

60 Years of Aid for Churches Worldwide

In 1954, the “Ecumenical Programme for Emergency Relief” was founded by the German Protestant Church (EKD). With this programme the German churches began to confront the challenges that lay beyond the adversities in their own country. When the Agency for Diaconia of the German Protestant Church (Dia-konisches Werk der EKD) was established in 1957, the programme of solidarity with churches in need was incorporated and given the name Churches helping Churches (ChC). From the beginning, ChC has supported a large number of projects and programmes: theological, pastoral and diaconal projects, emergency aid, technical aid and scholarships for theological and diaconal training. With this profile the programme responds to the needs of churches in all parts of the world, which bear their witness and their service in different social contexts and religious environments.

Today, the programme is financed primarily by the member churches of the Union of Protestant Churches within the Protestant Church in Germany (Union Evangelischer Kirchen in der EKD), which is composed of the Reformed and United churches in Germany.

The programme is also funded by the German National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, the Working Group of Christian Churches in Germany (ACK), and the Baptist Church.



Nursing home for elderly people in Lushki/St. Petersburg, Russia

For further information

Brot für die Welt - Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung e.V.
Kirchen helfen Kirchen
Caroline-Michaelis-Straße 1
10115 Berlin, Germany
Tel. +49 30 65211-0
khk@brot-fuer-die-welt.de
www.kirchen-helfen-kirchen.de

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Inter-Church Aid in worldwide solidarity

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für die Welt

Churches helping Churches (ChC)

is a programme of German Protestant churches to support Christian churches and their institutions across the globe. Churches helping Churches funds projects which are important for the ecclesial identity.

Apart from pastoral work, the programme supports diaconal activities reflecting practiced faith and charity. The emphasis of the programme lies on churches that lack access to other sources of funding as well as on Reformed and United churches and their organizations.

While Churches helping Churches supports projects in all continents, since the 1990s its geographic focus has been on Central and Eastern Europe. The annual budget available for project funding is about € 1.5-2 million. About 50 projects are funded every year.

Churches helping Churches is an independent programme line which is implemented by Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service.



Roma children from the social children programme of Diakonia in the village Mera / Cluj district, Romania

Project Activities Worldwide

Churches helping Churches supports diaconal institutions where elderly, sick and handicapped people are cared for and nursed. In addition to charity work, our church partners stand up for the rights of the poor and vulnerable people in society. Moreover, ChC promotes theological training and pastoral activities of churches worldwide.

Project examples:

In Russia, ChC supports an Orthodox sisterhood that lobbies for the rights of homeless people.

In Morocco, ChC funds the Diakonia of the Protestant Church supporting refugees in need from sub-Saharan Africa.

In Cuba and Iraq, ChC finances theological training seminars of lay people.

In Uruguay, ChC provides funds for ecological farming workshops as well as youth work in the capital city of Montevideo.



The Student Christian Movement of Zimbabwe stands up for human rights and democracy

Information for Applicants

As an ecumenical initiative, Churches helping Churches supports programmes of individual churches, church organizations as well as ecumenical associations.

Preference is given to diaconal programmes and projects which are committed to solidarity and justice, and which help people on the margins of society. The strengthening of the pastoral work of churches worldwide is supported as well. As a general rule, construction measures cannot be funded at all. The ex-post financing of measures that have already begun is also excluded.

Types of Funding

Projects up to 7.500 €

The small-project fund is intended to cover minor theological, diaconal and ecumenical projects.

- Project period: max. 12 months
- Application: any time, informal
- Project examples: seminars, conferences, public relations, equipment and material for diaconal and pastoral activities of churches

Projects over 7.500 €

- Project period: generally one to three years
- Application: if possible 8 to 12 months before the planned project starts. Application form required.

The allocation of funds is determined by the 'Development Service and Humanitarian Aid Committee'. Its subcommittee 'Churches helping Churches and Interchurch Aid' releases funds for projects of Churches helping Churches three times a year. Smaller projects (<25.000 Euros) can also be authorized independently of committee meetings.