



Section 20

2019 Convention of Synod

Australian Lutheran World Service Report

AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE

Overview

Australian Lutheran World Service is the aid and resettlement agency of the LCA. We strive to reach out in love for justice, guided by a strategic plan to help and inspire people, improve and strengthen our work, partner with others, and resource the organisation with the right people, funds and time.

In 2018, you brought love to life for hundreds of thousands of people in need around the world through a range of ALWS programs.

Core Programs

PNG – Church Partnership

This unique initiative is a collaboration of ALWS, six other church agencies and the Australian Government, to strengthen the capacity of partner churches in PNG to better serve their people. Funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), we work very closely with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG to do this. One exciting result to date is that there are now 23 disability hubs based in Lutheran Parishes in PNG offering awareness raising, screening, referrals and other services for families affected by disability.

Indonesia- Centre for Disaster Risk Management & Community Development Studies (CDRM & CDS)

In cooperation with the LLL, LCA International Mission and others, CDRM & CDS was established to build the capacity of local governments, churches, community groups and organisations to deliver effective programs with a focus on disaster risk reduction. In 2018 we supported 8,522 people including 738 people living with disabilities, to be more resilient in the face of disasters and a changing climate.

Cambodia – Empowerment through Self-Reliance

This program works with communities to understand and uphold their own rights, focusing on sustainable livelihoods, food security, education, health, advocacy and conflict resolution. In 2018, people totalling 48,357 were reached. Australian Lutherans supported 30 village partnerships in Cambodia in 2018, helping villagers move towards independence with roads, community ponds and bridges.

Burundi – Community Empowerment

Burundi is one of the world's poorest nations and continues to be gripped by political turmoil and economic instability. The community empowerment program brings healing to people through peace and livelihood initiatives, such as training in improved agricultural techniques. Most of the 3,232 households supported in 2018 reported increased food production, sustaining them through the lean 'hungry' season.

Kenya – Kakuma & Dadaab Refugee Camps

In Kenya, ALWS provides care at the camps. In 2018 in Kakuma 10,715 newly arrived refugees were welcomed and provided with accommodation and day to day support, including food and psychosocial support. Over 90,000 children in refugee camps in Kenya now have access to quality education.

South Sudan – Rebuilding Livelihoods

Following protracted conflict and frequent droughts and famine, ALWS enhances food security, livelihoods and quality education for the vulnerable population. In 2018 people totalling 8,300 in Jonglei State were supported. We were also able to leverage funds from the European Commission through a matching grant to support an accelerated learning program in schools in Maban and Ajuang Thok Refugee Camps.

Djibouti – Refugee Assistance Program

This program serves refugees fleeing war and drought in East Africa and the Middle East, and aims to improve the well-being of 12,119 refugee children by enhancing their ability to safely attend school. In response to the school absenteeism by many girls during their menstrual period, in 2018 the project trained girls and parents to make reusable pads. This saw a significant increase in school attendance.

Somalia – Supporting the Government Education Sector in Jubaland

Education is one of the most severely impacted services in the ongoing conflict in Somalia. In collaboration with the government and other stakeholders, ALWS supported an accelerated learning program to fast-track 1,000 children who missed out on education, to be at the same academic level as their peers.

Disability Inclusive Development

We support the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Action by Churches Alliance (ACT), a network of 151 churches and affiliated organisations including LWF. They are all working together in humanitarian assistance and development, to raise the profile of disability inclusive development and ensure that those with disabilities are not forgotten, but instead are included in all programs.

Child Protection

We aim to integrate the safeguarding of children in all we do, including screening of personnel, incorporating the voice of children into program design, and using photographs and stories in a suitable and sensitive way. In 2018 we supported the development of a suite of online eLearning modules for the ACT Alliance to build safeguarding capacities.

Emergencies

In 2018, ALWS responded to three emergencies through partners, including:

PNG – together, we helped the ELCPNG and other churches to respond to a devastating earthquake. 58,972 people in 37 villages now have rainwater tanks, disability friendly pit latrines and access to counselling services.

Indonesia – through your support, ACT Alliance partners were able to quickly provide lifesaving help, including first aid and provision of safe water and sanitation facilities, to people affected by the earthquake which struck Central Sulawesi province in September 2018.

Syria – Your contributions enable people who continue to be impacted by the crisis in Syria, to reduce their vulnerability and alleviate suffering through provision of baby and dignity kits, safe water, language courses, livelihood training and school rehabilitation.

For more on what you accomplished with ALWS in 2018, please pick up our Annual Report at the display table at Synod or visit www.alws.org.au.

Community Education

ALWS is committed to taking the message of those who suffer from poverty and injustice to the pews, desks and living rooms of our community. Without the endorsement and support of pastors, district church leadership, and Lutheran schools in the Queensland district, this would not be possible. In 2018, we delivered just over 300 presentations across Australia, 89 of these were in Queensland alone!

Along the way you may have met our new Queensland based Community Action Officer, Christian Stern, who joined in April 2018. Christian is looking forward to meeting you at Synod, and is happy to come and support your congregation, school or group in its outreach to a hurting world.

Through Awareness days, Refugee sleep-outs, Welcoming the Stranger events, Church presentations and Youth nights, we try to create a better understanding of the plight of many of the world's poorest people and how our Lutheran church is working through ALWS to empower the least of these to rise from poverty and need.

We look forward to our first Walk My Way event in Queensland in 2019! We've planned a 25km walking challenge along the Sunshine Coast for Sunday 4 August, starting at Good Shepherd Lutheran College in Noosa and ending at Luther Heights in Coolum. What better way to enjoy the great outdoors and help others at the same time? Proceeds will support refugee kids to go to school.

To learn more & register:

<https://walkmyway.org.au/groups/queensland-sunshine-coast>

Support from Australian Communities

We are most grateful to those members of our Lutheran community in Queensland who donated so generously to help others through ALWS. In 2018 alone, Queensland gave \$777,646. We recognise this support extends beyond donations, including the way Queensland churches and schools pray for those in need and endorse our work publicly. Last year ALWS raised over \$6.9m in total, of which \$2.3m came from the Australian Government through DFAT.

Stewardship of Resources

ALWS ensures the management of funds is transparent and accountable. ALWS is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development's Code of Conduct, which requires ALWS to meet minimum standards in governance, management and accountability. ALWS has full accreditation with DFAT, is subject to a rigorous accreditation review every five years, and has received the charity tick of registration with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission.

Thank You

We are most humbled by the generosity shown by the people of Queensland, to serve people who suffer through no fault of their own. We also give thanks for a supportive and encouraging church leadership and committed institutions such as the LLL. We couldn't have done it without you!

We are extremely grateful to Queenslander Judith Murray, who concluded her final term on the ALWS Board in September 2018, after more than a decade of service. In February 2019 we welcomed Jodi Hoff, Principal of LORDS, as the new ALWS Board member from Queensland District.

In February we farewelled Chey Mattner, who took up a new leadership role at the LWF Department of World Service. I came onboard in August 2018, and feel very blessed to be a part of such a talented team and compassionate Lutheran family in Australia.

There is still so much poverty and injustice in our world! In 2019, we will work on ways to stretch each dollar you donate even further, in order to have the greatest impact on the lives of others.

We appreciate you coming along with us on our journey as we continue to improve. Finally, we thank God for working through our church in such a transformational way.

Jamie Davies
Executive Director