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FEDERATION

A Communion  
of Churches

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## LWF Commitments to tackle gender-based violence in the lead up to 2030

In line with its strategic objective to promote and protect the rights and dignity of women and girls, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) will accelerate efforts to support its member churches and country programs to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in church and society.

We commit to:

- Step up advocacy towards concrete prevention and response strategies to GBV and ending impunity for perpetrators at the local, regional and global level. LWF works with its member churches and country programs and other ecumenical and faith-based actors to promote and protect the rights of women and girls as well as fighting harmful practices, social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and violence. Practices such as early, child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation remain a huge challenge in our countries of operation. LWF will also continue its work to combat gender-based violence in conflict settings, supporting refugees, internally displaced populations and host communities.
- Increase resource mobilization efforts towards gender-based violence prevention and response programs, including structured counselling and financial resources for self-help projects for survivors. There is a link between women's lack of economic empowerment and gender-based violence. LWF views economic justice as an entry point for broader social change at the household and community level, including ending gender-based violence. Most women who remain in abusive relationships cite the lack of financial independence as one of the reasons for staying.
- Continue to raise awareness of the LWF gender justice policy at Communion Office and country program level and monitor policy compliance in institutional practice and programming. The Gender Justice Policy and the Assembly Resolutions represent LWF's overarching institutional policy processes and structural frameworks. The Gender Justice Policy holds governance bodies responsible for assessing the gender implications of policies and decisions, as well as ensuring that organizational structures and programs are in line with gender justice principles.
- The LWF gender justice policy makes provision for a safe environment for male and female staff, free from violence and discrimination. At country level the LWF will continue to establish and/or support female peer groups.

- Support at least 30% of LWF member churches to adopt and implement policies and action plans to prevent and respond to gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including sexual harassment as part of the LWF Gender Justice policy implementation process through:
  1. Working with member churches to develop a spiritual and bible study guide to equip churches to examine gendered power dynamics and socio-cultural norms which relegate women to inferior positions in both church and society by 2023.
  2. Working with Ecumenical and Interfaith partners to untangle religious discourses from patriarchal and fundamentalist interpretations used to justify violence and discrimination against women and girls through ongoing advocacy and awareness raising from the local up to global levels.
  3. Supporting the creation of vigil groups in 30% of LWF member church congregations that enquire into reports of gender-based violence within the church by 2026.
  4. Encourage member churches to create men's and boys' networks for discussion of new models of masculinity in 30% of member churches by 2026. The aim is to sensitize men and boys to harmful, violent, and limiting ideas of what it means to be a "real man" to free them from the negative cultural pressures that make them believe they can only express themselves or act in certain ways toward women and girls.
  5. Providing support to relevant member churches on ongoing dialogues and programs to end early, forced and child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).
  6. Ensure that humanitarian and crisis preparedness and response plans in country programs include a focus on the prevention of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their forms.