men and enables us to develop a more inclusive approach where 'no one is left behind'.

An inclusive approach also means we recognise that when gender injustice intersects with other areas of inequality, such as age, sexuality, disability, ethnicity and caste, whether real or perceived identities, then discrimination and exclusion can be profound and play a fundamental role in defining a person's capacities, needs and risks.

'If you've come here to help me, you're wasting your time. But if you have come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.'

- Lilla Watson, Australian Aboriginal Elder

Gender inequality manifests throughout the life cycle from cradle to grave:

- In many societies, even before birth, a boy child is valued more than a girl child. The World Bank estimates gender-selective infanticide accounts for 1.56 million missing girls.²
- At school, girls' completion of primary and secondary education is still far below that of boys³ and it is estimated that only 42% of girls with a disability complete primary education.⁴
- Millions of girls are forced into early marriages every year. These girls are at far greater risk of dropping out of school, experiencing dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and suffering from domestic violence.⁵
- Even when women do complete schooling they are still likely to be paid less than men, hold jobs more insecure than those of men⁶ and are far less likely to hold management positions.⁷
- 1 in 3 girls will be affected by domestic abuse, most likely from an intimate partner.⁸
- Certain characteristics of women such as sexual orientation, disability status or ethnicity, and some contextual factors such as humanitarian crises (including conflict and post-conflict situations), may increase women's vulnerability to violence.⁹
- Women are more vulnerable to contracting HIV¹⁰ and transgender women are significantly and disproportionately affected by HIV globally. In some countries, a transgender woman is 49% more likely to be living with HIV than her non-transgender counterparts.¹¹
- In many societies, a woman's chance of representing her community in politics and addressing these disparities is minimal.¹²
- A woman who is lesbian or bisexual faces criminalisation and imprisonment in 73 countries.¹³
- In some societies, if a woman's husband dies she is denied the right to inherit property.¹⁴
- A girl born into the Dalit caste is likely to see a life of work limited to predetermined jobs such as manual scavenging, sweeping or disposing of dead animals.

These facts indicate the systematic and insidious discrimination of women and girls. Limited data to reflect the lived experiences of those most excluded – such as transgender people or those living with disability or other intersecting inequalities, thus rendering them largely invisible – poses challenges for us. However, it does not hinder our desire to 'leave no one behind'.

Men, Masculinity and Gender Justice

The world is increasingly unequal. Economic and political power is concentrated in an elite few, conflict is rife and volatile climate change and the depletion of the natural resource base has contributed to unprecedented migration levels.

Fig. 1

Asian countries have centuries-old histories of existence of gender-variant males.

In India, people with a wide range of transgender-related identities, cultures, or experiences exist – including Hijras, Aravanis, Kothis, Jogtas/Jogappas, and Shiv-Shakthis.

They can face physical and verbal abuse, forced sex, extortion of money and materials; and arrests on false allegations.

(United Nations Development Programme, 2010)¹⁵

In this context men are expected to live up to traditional gender norms and expectations to be 'masculine', the primary provider and protector and leader of the family.

These gendered norms have damaging consequences for men's wellbeing, and for transgender men and women too – according to a recent multi-country UN study, a common driver of violence against women was ideals of manhood that justify and celebrate toughness, male sexual performance and dominance over women.¹⁶

Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic and one of the most harrowing results of gender inequality rooted in patriarchal systems and structures that enable men to assert power and control over women. These attitudes start early in life and, without early intervention, are passed on from generation to generation. (See *Bayardo's story*, below.)

Christian Aid believes that such concepts and practices of 'maleness' and their resulting suffering and injustice must be against God's intentions for all to live a full life, as we hear in John's Gospel.

It cannot be right that women bear more of the burden of poverty than men, nor that gender or other identities become a cause of poverty and vulnerability. This is a distortion of the human relationship, a sign of what happens when power is exercised unequally and when some are made vulnerable by others.

Despite increased attention given to gender inequality in recent years, interventions to date have tended to focus more on the effects than causes of gender inequality. Indeed, gender inequality is a challenge that many development and faith-based organisations have yet to fully take on.

A violent life transformed in Nicaragua: Bayardo's story

Bayardo Fargas, 31, grew up in Nicaragua, in a highly patriarchal society. He felt helpless and angry as he witnessed the beatings his mum endured at the hands of her husband.

For many years, Bayardo was a heavy drug user, drug dealer and gang member.

Today, after many years of support and counselling from our former partner CEPREV, Bayardo's life has been transformed.

The former violent man is now a committed husband and father of two children. He volunteers with CEPREV reaching out to other young men in his neighbourhood, in order to stop their life of drugs, alcohol and violence.

CEPREV works in violent neighbourhoods, trying to change patriarchal societal structures.



Photo: Christian Aid/Paula Plaza

Furthermore, the idea that gender inequality not only should end, but *has* to end and *will* end, has yet to fully grasp the global consciousness: for the majority of people, gender inequality is simply ‘the norm’ often going unnoticed, including by those who have been socialised to accept an inferior status because of their gender. (See *Rahemete’s story*, below.)

Christian Aid believes that the current state of gender relations is broken and not ‘fit for purpose’. Not only is it failing women, girls and those with other marginalised gender identities, but also men and boys too.

Gender inequality is violating people’s human rights, constraining people’s choices and agency, and is negatively impacting upon people’s ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development and humanitarian relief. But it doesn’t have to be like this, another world is possible.

‘Christian Aid believes that the current state of gender relations is broken and not “fit for purpose”.’

A greater understanding of equality: Rahemete’s story

‘How would I dare ask my husband to help?’ says Rahemete Mohammed from Wulbareg district in Ethiopia. ‘In this house, it is only me who goes to fetch the water.’

Like many women in this part of Ethiopia, Rahemete is solely responsible for taking care of her family. But with support from our partner Water Aid, Rahemete’s life is getting better.

Not only is there much easier access to water – making daily life for women easier – but women are also an important part of the newly established water management committee.

Rahemete, who is the treasurer, recalls how in the past she and the other women were not allowed to leave their homes without permission from their husbands.

Water Aid’s work within the community is creating a greater understanding of equality between women and men.



Credit: Christian Aid/Gen Lomax

2. Our vision: gender justice for all

Our vision is a world of gender justice and equity in which neither women nor men, nor any other gender identity of any age, ability, sexuality, ethnicity or caste, are excluded, marginalised, poor or discriminated against, but live in dignity. For Christian Aid, gender justice means a world of:

- Social justice and just power relations, where all people, irrespective of gender, are equally valued in society and empowered to pursue their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including reproductive health rights.
- Political justice, in which all people are able to have an equitable, active and influential say in decisions that affect their lives, irrespective of gender.
- Economic justice, whereby power relations, access to and control over resources, business and market activity, and regulation, shift to become more gender equitable, providing sustainable benefits for all.
- Environmental justice, whereby gender is no longer a barrier to accessing, controlling and sustaining the natural resource base upon which we all depend.
- Spiritual enriching, where everyone can live alongside one another in peaceful and just relationship, equal as in God's sight.

For Christian Aid, gender justice is not simply a means to ending poverty, but is a worthy aim in and of itself. From a theological perspective we believe Christians are called to fight for justice. In the Christian faith, in scripture, in its beginnings as a radical movement, and its Church traditions, there are profound examples of this commitment. St Paul wrote that through Jesus Christ, 'there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female; for you are one in Jesus Christ' (Galatians 3:28), and we feel bound and encouraged by this vision of God's Kingdom to speak out for gender justice.

We do not presume to dictate exactly what gender justice will look and feel like in the countries in which we work. Even so-called 'developed nations' are far from achieving it.¹⁸ Gender relations, roles and norms vary between cultures, societies and generations. As such, achieving gender justice across the whole spectrum of differing gender identities will be a constantly evolving process and an exploration together on how we can all live lives of dignity, free from fear and oppression in pursuit of justice and human rights.

We believe Christian Aid has a crucial role to play in helping to establish safe spaces in which visions for gender justice can be formulated and achieved.

For some, achieving a state in which both women and men perceive the relations between them to be just, equitable and mutually empowering will take generations to achieve; and for those for whom the light of equality never seems to dawn, we believe that we have a duty to give hope that one day it will.

'To reflect before God on gender is to think about what it means that we are male and female... it is to ask what it would mean to experience our being gendered as gift rather than danger, a source of life and hope rather than of oppression or fear.'¹⁷

3. Global barriers to gender justice: unjust gendered power relations

Gender inequality often begins in the home and is perpetuated by families, schools, workplaces, communities, customs, cultures and religions as well as structures within society more broadly: the media, digital media, popular culture, advertising, laws, law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and others.

In order for gendered power imbalances to be redressed, the underlying structures and dynamics which produce them must be comprehensively addressed. As outlined in our Theory of Change for achieving gender justice (p24) we perceive the key barriers to achieving gender justice are as follows:

Visible power structures

These are structures, such as legal, health or educational services that are visible in public spaces or formal decision-making bodies. Often these visible structures do not take full account of people's differing practical or strategic gendered needs (see figure 2, p14) and are backed by policies, laws, systems and procedures that are intentionally or blindly discriminatory and unresponsive. Therefore, despite being 'visible', they deny (more often) women equitable access to and control over services and resources.

Further still, across most of the world, transgender people lack any recognition under the law or face considerable obstacles in being able to legally change their gender identity, which increases their vulnerability to poverty and decreases their agency to respond to it.

To achieve gender justice, Christian Aid needs to build upon the strong track record we have in successfully challenging and changing these visible power structures.

Hidden and invisible power structures

These are the unseen social and political norms reproduced by patriarchal structures and institutions, that favour one gender over others. Despite changes to laws and constitutions, and even when services and resources do exist, gender equality isn't a reality.

Social norms regarding women's reproductive and domestic roles¹⁹ still often confine them to the home, unable to access the visible structures available to them to pursue and obtain their rights and seek an independent income. Similarly, social attitudes towards transgender women and men can lead to extreme forms of violence, exclusion, abuse and discrimination within their families and communities.

These invisible power structures that favour men and a particular idea of masculinity can also disproportionately disadvantage women who are older or younger, disabled, indigenous, Dalit, or from an ethnic or sexual minority.

To achieve gender justice, Christian Aid needs to identify, challenge and change these invisible power structures. Some of these include:

'If the rights and entitlements I now enjoy have been built upon the oppression of yours, then what are they really worth?'

- Male Christian Aid staff member

- **Dominant social norms:** around the world, there are many values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and practices that support male dominance, weaken women's sense of self-worth and validate violence against women and girls.²⁰ Such damaging social norms are perhaps the most insidious invisible barriers to gender justice, because they shape what we believe to be 'normal'. This is accentuated all the more when women and girls have multiple and overlapping identities, such as older age, disability or being lesbian or bisexual. This means that, from an early age, men often believe it natural and right to subordinate women, and women believe it their duty to be subordinate, having internalised such negative messages. Without challenging and changing these, no sustainable impact on gender discrimination can be achieved.
- **A lack of political and moral will:** there needs to be the political and moral will – and accompanying resources from governments, intervening international and bilateral agencies, and faith leaders – to understand the nuances of gender injustice, get to its root cause and respond to the way it intersects with other areas of inequality. An over-burdened and under-resourced civil society still undertake the majority of gender equality and women's empowerment efforts. Gender equality is not simply the domain of civil society to address: it is a political and economic issue too (see figure 3, p14).

Religious leaders and faith-based organisations

Faith-based organisations, faith leaders and religious texts have often been a key factor in replicating damaging gendered social norms at the local, national and global levels. They are the source of many of our values and beliefs which in turn give rise to attitudes and behaviours, which are then formalised and condoned in our laws and policies.

To date, the breadth and depth of their interventions and unequivocal leadership in challenging and changing gender inequality has often been piecemeal and left wanting. However, faith-based organisations are not homogenous and have also shown that they can play a vital role in challenging and changing damaging social norms.

Faith-based communities have also been those that reach out to support those at the fringes of society, such as the destitute, widows, people living with disability and orphans. Indeed, they are an essential partner for us in achieving gender justice (see section 6).

A focus on practical rather than strategic needs

To date, most interventions to address gender inequality have addressed people's practical, basic needs rather than being more strategic and transforming power relations and affecting societal change (see Figure 1, p8). For example, in the 2010 budget, just 1.3% of OECD DAC funds (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee) dedicated to

'I survived': Karla's story

'We are being killed. We don't have a right to life in El Salvador', says Karla Avela, a human rights activist who is transgender. She has survived two attempted murders over 37 years of life, dodged a total of 14 bullets and was recently kidnapped by a group of men because of their gender.

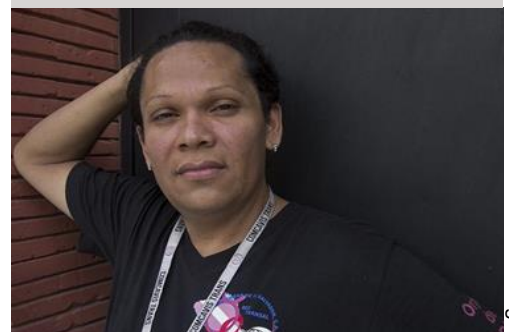
'I survived. I am lucky,' Karla says, 'but there is no access to justice here, murders are not investigated, victims are labelled as criminals, and cases are [just] archived.'

When Karla was incarcerated in prison for violence, which Karla says was in self-defence, she was sent to an all-male prison. On her first day Karla says she was raped over 100 times and daily by the authorities and gang members.

On leaving prison after six years, Karla set up COMCAVIS TRANS because, she said, 'Looking at everything I'd lived for, everything I'd gone through, I decided to create an organisation that would work for the defence and human rights of trans-people in this country.'

Together FESPAD, supported by Christian Aid, and COMCAVIS were able to submit a case to the American Human Rights Commission, as a murder case of one of Karla's friends, who was trans, had not previously been recognised by the Salvadorian state.

The American Human Rights commission subsequently passed a resolution that strongly suggested the Salvadorian state write and pass an identity law passage for an antidiscrimination law for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex population.



Christian Aid/Emma Wigley

gender equality went directly to women's rights organisations and ministries with the necessary expertise to address strategic gender needs.²¹ To properly address gender inequality, organisations need to invest more time, resources and money into the tackling its root causes.

Fig 2.

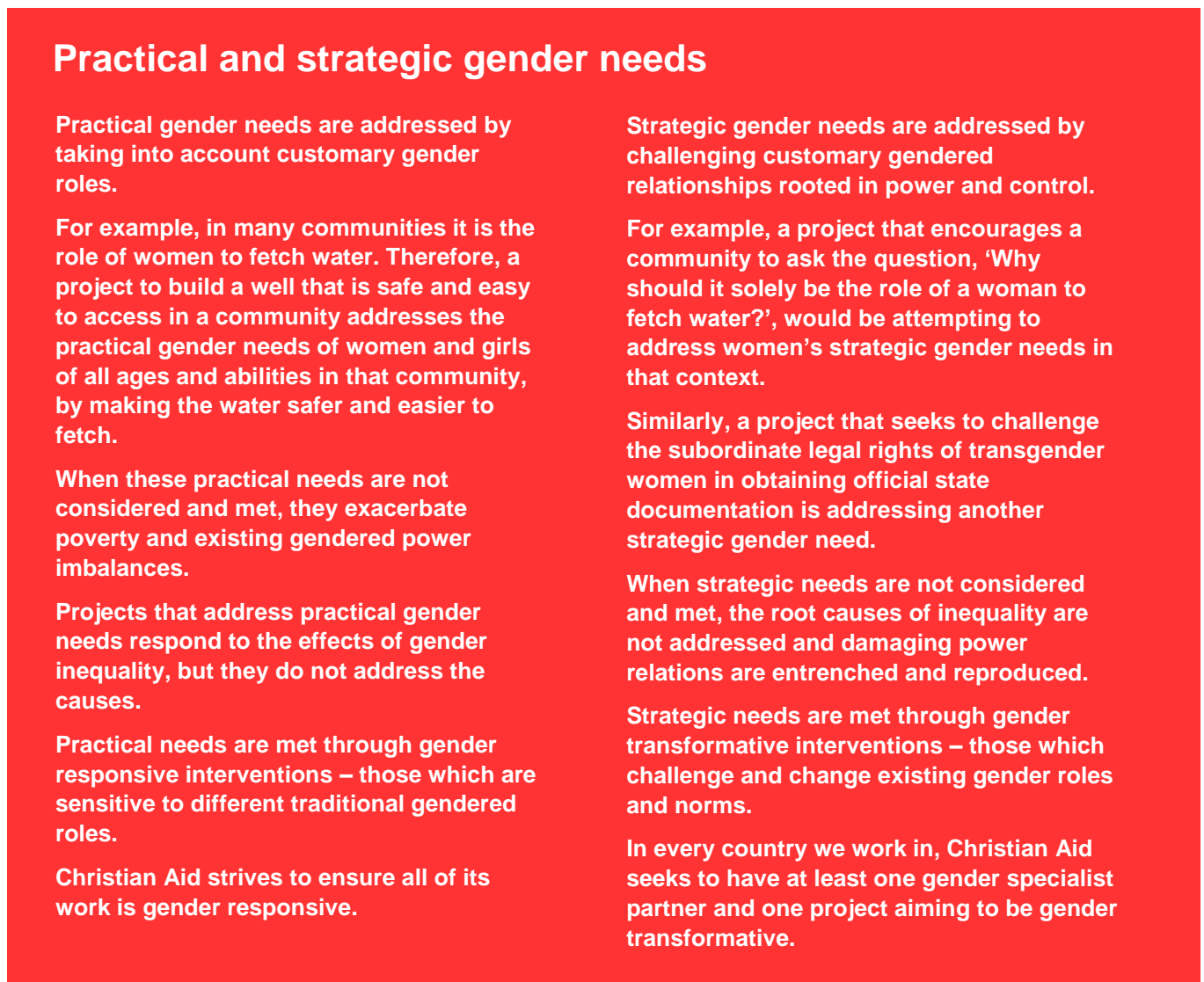


Fig 3.

'Narrowing the global gender gap in work... could double the contribution of women to global GDP growth... by up to \$28 trillion by 2025. This impact is roughly equivalent to the size of the combined US and China's economies today.'

McKinsey Global Institute, 2015

4. Internal barriers to gender justice: being the change we want to see

Christian Aid recognises that to be a champion of gender justice, we ourselves need to change. In 2013, we commissioned an independent assessment of our gender programming and advocacy work, our internal policies, procedures, systems, culture and practice. As outlined in Christian Aid's internal Theory of Change for achieving gender justice (see p24), this identified five key barriers that we ourselves need to overcome in order to make a significant contribution to gender justice:

1. We need to better develop, strengthen and demonstrate our own commitment, capacity and leadership for gender justice and to support staff to understand how gender affects their own lives.
2. We need to better assist our partners and supporters so that they feel inspired and capable of making a significant contribution towards gender justice.
3. We need to better focus our programming and advocacy work towards addressing the root causes of gender inequality and to demonstrate that we are making an impact.
4. We need to better align our fundraising, resourcing and prioritisation with our aspirations for gender justice.
5. We need to help mobilise a global inter-faith based movement to champion gender justice and address damaging social norms.

Over the past few years we have sought to overcome these barriers by challenging ourselves in three interconnecting dimensions where change is most required. We also recognise the need for continued commitment and greater effort to achieve the transformative change towards gender justice we want to see within Christian Aid and in the world.

The personal dimension of change

We need to take the time to examine and explore our own personal beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in relation to gender. All staff need to understand and reflect on how gender and intersecting inequalities affect their personal as well as their professional lives. We must encourage our partners and supporters to do the same.

Of the Same Flesh (2015) and *Loving One Another* (2016), are key resources for theological reflection and biblical engagement on gender justice.

The professional dimension of change

We need to ensure that our programming and advocacy work is incorporating effective methods and approaches to tackle the root causes of gender inequality. We need to deepen the impact of our existing work and scale-up gender transformative work to new areas. In order to do this, we need to invest in building the appropriate commitment and technical capacity of partners and sharpen the

'In theory I could go and run a successful gender project during the day, and come back home in the evening and beat my wife – if that's the case, then what has really changed?'

- Christian Aid staff member

gender dimensions of each of *Partnership for Change's* Strategic Change Objectives.

In 2014 Christian Aid produced *Taxing Men and Women: why gender is crucial for a fair tax system*. This piece of work has provided a strong first step towards building gender analysis into our fiscal justice work; it aimed to stimulate debate and offer guidance for those attempting a gender analysis of their own tax system.

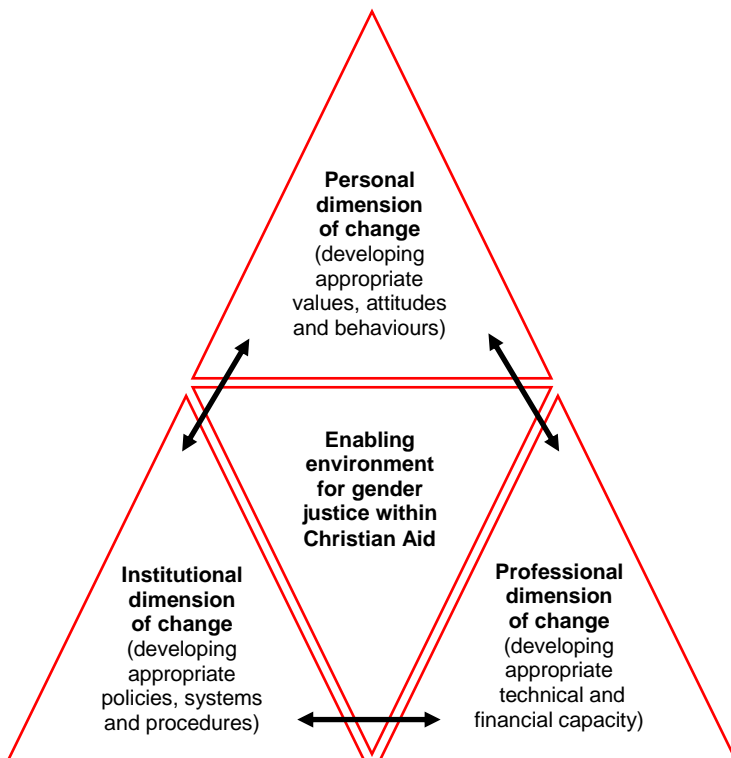
In the past year, Christian Aid has taken significant steps towards a more inclusive approach to programming. Materials and training have been developed as part of the Inclusive Programming Approach, which strengthens and builds upon our commitment to gender justice by promoting four pillars in humanitarian and development activities: challenging power imbalances; meaningful access and participation; safety, dignity and do no harm; and inclusive accountability.²²

The institutional dimension of change

We need to support staff and partners in their commitment and capacity to change with appropriate policies, systems and resources. We need to be more equitable, not just in how we recruit our staff, but also how we retain, respect and develop our staff. Furthermore, we need to set red lines in our selection and retention of staff and partners. The commitment of our trustees and leaders for gender justice mustn't be a passing fad, but an unwavering commitment.

For us to be the change we want to see, all of these three dimensions of change are interconnected, mutually supportive and essential (see *diagram, below*).

Dimensions of change:



5. Achieving gender justice: progress against our commitments

As an organisation and movement based on Christian values with a deep understanding of poverty and the power dynamics which create it, we believe that we have something significant and distinctive to contribute.

To achieve our vision of gender justice in line with our strategy *Partnership for Change*, we will build on our achievements over the past few years and continue to:

1. Place gender justice at the centre of Christian Aid to ensure that all staff possess the necessary commitment, technical capacity and resources to make a significant contribution to gender justice.

Our achievements:

- We published our theology of gender justice, *Of the Same Flesh*, exploring a theology of gender, to ground and inform our and others' approaches to gender justice.
- All staff have undertaken our Gender Induction Training.
- Maternity leave for international staff has been increased to achieve global equity amongst child bearing staff across Christian Aid.
- Our security training takes account of different security threats and vulnerabilities facing staff because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- We have dedicated staff championing gender and inclusion in all areas of our work across geographic regions.

2. Build capacity of faith groups so they can play a more distinctive role in achieving gender justice for all, with particular focus on securing dignity and rights of women and girls.

Our achievements:

- Initiated by Christian Aid, Side by Side is a faith movement for gender justice: it aims to mobilise faith leaders, institutions and people of faith to take a more active and influential hand in achieving gender justice – especially through challenging and changing damaging social norms that promote gender inequality.
- Over the past two years, grassroots faith organisations and faith leaders are forming national Side by Side chapters around the world in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean. In these chapters, faith leaders from across faiths are coming together to identify barriers to gender justice and ways they can practically respond.
- For example, the Kenya chapter of Side by Side is advocating hard for the ratification of the two-thirds gender bill that would ensure increased female representation in parliament.
- At an international level, Side by Side's membership organisations, agencies and individuals, collaborate to strengthen faith voices for gender justice in spaces such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

'The full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields'

- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 1979



FAITH MOVEMENT FOR GENDER JUSTICE

www.sidebysidegender.org

Side by Side around the world

At a recent Side by Side workshop in Brazil, women of faith from all over the country, led by the National Council of Christian Churches (CONIC), met together for joint action and mapping exercises. Their aim was to form a common strategy to address rising inequalities and build gender justice.



The group subsequently linked up with the Council of Churches in Angola, to share their experiences and action plans.

Left: The workshop in Brazil. *Right:* Other Side by Side activities worldwide have included the Eastern Africa Faith Leaders Symposium for Gender Justice, held in Nairobi.



3. Raise awareness of gender justice amongst supporters, church partners and the private sector in the UK and Ireland, inspiring and resourcing them so they can engage in meaningful and lasting action to promote gender justice.

Our achievements:

- Our publication of *Loving One Another* has supported churches across the UK in biblical discussion on gender justice and encouraging transformational responses.
- Our communication guidance on gender justice has made sure all staff feel confident in communicating gender issues to a wide range of audiences.
- The SALT Business Network, initiated by Christian Aid, mobilises small and medium-size private sector organisations to lead, promote and resource gender justice within the private sector.

4. Promote gender justice as a core issue in global development and demonstrate how we are making a significant contribution through our partners to achieve gender justice across sectors.

Our achievements:

- With the aid of a substantial legacy from the Hamilton Foundation, our advocacy team contributed significantly towards gender equality becoming a stand-alone goal in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and gender-sensitive indicators incorporated into all other goals.
- In support of the SDG principle of 'Leave No-one Behind', we have developed a widely adopted Inclusive Programming Approach on how to ensure this intention becomes reality. (See Figure 4, p19.)



- All new proposals now have to include gender and inclusion sensitive indicators.
- A £22 million grant from DFID, DANIDA, USAID and the EU is helping us to support women's leadership and participation in governance in Ghana and our governance work in Nigeria has had notable success in increasing female political participation.

5. Make a significant contribution towards a reduction in gender-based violence (GBV) and specifically in changing social norms which promote or condone it.

Our achievements:

- Colombian partners, Sisma Mujer and other women's organisations, successfully ensured there will be no amnesty for sexual violence crimes in the peace process, unlike in other peace settlements.
- The Irish Research Council and Christian Aid are beginning a piece of work on best practice for tackling gender-based violence in states affected by violence and fragility, and are members of the World Banks' Joint Learning Initiative on sexual violence.
- Through the World Humanitarian Summit we committed to gender justice being incorporated into our protection work and to an incremental increase in financial resourcing to selected partners working on gender-based violence in at least 10 countries.



The 'Idikacho - Women in Governance Network', supported by our Voice to the People programme in Nigeria, has strengthened women's leadership skills and prepared them for elected office.
Photo: Tom Saater.

Fig. 4

Leaving no-one behind: our inclusive programming approach

In order to achieve the 2030 agenda, our inclusive programming ensures that everyone, regardless of gender, age or other dimension of diversity, is treated equitably and given fair and free opportunity to participate and have influence in activities, decisions and structures that affect their lives.

Challenge Power Imbalances

Design and inform programmes, through analysis of context, power relations and differentiated needs, to mitigate, address and ultimately tackle the power imbalances driving exclusion and inequality.

Meaningful Access and Participation

Arrange for people's access to impartial assistance and services – in proportion to need and without any barriers (i.e. discrimination, violence or exploitation). Support the development of self-protection capacities and ensure active, inclusive and effective participation in decision making at all stages of the project cycle.

Safety, Dignity and Do No Harm

Prevent and minimise as much as possible any unintended negative effects of the intervention/programme that could increase people's vulnerability to physical and psychosocial risks (such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)) or perpetuate inequality.

Accountability

Set up appropriate mechanisms through which affected populations can measure the adequacy of interventions, or address concerns and complaints. Provide relevant information in a timely and appropriate manner and ensure that Codes of Conduct are well understood and applied effectively.

6. Essential partners in achieving gender justice

We cannot achieve our vision for gender justice alone. We are mindful that many others are making significant contributions towards gender justice and we will work to complement, rather than duplicate, their work. However, we do believe that we have a significant role to play – especially in convening and mobilising faith-based organisations to speak out and address gender injustice.

To achieve this strategy, we will be relying on several essential partners:

Churches and faith groups

Faith-based organisations have an indispensable role in challenging prejudices that are deeply rooted in culture and tradition. For example, a UN Multi-Country Study in September 2013 concluded that early prevention of gender-based violence is possible but 'requires the sustained involvement of socialising institutions at the community and state levels, including faith-based organisations'. Despite the fact that often they have been a barrier to promoting gender equality (see section 3) they are also part of the solution. Unlike governments and NGO's, they do not come and go. They have a more stable influence on social norms through frequent face-to-face interaction with communities.

Christian Aid is ideally placed to interact with faith groups, creating safe spaces for discussing contentious issues, and unlocking their full potential as agents of positive change. As such we will continue to develop Side by Side, the faith movement for gender justice, to ensure that it makes an impact upon damaging social norms and practices. (See box, right.)

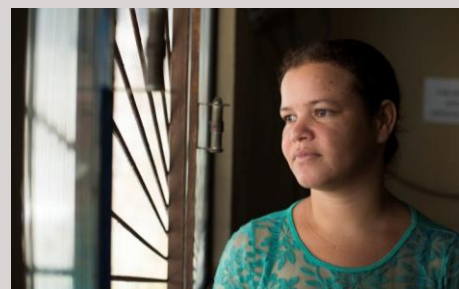
Women's rights organisations, coalitions, trade unions and others

In a patriarchal society, it is extremely difficult for women to be heard, so it is important that women are supported to come together. Women's organisations have a strong record of taking action to overcome gender inequality, and these experiences need to be more explicitly recognised and drawn upon.

Supporters

Our supporters are passionate about ending poverty in all its forms. By supporting our work on gender justice through giving, acting and praying they will be vital in challenging gender inequality in all its forms, including through their churches and faith communities. Collectively they are a strong body that can hold governments and institutions across the world to account on implementing policies and laws that combat inequality and discrimination, and promote inclusion.

Helping Brazil's churches tackle gender based violence



In Brazil a woman is assaulted every 24 seconds, says Deacon Elineide Ferreira de Oliveira. Deacon Elineide and Christian Aid's partner Anglican Service for Diaconia and Development (SADD) play a key role in helping Brazilian churches to address gender-based violence (GBV) within their communities.

SADD has practical experience of working with victims of GBV, through the Casa Noeli dos Santos safe house that they run for women in Rondonia – a poor state with high rates of violence.

Christian Aid is supporting SADD to use this experience to scale-up and develop their educational and pastoral work.

Part of this has involved writing biblically-based training materials to encourage other churches in Brazil to take a role in tackling violence in their communities – both practically by understanding how to support women who have been abused, but also by speaking out when the laws and policies in place to protect women are not fully implemented at a local level.

Their aim is that 'we may be, as a Church, a place of safe haven for women'.

Inspired by SADD's training materials, Christian Aid Scotland have developed a church resource, *Loving One Another*.

Photo: Frances Mary Santos Montiro stayed in the Casa Noeli dos Santos safe house three times. After receiving psychological support and training in handicrafts, her life has been transformed. She now uses her experiences to encourage other women in a similar situation. Credit: Christian Aid/Tom Price

Social movements and networks worldwide

Many of the networks that we are a part of, including the ACT Alliance and World Council of Churches, are effective in campaigning against gender inequality, bringing passionate commitment together with advocacy and research.

The media

The many online and offline media outlets are together one of the main instruments in which social norms, attitudes and behaviours are produced and reproduced. Their power to influence is strong and therefore they are a critical stakeholder with whom we need to work.

The private sector

Businesses and their associates are key stakeholders for securing inclusive and non-discriminatory business practices that enable largescale, innovative solutions to end gender inequality. Through Christian Aid's Salt Business Network we aim to build and grow a community of change makers to:

- **Lead change:** work together to develop and adopt new business practices and explore the potential of business as a partner for gender justice.
- **Provoke a community of change:** encourage members to use their insight and expertise to influence others within business and faith domains.
- **Resource change:** support Christian Aid's enterprise work through funding and use of skills in pursuit of gender justice.

Governments

Governments and other political bodies are crucial in setting a firm legal framework for equal rights, and for resourcing the services that they are responsible for.

We may experience puzzlement, resistance or even backlash from some of these partners. But we can be confident in our convictions that gender inequality and the disempowerment of women must end.

Whilst our approach shall be that of positive engagement based on building mutual understanding and trust, we will not be afraid to speak truth to power and draw red lines with partners where we see persistent and wilful neglect of the issue of gender justice.

At the same time, we will strive to ensure that partners and individuals working at the frontline of these issues have adequate protection and are not put at unnecessary risk.

'Policies and laws that affirm women's rights and open up pathways for women's empowerment are critically important, but they are not in themselves sufficient to change women's lives'

- Pathways to Empowerment²³

7. Moving forward: our ambitions for change in 2017

Since 2014, Christian Aid has aimed to place gender justice at the front and centre of our work and we have been fully committed to achieving it. Moving forward we will continue to:

1. Place gender justice at the centre of Christian Aid to ensure that all staff possess the necessary commitment, technical capacity and resources to make a significant contribution to gender justice.

In 2017 we will:

- Run refreshed face-to-face gender and inclusion induction training sessions for staff, trustees and volunteers, and roll out the revised gender and security training and policy.
- Ensure organisational design, talent and succession planning, and the process of enabling an effectiveness culture, result in increased gender equality and inclusion across the organisation.
- Uphold transformative gender and inclusion approaches in our humanitarian responses, through our continued commitments under the World Humanitarian Summit, Call to Action and The Inclusion Charter.

2. Build capacity of faith groups so they can play a more distinctive role in achieving gender justice for all, with particular focus on securing dignity and rights of women and girls.

In 2017 we will:

- Ensure the institutional growth and sustainability of the Side by Side faith movement for gender justice at local, national and international levels by increasing global membership by 50% and broadening the number of faiths represented by Side by Side.
- Help Side by Side develop a programme of activities in support of the gender targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Raise awareness of gender justice amongst supporters, church partners and the private sector in the UK and Ireland, inspiring and resourcing them so they can engage in meaningful and lasting action to promote gender justice.

In 2017 we will:

- Further develop and integrate key messages in our communications with supporters and supporting churches, to raise greater awareness of the importance of gender justice for sustainable development.
- Partner with Side by Side to challenge, inspire and resource supporting churches in the UK to become advocates for gender justice.
- Mobilise our Salt Business Network members to take on new business practices that promote gender justice.

4. Promote gender justice as a core issue in global development and demonstrate how we are making a significant contribution through our partners to achieve gender justice across sectors.

In 2017 we will:

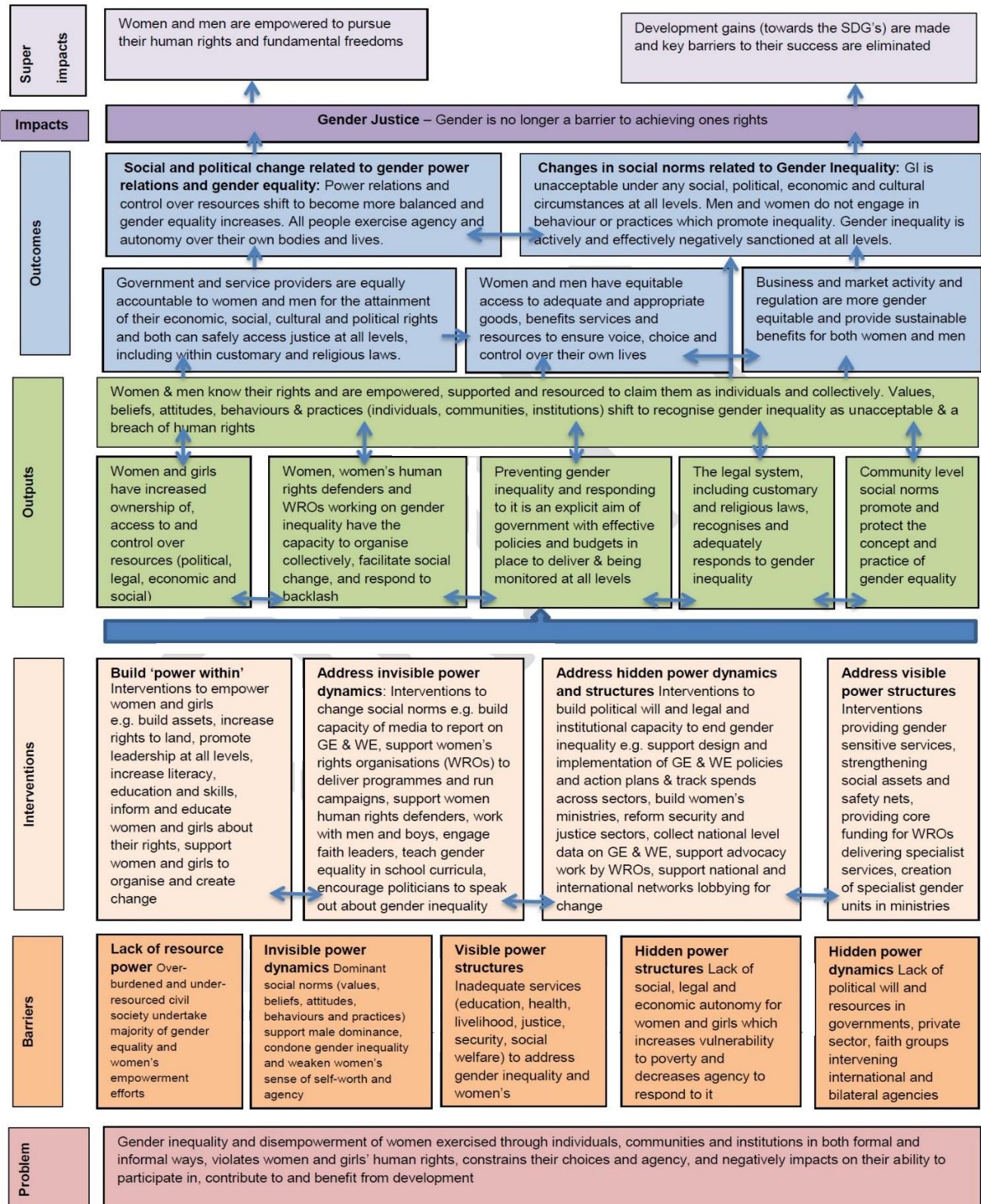
- Develop gender-responsive and inclusive policies on fiscal and climate justice, tackling violence and building peace, and in our emerging work on refugees and migration
- Select new programme partners based on their commitment to gender justice, build capacity of new and existing partners to rigorously apply our Inclusive Programming Approach whilst reviewing partnerships that consistently fail to demonstrate a commitment to gender justice.
- Undertake power and gender analysis in all programmes, disaggregate data according to sex, age and disability, and ensure methods of research take into account the effects of intersecting inequalities.
- Mobilise and engage with key people and corporations in the private sector to help ensure that business, market activity and regulation are more gender equitable and provide sustainable benefits that 'leave no one behind'.
- Strengthen communication and collaboration between programmes, policy and advocacy, to increase our impact on gender injustice, better evidence the impact and to ensure our strategic change objectives continue to be gender transformative.
- Explicitly reference and measure impact against objectives of the Gender Strategy in annual reports across all areas of our work.

5. Make a significant contribution towards a reduction in gender based violence and specifically in changing social norms which promote or condone it.

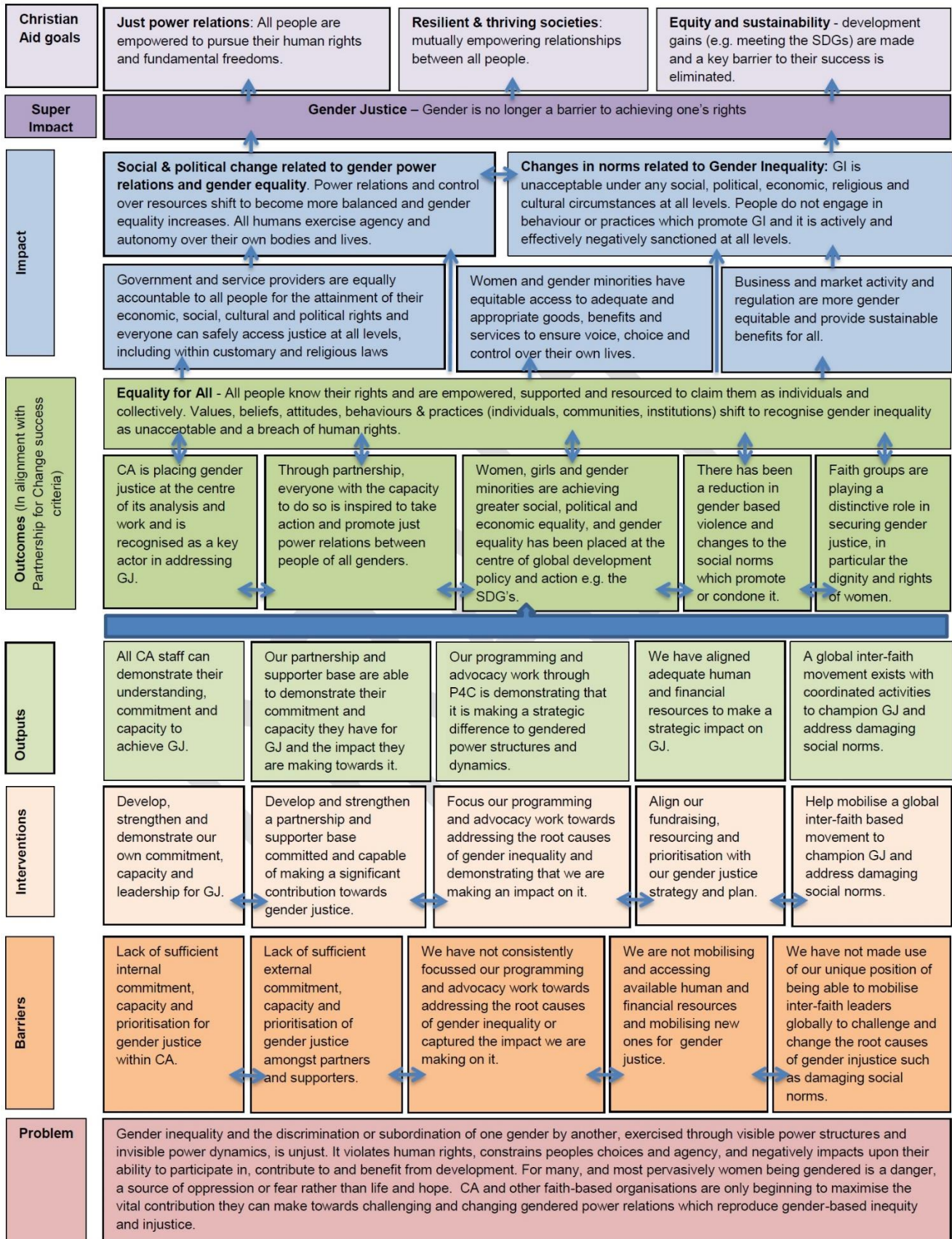
In 2017 we will:

- Advocate with Women's Rights Organisations and partner organisations working on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, for the prevention of violence and discrimination, particularly in conflict situations.
- Work towards ensuring women and girls can safely access justice at all levels, including within customary and religious laws and practices.
- Increase research investment to understand good practice on gender-based violence in contexts of violence and fragility.

Appendix i: Christian Aid's Theory of Change for achieving gender justice



Appendix ii: Theory of Change for what we can contribute



References

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