

# Building a just and green world

Responding to the Cry of the Poor  
and the Cry of the Earth

2021-2025

A five-year plan for supporting our sisters  
and brothers around the world

# Who we are

**SCIAF is the official development and aid agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland. We form part of the global Caritas family, and since 2020 have been based in our eco-friendly offices in Glasgow City Centre.**

Compelled by Christ's love, we help people in the world's poorest places lift themselves out of poverty, work together to protect our common home, and help people recover from disaster.

For five decades we've reached out to our global neighbours in need, irrespective of their race, religion or background, sustained by the generosity and love of Catholics in Scotland.

We work in partnership with local and church organisations, supporting communities across Africa, Asia and Latin America, to bring about lasting change.

We put pressure on governments to care for the planet and create a fairer, more peaceful world.

## Introduction

**At SCIAF we are inspired by the gospel to tackle the causes of poverty and injustice.**

We know poverty is not just a lack of money, it flows from our selfishness, indifference and failure to treat every single person with the dignity they deserve. There is no single source of poverty. A variety of crises and causes combine, creating relentless downward pressure on those who have the least.

We always work with people in the hardest circumstances, so they can overcome their daily struggles and break the deeper causes that create suffering. Reaching out in love to the poorest people – regardless of age, race or religion – we believe in supporting the whole person, including their spiritual wellbeing, political voice, and cultural and community life.

We actively serve the most marginalised people – those forced to the fringes of society and deprived of opportunity – with a focus on women, girls, people living with a disability, and refugees. We know that the poorest suffer the most: we will not forsake them.

Over the next five years, our focus will be on increasing our impact on people's lives, offering long-lasting change and providing a brighter future for generations to come. We will inspire Scottish Catholics to live out their faith, increasing their understanding of poverty and injustice, and enable them to help build a world where everyone is equal and free from poverty. And, we will put pressure on governments and big business to create a fairer, greener and more peaceful world.

**A just and green world is possible, if we put our faith into action.**

# Our Motivation



## Our inspiration

In all we do, we are compelled by the love of Christ. We are guided by our Christian faith and inspired by love and compassion to stand in solidarity with the people we serve, our wounded earth, and the Catholic community in Scotland. We know that the poorest suffer the most: we will not forsake them.



## Our vision

A just world, free of poverty, where we flourish and live in harmony with each other and all creation.



## Our mission

Compelled by Christ's love, we enable the poorest to lift themselves out of poverty and work together to protect our common home, help people recover from disaster, and inspire people in Scotland to put their faith into action.



## Our values

Our values derive from our Christian faith and our love and compassion for the people we serve, our overseas partners, and the Catholic community in Scotland. They are firmly rooted in Scripture, Church Teaching and Catholic Social Teaching. We aim to encompass these values in all we do.

## Our values: dignity, solidarity, hope & ambition, integrity, stewardship

You can see our full set of values on our website: [sciaf.org.uk](https://sciaf.org.uk)

"Since the ordination of the first deacons in the Acts of the Apostles, care for the poor has been at its heart. Today, SCIAF – as part of the church's worldwide network *Caritas Internationalis* – strives to bring comfort to those who suffer, and justice to those who are downtrodden."

**Bishop President Joseph Toal**  
Bishop of Motherwell and Bishop President

"Reading the signs of the times, we see a world in which the people who are poorest are killed first and suffer most. We cannot and must not stand idly by while so many need our help. We must overcome the culture of indifference. In his encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis invited us to "hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor". These aren't two crises. They are the same."

**Alistair Dutton**  
Chief Executive of SCIAF

# Our approach

## Our principles

We are committed to building a just and green world, in which everyone is safe and treated with respect.

- We will live our value to respect the dignity of all people
- We will ensure that the equality and empowerment of women and men are woven into everything we do, particularly those living with a disability
- We will work with partners and others to learn, share, and improve the quality and impact of our activities
- We will ensure that the charity is well run, that we honour the trust given to us by our supporters, and that we are accountable to all our stakeholders
- We will value all parts of the organisation and use our collective talents and experiences to work together to one end.

## Our standards

Over the next five years we will renew our focus on safeguarding, quality, transparency, and accountability to ensure the continued safety and dignity of all we serve. In part, this will be achieved by working more closely and in-depth with fewer international partners, now across eight countries.

As an organisation we deliver quality work to recognised national and international standards, abiding by all relevant legislation and regulations. We are registered with and regulated by OSCR, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, SC012302.

**Our focus countries are Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Zambia**



## Integral Human Development

Our model of international development supports the whole person, including their spiritual wellbeing, political voice, and cultural and community life. This philosophy is grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and is called Integral Human Development (IHD).

Inspired by the Gospel, the cornerstone of SCIAF's work is Christ's teaching to love your neighbour and walk in solidarity with the poor and oppressed. By developing our approach to IHD we have built on these foundations and refocused our work on the poorest and most in need.

At SCIAF, we believe that everyone must have agency over their own lives and that any project must be formed by the participants themselves, accompanied by our staff. Our programmes promote the development of the whole person, in every aspect of life. We design our work with the people we serve, ensuring all their needs are met – not just financial, but also physical, natural, social, psychological, spiritual and human.

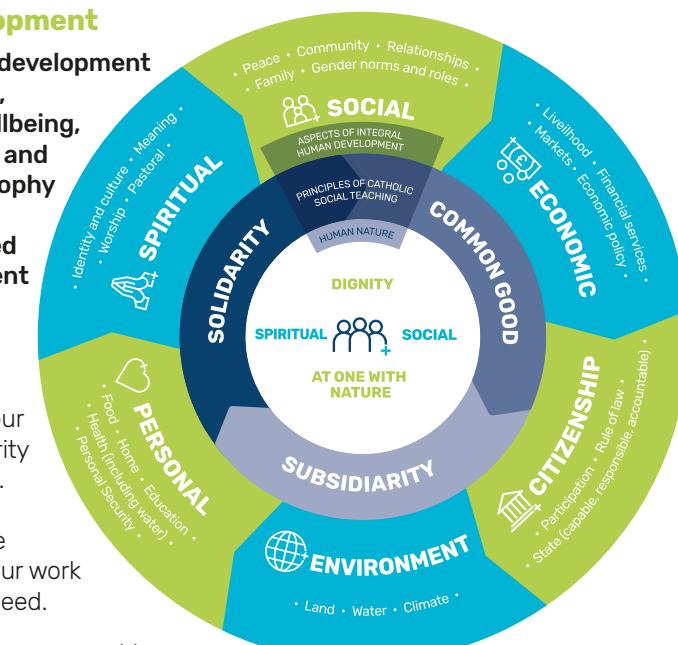
In essence, IHD promotes the dignity of the human person, and ensures that the poor are not treated as objects to be exploited.

 To find out more about our approach to IHD, please visit [sciaf.org.uk](http://sciaf.org.uk)

"IHD upholds the innate dignity of the human person. It is not limited to economic growth but is holistic, covering all spheres of life... Development is a transition from less human conditions to more human ones. The preferential option for the poor means that the poorest should have priority and they should be the subject of their own development, not the object of someone else's idea of how they should be developed. That requires maximum participation by the poor in everything affecting their community."

**Duncan MacLaren**

*A Rough Theological Guide to Integral Human Development*



# Our Objectives

## A Just & Green World

We want people across the world to enjoy a better future – to live in safe, secure communities in flourishing environments; to influence decisions that affect them; and to support their families by building sustainable ways of earning a living.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) tells us that peace is intimately connected to justice – a series of right relationships between human beings, between human beings and God, and between human beings and all Creation. Human rights, peace, security and sustainable development are deeply interlinked and mutually reinforcing. This understanding is key to SCIAF's approach; we need to be working with project participants, as well as our partners, to create powerful, safe, green and just communities.

Humankind's relationship with God,

the created universe and our particular place on the Earth is a fundamental part of what it is to be human. Our ability to develop and flourish is bound to the health of the planet and the strength of our relationship with it. This requires us to be good stewards who care for our common home. We need to amplify local voices and leadership, and we need to enable the conditions whereby people can provide for themselves today and tomorrow.

"Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations."

**Pope Francis, Laudato Si**

## Emergencies

We want people across the world to prepare for, survive, and recover from humanitarian emergencies. And, as our climate continues to degrade, ensure communities are more resilient in the face of extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, landslides and storms.

One of our values is to stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers – a value which only intensifies in times of humanitarian emergencies – and meet their basic needs in the short term. We will work to minimise loss of life, reducing suffering and impact to livelihoods, empowering local communities, and influencing systemic factors in emergencies.



## Development Education

Here in Scotland, we aim to make people aware of – and increase their understanding of – global poverty and its causes. In schools and parishes, we will demonstrate how SCIAF's work delivers change, to inspire the Catholic community in Scotland to put their faith into action.

## Act & Give

We will provide opportunities and offer inspiration for both individuals and groups to help more women and men who live in poverty, regardless of faith or background.

We want to create a vibrant, passionate SCIAF family throughout Scotland which is deeply committed to and supportive of our work. We will treat supporters as partners in our mission, and offer them opportunities to help which also satisfy their thirst for justice and service – either through prayer, by offering their time to campaign or volunteer, or via financial support.

## Funding & Capacity

United in a common objective, we must continue to encourage SCIAF employees to focus their energies on delivering our mission and strategy.

To bring about change in the world we need to maximise our resources and use them wisely. We must invest in the people who work and volunteer for us, as well as in our systems. This will ensure we can meet our goals together.



**"A new commandment  
I give to you, that you  
love one another:  
just as I have loved  
you, you also are to  
love one another.  
By this all people will  
know that you are my  
disciples, if you have  
love for one another."**

John 13:34-35

**Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund**

SCI&F is the official overseas aid and development charity of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family.  
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[sciaf.org.uk](http://sciaf.org.uk)

