



World Council of Churches  
**Central Committee**

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FOR INFORMATION to the Central Committee  
FOR ACTION by the Programme Committee

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## **Programme Plans Summary**

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# 2010-2013

With project outlines 2010-2012



# World Council of Churches

*"Churches together to transform the world"*

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## Programme Plans Summary

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# 2010-2013

With project outlines 2010-2012

*June 2009*

### **The context of this document**

This document presents programme plans that have been approved by the WCC Central Committee in September 2006 for the period 2007-2013 in a rolling cycle. The programmes presented here are for the period 2010-2012. This is now presented to the WCC Central Committee (August-September 2009) through the programme committee for final approval. The budget 2010 and a framework budget for 2011-2012 are being presented separately.

This document provides an outline of proposed programmes and projects. Detailed descriptions of projects and activities, including budgets, will be available by early July on [www.ecuspace.net](http://www.ecuspace.net).

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## Foreword

Since the meeting of the World Council of Churches executive committee in September 2008 in Lübeck, Germany, the staff leadership group has been working with the programme directors and managers on a careful review of planned activities with two concerns in mind.

First, this round of planning has been heavily influenced by the global financial crisis that the world is experiencing and by the diverse projections about the short and longer term economic future. While there are differing opinions regarding the causes of the present crisis, there is agreement among economists that the evolution of regulatory frameworks has not kept pace with the globalization of financial markets. We are aware that, in this climate, the WCC member churches, ecumenical partners and specialized ministries are going through their own financial challenges, having to reduce their budgets and some even having to downsize their staff. We are grateful to our partners that the programme income of the WCC has been relatively stable for the past five years or so. While contributions for 2008 did not show significant reductions, we are conscious that some projected contributions for 2009 and 2010 are likely to show reductions. The WCC has also been adversely and significantly affected by changes in currency exchange rates and a reduction in returns on its endowment funds. The activities and financial plans included here propose a sizeable reduction in expenditure for the coming few years. Given the difficulty in accurately predicting the level of income, staff have been working on various scenarios to be presented to the finance committee.

The second concern is a constant challenge from the WCC governing bodies, some member churches and many of the ecumenical funding partners that the many activities the WCC engages in are not adequately focused and do not make a significant impact on the churches and on society. Therefore, as we planned the work, we have tried to ensure that we will actually do less and do it better. We have also attempted to demonstrate that the vision of an integrated programme as was envisaged in the post Porto Alegre structure has been realized.

There has also been renewed reflection on what the role of the WCC should be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, trying to define more sharply what the WCC is uniquely placed to do. We have reemphasized that one of the primary roles of the WCC is that of convener – providing relevant platforms for analysis and dialogue on the challenges the churches and ecumenical partners face today. This task of identifying the role of the WCC and monitoring the work in light of this role is far from over – it will continue. This planning document indicates some initial but critically important steps in this direction.

The vision of the WCC assembly in Porto Alegre – to bring the churches together to transform the world – is reaffirmed in these plans. The programme structure of six major programmatic areas, as approved in the 2006 central committee, remains unchanged. The number of projects and activities has been reduced through a process of integration and refocusing. We have also reduced the number of and reformulated the major achievements that we hope to attain by the next assembly.

The plans contained herein are now being presented to the central committee for final approval. Pending approval by this governing body, the plans have also been shared with the funding partners with. The text you have before you includes a few more details and calls for your comments and valuable input.

I would be remiss if, in this introduction, I did not give special thanks to two colleagues who have been not only instrumental in developing these plans and those of previous years, but have been two key members in the WCC leadership. Dr William Temu, associate general secretary for programme and IMD director, will be leaving the WCC at the end of 2009 on early retirement. Dr Aruna Gnanadason, executive director for Planning and Integration, will be completing her work here at the end of September 2009. Both have worked tirelessly on programmatic coordination and ensuring that the WCC has a programme monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that embodies the good stewardship our churches and partners can expect from the WCC. We thank them both heartily and wish them all God's blessings as they embark on this next step in their lives.

**Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia**  
**General Secretary**  
**World Council of Churches**

Geneva  
June, 2009

# Vision and purpose of the work of the World Council of Churches

## **Introduction**

The WCC's programmatic work is grounded in the WCC's Constitution and the Common Understanding and Vision (CUV) process. The 9th assembly of the WCC reaffirmed Article III of the Constitution as the basis for its work.

*The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe.*

That same article affirms as goals of the council, the commitments to:

- promote the prayerful search for forgiveness and reconciliation in a spirit of mutual accountability, the development of deeper relationships through theological dialogue and the sharing of human, spiritual and material resources with one another;
- facilitate common witness; express their commitment to diakonia in serving human need;
- nurture the growth of an ecumenical consciousness;
- assist each other in relationships to and with people of other faiths; and
- foster renewal and growth through unity, worship, mission and service.

## **The programmes**

With this being the basis and from the impulses coming from the assembly, the WCC central committee at its meeting in September 2006 approved the following programmes:

- WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century
- Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality
- Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace
- Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation
- Education and Ecumenical Formation
- Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation

Communication is an integral element within each programme. The communication strategy that had been shared with the central committee in February 2008 indicates that communication will be carried out interactively with key constituencies and towards building a clearer public profile for the WCC in its witness to the world.

## **Focusing the work**

The central committee and the executive committee, in endorsing the programme structure, asked for more clarity on three areas. This has been developed and now forms part of the next three-year cycle of work (2010-2012):

- The strategy to communicate the work of the WCC is placed in the context of the wider audience, particularly the secular media.
- The vision and purpose of the work is articulated more clearly both to the churches and to the world.
- There is a small number of measurable (both qualitative and/or quantitative) major achievements or signs of change in the churches and the world, by the time of the next assembly, because of the WCC programmes.

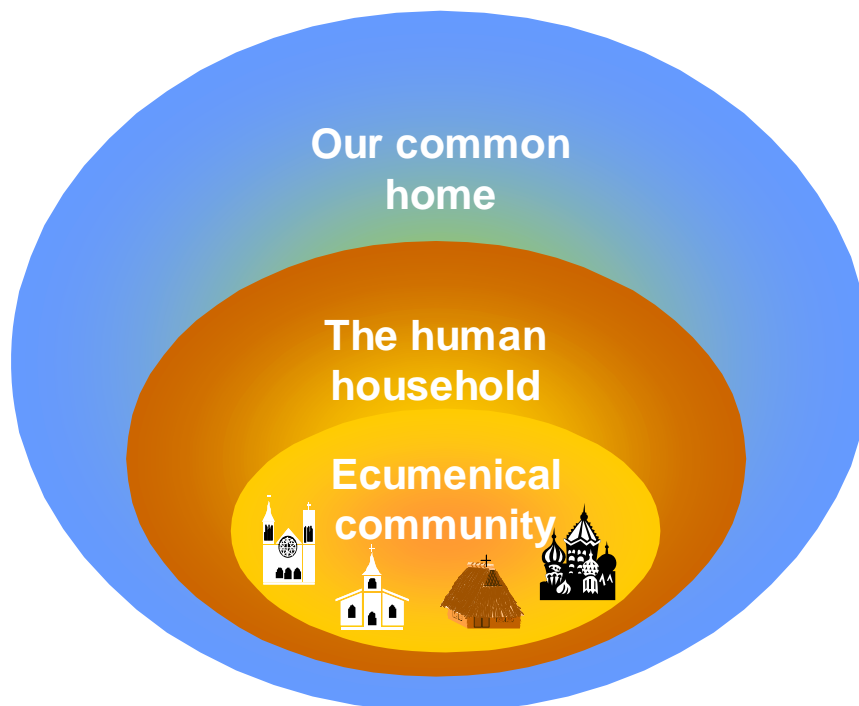
The following sections develop these dimensions further.

## 1. The WCC in context

What is the context in which the fellowship speaks today? What is the basic message this fellowship communicates to church and world today? What is the place of the council's life and work in the "oikoumene" and does it reflect the WCC Constitution, basic elements from the 9th assembly and the emerging profile of the new programmes?

To communicate the WCC in action the metaphor of the "oikoumene" is used.

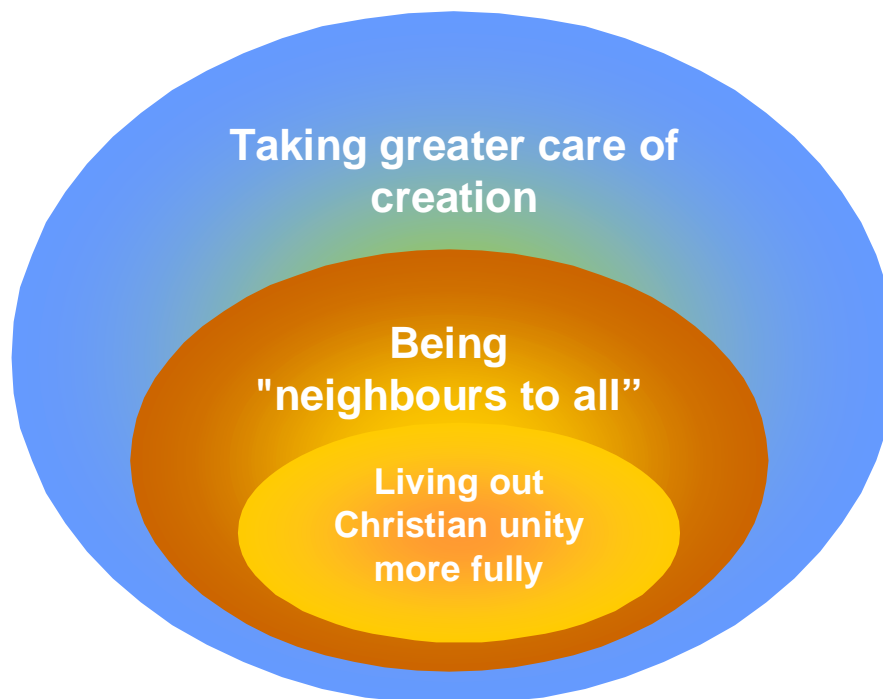
As a unique global fellowship of churches, the WCC is called to play a leading role within the wider **ecumenical community** as part of the **human household**, sharing a **common home** with all of creation.





## 2. Threefold vision for transformation drawn from the assembly’s message.

The context provides the framework for interpreting the vision and mission of the WCC.



### Threefold vision

*Living out Christian unity more fully*

*Being “neighbours to all”*

*Taking greater care of creation*

### Mission

Churches seeking unity and committed to working and witnessing together

Churches advocating against the threats to human community, with their neighbours

Churches protecting the earth and the peoples of the earth

### Methodology

Working together for visible unity and new forms of mission, providing space for deepening relationships and broadening participation for vital engagement

Working together to overcome what threatens to divide the human community and to work for peace and the common good through shared values of justice and equality

Working together to promote the practice and culture of sustaining life

### **3. Major achievements**

In order to respond to the vision and mission of the WCC, eight positive changes or achievements will demonstrate that the programmes of the WCC have had an impact on the churches and in the world in the period up to 2013. The major achievements proposed reflect both the uniqueness of the WCC's basic purpose and the types of work or functions selected to fulfil that purpose.

The programme guidelines committee at the 9<sup>th</sup> assembly directed the WCC to work in an integrated, collaborative and interactive way. This is realized by ensuring focus on the WCC's specific mission and around its unique functional roles, on behalf of the ecumenical community.

The achievements described here are supported by all programmes and reflected in their activities. For practical reasons, they are hosted in one programme, representing its main focus.

#### **Living out Christian unity more fully**

*Major Achievement 1* – Member churches have affirmed together the nature and form of the unity they seek, made concrete steps forward and identified challenges on the way towards visible unity. New ways of living unity and ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been clarified and practised by broadening participation and ensuring coherence through collaboration and defining clarity of roles.

*Major achievement 2* – Member churches, mission bodies and ecumenical partners have reached a common understanding on key ecumenical convictions on the theology and practice of mission and evangelism for today (100 years after Edinburgh 1910).

*Major achievement 3* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been facilitated in the formation of a new generation of ecumenists and their participation has been enhanced in the ecumenical movement. New and creative models of ecumenical formation and participation have been developed. The Ecumenical Institute in Bossey has maintained its laboratory character in dealing with challenging ecumenical themes.

#### **Being “neighbours to all”**

*Major achievement 4* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been enabled to develop new practices in building healing and reconciling communities on the basis of social justice and ecclesial inclusiveness.

*Major achievement 5* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have demonstrated through actions and advocacy, in particular at the UN, their ecumenical commitment to justice, peace and human rights. The International Ecumenical Peace Convocation and the Declaration on Just Peace has enabled member churches to agree on and commit themselves to the theology, spirituality and ethics of peace with justice.

*Major achievement 6* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been mobilized to work for peace in the Middle East. An international platform for engagement and action has been established for those working together for peace in the Middle East, including member churches and ecumenical partners in the region and globally. Such work has been done in close cooperation with leaders of other religious communities.

*Major achievement 7* – Member churches have gained a clearer self-understanding amid many religions, and have been engaged in dialogue and cooperation with people of other faiths. Bilateral and multilateral relationships and dialogues have been further developed. Member churches have been accompanied in situations of conflict that are related to religion.

### **Taking greater care of creation**

*Major achievement 8* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been engaged in joint reflections and actions on wealth, poverty and ecology. They have been enabled to understand more deeply the inter-relatedness of wealth, poverty and ecology, and have cooperated with other faith communities in developing a common framework for action on poverty eradication and climate change through a renewed understanding of and commitment to diakonia.

### ***How the WCC does its work in order to achieve these goals***

#### **Broad framework**

In focusing the work and by identifying its major achievements, the WCC works with the intent to strengthen relationships between and among churches and ecumenical networks and partners. It brings greater coherence to the ecumenical movement by clarifying complementary roles and by engaging the churches, ecumenical organizations and partners in dialogue and discussions on mutual accountability to the world. It engages more fully with people of other faiths in order to nurture cooperation with them. While working in cooperation with churches and other partners in the regions in achieving the objectives, the programme work of the WCC recognizes and encourages initiatives by churches and others which contribute to the same goals.

It has organized itself in six programmes with project staff groups which have the responsibility of putting in place processes that contribute to the major achievements. It strengthens the contributions of women, youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, migrants and those living in a context of racism and casteism, in all the major achievements. The work is theologically and spiritually grounded. Ecumenical formation and the role of the Bossey Ecumenical Institute and the ecumenical library are key instruments for reaching the major achievements.

It has designed and has in place a solid communication strategy that gives visibility to the work of the World Council of Churches. The WCC is committed to bring to the world, through the church and secular media, the ethical and moral alternative voice of the churches and the ecumenical movement.

The WCC is a knowledge-based organization and offers the skills and expertise of its staff to the churches and other partners and leads reflections and actions by the churches and others.

## Functional criteria

The functions of the WCC are to:

- a) **Convene:** Enable concrete experiences of unity to take place. Bring different “worlds” together to find common solutions. Assist churches committed to common goals in specific programmatic areas to discover the special strengths that are only found in unity. Facilitate the use of these shared strengths for the glory of God and the good of others.
- b) **Provide leadership:** Lead initiatives of member churches and partners in priority areas. Leadership includes elaborating or ensuring coherence of theology and spirituality as well as clear articulations of faith in relation to the work so as to empower the fellowship of churches and as the trustee of the ecumenical movement. In doing this the WCC constantly reviews its mandate to re-orient itself and engage the churches and the constituency in ecumenical and faith learning.
- c) **Initiate reflection and analysis:** Enable the member churches to periodically reflect on and analyze the changing economic, political context of the world and the ecclesial landscape. This process of discernment will strengthen the voices, the witness and the ministry of the churches to the world.
- d) **Coordinate:** Coordinate networks and advocacy with other ecumenical organizations to achieve greater collaboration and effectiveness in common endeavours. This includes promoting capacity-building within the constituency.
- e) **Build ownership:** Ensure that programmes build or re-build the ecumenical constituency for selected areas of mission and service. Build on existing initiatives of churches and partner organizations as much as possible. Connect, share and celebrate member church initiatives in various areas and ensure that these form new chapters of ecumenical history.
- f) **Communicate:** Be strategic, timely, and imaginative and engage in each field and build ownership of the WCC programmes and work.
- g) **Engage leaders** in programmes and communication as follows:
  - i. church leadership groups (broadly defined, at different levels),
  - ii. networks addressing selected global issues, and
  - iii. relevant, complementary institutions.
- h) **Enable witness:** Identify and address challenges that are global in scale, reaching for the horizons of faith, compassion and understanding that “drive” change. Invite Christians to find their calling in selected programmes that link local, national and international policies and actions with global consequences. Where possible, facilitate connections within the ecumenical community through these programmes.
- i) **Work in partnership:** Ensure that the work is done in partnership with the churches and other ecumenical actors so as to provide coherence to the ecumenical movement. Such joint work will also enhance the witness of the churches and recognize their expertise in some areas of the programme work of the WCC.

## General Secretariat

### ***The general secretariat and the leadership structure***

The general secretary of the WCC is an *officer of the council*, together with the moderator and the vice-moderators of the central committee. Thus, the general secretary represents and interprets the council to member churches, ecumenical and other partners, political authorities, the global society and the public at large; engages interaction among member churches, inviting and challenging them to think about the meaning of the fellowship; contributes to both strengthening and broadening the fellowship; provides and/or provokes reflection on emerging issues and partnerships in the ecumenical movement; regularly visits the member churches, thus providing them with a tangible expression of the solidarity of the churches worldwide.

The general secretary is the *chief executive officer* of the council. As such, he or she is the head of the staff (Constitution Rule XII), with overall responsibility for:

- a) directing the activities of the council according to the mandates and policies of the governing bodies;
- b) representing and communicating the council to its member churches, ecumenical and other partners and the public at large;
- c) strategic leadership and coordination of the activities of the WCC.

As the chief executive officer of the WCC, the general secretary offers leadership to and is assisted by a general secretariat, bringing and holding together a council-wide strategic view on relationships, programme planning and coordination, monitoring, communication and stewardship. The general secretariat provides a supportive atmosphere to nurture and enhance the work of the staff.

The general secretariat provides leadership to the churches and gives visibility to and serves the fellowship of member churches through visits to the churches and through receiving visits at the ecumenical centre from the member churches. Additionally the general secretariat coordinates the organization of the meetings of the governing bodies – officers, executive committee, central committee and related groups. These meetings are tangible manifestations of the fellowship, but also occasions for mutual encounter and for analyzing together developments in the ecumenical movement. Apart from the institutional role of the governing bodies in setting policy and taking management decisions, they also contribute to the discernment of ways to serve the wider goal of Christian unity and coherence of the ecumenical movement.

A **staff leadership group** and a **staff executive group** advise the general secretary, coordinate the implementation of policies and decisions established by the governing bodies, facilitate proposals to be submitted to the governing bodies, participate in the long-range planning and management and assist the general secretary in the appointment of staff groups and other functional groups.

The WCC has set in place **systems for the management of human resources and financial stewardship and accountability**, as well as sound instruments for planning, monitoring and evaluation and methodologies to ensure that the WCC's governing bodies are able to accompany the work and give it direction. The three-year rolling cycle creates the possibility for the

governing bodies to respond to new challenges and shifts in the programmes as the situation demands.

The WCC income development strategy 2008-2010, approved by the central committee in early 2008, is in process of being implemented. Intensifying the membership campaign and strengthening relationships with the specialized ministries are central to the strategy, as these sources traditionally provide more than 90 percent of the council's contributions income. In the context of the current financial crisis, focused attention is being paid to new fundraising and the diversification of funding sources, both in the acquisition of new partners and expansion of the regional spread of donors. Foundations and individual/congregational giving, in close collaboration with member churches and other partners, have been targeted as the most suitable types of fundraising programmes for the council to implement at this time. The Income Monitoring and Development office works closely with the programmes, strengthening the fundraising capacity of staff, and with communication in efforts to enable greater WCC visibility and therefore greater potential for fundraising.

### ***Preparation process for the 10th assembly***

This central committee (August-September 2009) will receive a report of the assembly discernment committee and will advise the WCC on the planning work that needs to be set in place. In 2010 there will be a meeting of the assembly planning committee and the assembly worship committee to begin the work on the content and programmatic life of the assembly, recognising that it should be an assembly with a difference. Further work will be done to ensure that the venue selected by the central committee (in 2009) can be prepared for the assembly – building relationships with the churches in the country and region and defining with them the logistic needs for an assembly.

### ***Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER)***

The WCC has now in place clearly defined PMER processes under the leadership of the general secretariat. Following the recommendations from the 9th assembly, the general secretary set up a Planning and Integration (P&I) office which has implemented and set in place planning, monitoring and evaluation processes, effective since 2007. Training sessions have been organized for all staff introducing the purposes of PMER, and the concepts of goals, indicators and measurable criteria for achievements. These will be continued in the period 2010-2013, in a new framework.

### **Planning**

Fundamental commitments of the WCC continue to be framed in the six programmes which will sustain the work of the WCC up to the next assembly. The objective of each programme is to achieve goals which represent a seven-year process from one assembly to the next. A select number of major achievements to take to the assembly have been articulated. These are measurable and are monitored over the three-year rolling cycle of work and allow for evaluation at the time of the next assembly of the WCC to ascertain the extent to which the work has had an impact on the churches and the world.

## **Monitoring**

All projects are monitored regularly in order to have a clear view of the progress of activities and to call the attention of the leadership to any problems which may occur in the implementation of the work. Monitoring is principally carried out by two different methods: (1) at the project staff group meetings organized regularly under the leadership of the project coordinator, and (2) at the time of the overall review of projects which is carried out in June and November each year. Monitoring involves the whole project staff group with relevant staff from leadership, finance and communication.

The monitoring includes work carried out in Geneva as well as in offices outside Switzerland and covers four dimensions: (1) ensuring that the plans for the work are on track, observing how the work is received by the constituency and identifying problems being encountered early enough to propose changes, or to accompany staff in the implementation; (2) ensuring that financial resources are being managed within approved budgets, with the help of specialized staff in each project; (3) encouraging team spirit and participation of all staff in the work to support the performance appraisal process; and (4) ensuring that the organization is effective in terms of information sharing, coordination and integration. Monitoring is conducted using established indicators.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation is an integral part of the way of assessing whether the work is on track to achieve the objectives set and to draw learnings for the next phase of the work.

Evaluation will be conducted in three phases between assemblies:

- At the end of each year there is an internal evaluation.
- The mid-term evaluation between two assemblies involving members of the central committee, funding partners and churches, has taken place and a report will be presented to the central committee through the programme committee.
- The pre-assembly evaluation, which will be more extensive, will also involve external evaluators and will take place early 2012 to deliver a report to the central committee in August 2012 in preparation for the assembly.

All evaluations cover the content of programmes, as well as management issues, with an effort to keep a good balance between the two. Evaluation takes into consideration indicators representing key results of each activity and an assessment of how integration is taking place across the organization.

The cost of the PMER initiatives are accounted for along with the Finance, Service and Administration departments and are charged to the programmes as part of infrastructure costs following an activity-based costing method.

## **Major achievements**

The general secretariat is responsible for monitoring all the achievements and preparing for the presentation of the outcomes at the next assembly.

## **Major activities in 2010**

- General secretariat (G101)
- Governing bodies (G102)
- Assembly planning meetings (A1)



## ***Proposed changes to the 2010 – 2012 plans***

The programme plans for the coming three-year period incorporate the merging of some projects to stimulate greater coherence and integration of the work. In this way projects that were implemented by one programme executive will benefit from the expertise of other staff. This consolidation of executive and support staff will enrich the content of the work and enhance administration and accountability.

### **The projects that have been merged or reorganized:**

- Youth (P105) and Women (P106) have been merged with P101 (Interpretation of the Ecumenical Vision of the WCC) in order to ensure the contributions of women and youth to the future of the ecumenical movement. However, the specificity of the WCC's commitments to women and youth will be ensured by maintaining activities that are relevant to these groups.
- The work on Worship and Spirituality has been moved into P101 (Interpretation of the Ecumenical Vision of the WCC) as it was recognized that the Porto Alegre assembly had asked that worship and spirituality be more central to the life of all that the WCC does.
- The WCC's advocacy work in relation to networks concerned with migration, Indigenous Peoples, the racially discriminated, Dalits and people with disabilities (EDAN), will be handled in a reinforced project entitled Just and Inclusive Communities (P204), along with the Global Platform for Analysis and Theology which has been moved from WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P1) into the programmatic area Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality (P2). Migration has been moved here from Justice and Diakonia (P4). The inter-linked theological and ecclesial aspects of these important issues will become an area of expertise in this newly formed project.
- The project entitled "Global Advocacy and Human Rights: Justice and Accountability" (P302) has been formed out of a merger of the project on Global Advocacy for Justice and Accountability (P302) and the project on Human Rights to Enhance Human Dignity (formerly P303) so as to give greater coherence to the WCC's advocacy work at the UN. The specific significance of each of the original projects is retained.
- The work on regional relations within Justice and Diakonia, Responsibility for Creation (P4) is intimately related to the relationship work with member churches in the programmatic area WCC and the Ecumenical Movement (P1). More intentional efforts will be made to stimulate an inter-dependent and integrated approach bringing together the expertise of staff in both programmes.
- The strengthening of P4 (Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation) in searching for a renewed understanding of prophetic diakonia has also seen the work on economy, ecology and water being moved into this programme from P306.
- Library and Archives has been moved from P505 into Communication, in order to develop a long-term plan to make this treasure of the ecumenical movement more effective in communicating the work of the WCC to a wider audience.

# Programmatic Areas

## *WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century (P1)*

### **Background**

In its vocation to work for and pray for the visible unity of the church that is Christ's gift and calling (John 17:21) and to serve both the member churches and the ecumenical movement, the WCC responds to new challenges brought by changing times, renews and strengthens relationships among member churches and with its partners, and emphasizes the need for growing discernment and the renewal of the ecumenical calling by the power of the Holy Spirit. The commitment both to the fellowship of churches and to the ecumenical movement transcends any narrow institutional mandate or agenda.

The consequences of the process of globalization, global networking, the changing ecclesial landscape, and new challenges in inter-religious relationships have a profound impact on the churches and their understanding of ecumenism. Careful analysis and theological reflection is required to address these challenges. The visions, patterns of relationships, priorities as well as structures of ecumenical organizations must reflect these changing realities. The horizon for mutual action today is nothing less than the oikoumene as God's household of life. Common prayer and worship life and a conscious focus on the spiritual dimension of everyday experiences and practices will nurture a shared vision, undergird meaningful relationships, and contribute to revitalizing the commitment to ecumenism. The spiritual dimension will be integral to all activities and programmes of the WCC.

There are two major facets in this programme: (1) the WCC's leading role in coordinating joint efforts to unfold the challenges of ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and their consequences for the vision, activities and structures of ecumenical organizations and partners, with emphasis on the contributions of youth and women and ensuring that common prayer and worship life undergirds all activities of the WCC; (2) the WCC's role in the broadening and deepening the fellowship and the maintenance of coherence of the ecumenical movement.

Churches as communities of women, men, youth and children are called to address the contemporary challenges with a contextual and intergenerational approach and from the perspective of women and youth. The WCC will continue in its commitment to women, children and youth both programmatically and structurally by devoting staff and other resources to mobilize these constituencies in the churches and ecumenical networks; to advocate for their full and just participation; and to support them in their efforts to transform the life of the churches and society.

By creating space for encounter and fellowship and opportunities for cooperation, the WCC serves its member churches and a range of ecumenical partners. It convenes spaces for the churches and ecumenical partners to come together to pray, reflect, plan and act. They seek together to discern the promises and the challenges of the times by listening to what God is saying to the churches and the world at this moment in history. They open themselves to a culture of dialogue, cooperation and solidarity. They work together as instruments of God's reconciling and healing grace for the healing of human community and creation. Together they become agents of renewal and transformation. All these presuppose nurturing relationships with and

among churches, including those who are not yet members of the WCC; establishing and maintaining relationships with Christian world communions, conciliar bodies and other ecumenical agencies; supporting ecumenical initiatives especially at the regional level, and intentionally seeking the perspective of grass-roots experiences of ecumenism. The WCC is often affirmed by its partners as being best placed to work towards providing coherence of the one ecumenical movement in its diverse manifestations.

By integrating the work on regional relations as one shared activity between the programmes on the WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P1) and Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation (P4), the WCC will strengthen its efforts towards this task. An integrated activity on regional relations will strengthen the capacity of the WCC, to respond to new developments and to stay in close contact with member churches and ecumenical partners in the regions.

The projects and activities presented in this chapter should not be seen as related purely to one “programme”, but rather as clarifying a common vision, affirming a *raison d’être* for WCC’s specific role and the broader framework for all WCC programmes.

## **Major achievements**

*Major Achievement 1* – Member churches have affirmed together the nature and form of the unity they seek, made concrete steps forward and identified challenges on the way towards visible unity. New ways of living unity and ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have been clarified and practiced by broadening participation and ensuring coherence through collaboration and defining clarity of roles.

It will also contribute to other achievements related to ecumenical formation, diakonia and public witness. (Achievements 3, 4, 6, 8)

## **Projects 2010-2013**

### **Interpretation of the ecumenical vision of the WCC (P101)**

The adoption of the policy statement “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC” at the Harare assembly (1998) opened a new avenue, encouraging churches to evaluate their ecumenical commitment – in their own local contexts, in their national, regional and global relationships and, specifically, in relation to the fellowship of the churches that is the WCC. Finding ways to interpret and communicate the spirit of the “Common Understanding and Vision” (CUV) process in the changing context at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and renewing the shared vision are the overarching objectives of this project to which the following activities contribute with their own specific initiatives.

### **Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P101-1)**

The work with the continuation committee on ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which must be closely connected with the preparations for the 10<sup>th</sup> assembly and accompaniment of the Global Christian Forum serve the common objectives of the project. The continuation committee will work towards the next assembly as a decisive opportunity for the implementation of its recommendations. From 2010, this activity includes the WCC’s work on worship and spirituality in an ecumenical context. A shared vision will be embodied in prayer life and will be nurtured by

the spiritual dimension of experiences and practices. Common prayer will undergird meetings of decision making bodies of the WCC. Through work on spirituality and worship, the WCC will continue to explore the significance of worship as integral to the life of the churches in their search for unity and common witness and accompany member churches and ecumenical partners on their way towards the 2011 International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) and the 2013 assembly.

### **Youth in the ecumenical movement: challenges and hopes (P101-2)**

In all of its work, the WCC ensures the full and creative participation of young people in shaping the ecumenical vision and determining the role and functions of the WCC in relation to its member churches, ecumenical partners and the wider ecumenical movement. This programmatic area is committed to an intergenerational approach for developing relationships and working methods within the fellowship of member churches and with ecumenical partners. Echos – the commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement, internships and the coordination of stewards at governing bodies, and the World Youth Programme play a key role in this regard. Echos will continue to focus its efforts on ensuring strong youth involvement in the Edinburgh 2010 centennial conference on mission and to the planning efforts for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) in 2011.

### **Women in church and society: challenges and hopes (P101-3)**

Through active cooperation with women of various Christian traditions, from various regions of the world and of different ages the WCC works towards including women's voices and visions in the churches' life and witness to the world and inspire broader recognition of the contributions of women to making the unity that is already given in Christ more visible. The work with women in ecumenical organizations, the Orthodox churches and other networks will continue. Towards the celebration of Edinburgh 2010, efforts will be made to ensure that women are an integral part of the event. Until 2011, the focus of the activities will continue to address the issue of violence against women and children as a priority towards the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. This includes advocating for positive masculinities as part of a culture of justice and peace.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

#### **Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P101-1)**

- Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century continuation committee
- Global Christian Forum
- Worship and spirituality in ecumenical contexts
- Building consensus: a case study on human sexuality

#### **Youth in the ecumenical movement: challenges and hopes (P101-2)**

- Echos - Commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement
- World Youth Programme
- Stewards and interns

#### **Women in church and society: challenges and hopes (P101-3)**

- Networking with women in ecumenical organizations and networks
- Initiatives with Orthodox women
- Overcoming violence against women and children

## **Nurturing the fellowship of WCC member churches and relations with ecumenical partners (P102)**

The WCC provides a space in which the member churches are able to give thanks for the unity they share in Christ and experience together what it means to be in fellowship through the WCC. This fellowship is a dynamic relational reality embracing the fullness of the churches and the entire life and work of the WCC. The WCC affirms the centrality of the ethos of the fellowship, and consensus, in the life of the member churches and this project seeks to promote reflection on the experiences of belonging to the WCC. The project works in close collaboration with the general secretariat in nurturing the fellowship among the member churches.

The WCC seeks to strengthen the fellowship of member churches and cooperation with ecumenical partners at the regional level through an integrated approach involving also the project on regional relations (P402). This integrated work seeks to enhance relations and cooperation with member churches, regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches, and to foster the coherence of the ecumenical movement, while maintaining the specificity of regional contexts.

In seeking to foster the coherence of the ecumenical movement, the WCC works to develop effective and mutually enriching collaboration with a range of ecumenical partners, including the regional and national instruments mentioned above, and also with Christian world communions and with churches that are not members of the WCC. The project gives particular attention to the WCC's relationship with the Roman Catholic Church through a joint working group, in collaboration with Faith and Order (P201). The project also coordinates contacts with Pentecostal and Evangelical churches that are not members of the WCC, in collaboration with Mission and Evangelism (P203).

This project seeks to strengthen the WCC's reflection, both theological and strategic, on "ecumenism in the 21st century" through substantive discussions with ecumenical partners on their respective roles, mutual accountability, and ways of ensuring that programmatic work and public statements complement each other. While doing this, the WCC seeks to identify and engage with grass-roots networks and emerging expressions of the ecumenical movement in order to encourage fresh perspectives and to give voice to the wider ecumenical movement.

In 2010, the project will give particular attention to deepening relations between the new leadership in the general secretariat and the fellowship of member churches and ecumenical partners. The project also accompanies assembly preparations under the leadership of the general secretariat. In 2010, the project will focus on building momentum toward the 10<sup>th</sup> assembly in 2013.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

### **Developing the fellowship of member churches**

- Ecumenical officers network
- Orthodox member churches
- Membership matters

**Regional relations (in cooperation with Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation – P4)**

- Regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches
- Member churches in the regions

**Relations with Christian world communions (CWCs)**

- Joint consultative commission between CWCs and the WCC

**Relations with the Roman Catholic Church**

- Joint working group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC

**Relations with Pentecostal Churches**

- Joint consultative group between Pentecostals and the WCC

## ***Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality (P2)***

### **Background**

The programme area on Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality addresses issues which are central to the identity, life and witness of the church and the ecumenical movement. It encourages and enables the churches in calling one another to the goal of visible unity; to deepen the spiritual dimensions of their lives; to work together for a more faithful mission in the world and to develop healing and reconciling communities.

In all the above areas, the programme responds to commitments made and needs identified by the churches at the WCC 9<sup>th</sup> assembly, and responds to new challenges from ecumenical partners. Significant progress has taken place in the furtherance of ecumenism and unity since the creation of the WCC. The churches need to acknowledge this and be grateful for it. However, in the last two decades, changes in cultural and religious behaviour, as well as the rapid growth of new churches, has modified the context in which the search for visible unity takes place. As a reaction to economic and cultural globalization, churches at the local and national level, as well as Christian communions, may be tempted to give higher priority to strengthening their own identity and tradition and less attention to their ecumenical engagement with other communions or traditions. The original vision of unity has to be reaffirmed and reinterpreted under these new conditions. Recent difficulties prove that further progress in unity depends on serious work on ecclesiology as well as on the ethical challenges the churches face today. Both of these dimensions continue to be addressed by the work of Faith and Order.

The new global context also shows that the WCC cannot continue to work on Christian witness and spirituality without connecting with the reality of migration and the important and growing mission movements, particularly in and from the global South, and their theological perspectives on mission and evangelism. It is urgent to strengthen the dialogue with this “wider constituency”. These trends have an impact within and among the member churches and related ecumenical partners. Additionally, the increasingly multi-religious context of the world in which the churches are placed, gives them the opportunity to redefine key ecumenical convictions in the mission mandate. In the past, the WCC had systematically advocated for a holistic approach to witness, evangelism, spirituality and healing. Today, the WCC is challenged to revisit the work done since the 1960s and open up new avenues for a spiritual vision related to the contemporary world. In doing so, the WCC will attempt to reemphasise the intrinsic link between the search for visible unity among the churches, while working for the healing of memories and reconciliation by building up inclusive communities. All these commitments are grounded in a holistic spirituality.

For the coming years till the assembly in 2013, the following priorities will shape the work in this programmatic area: Receiving responses to and monitoring the reception process of the ecclesiology text “Called to Be the One Church”, adopted in the WCC assembly at Porto Alegre (2006), which seeks to renew the search for visible unity. The ongoing evaluation and development of the study paper *The Nature and Mission of the Church*, which allows for a clearer grasp of both common understandings and remaining differences in the reflections on ecclesiology. This will be enhanced by the renewed cooperation between the work on Faith and Order and on Mission and Evangelism in strengthening the relation between church and mission. The common preparation of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity between Faith and Order and

the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity reaffirms the foundations of the search for unity in prayer and spiritual life.

The centenary of the Edinburgh Mission Conference in 2010 will be an opportunity for representatives from a wide segment of world Christianity to meet and debate on priorities in mission, aiming at closer cooperation in the future. The WCC is fully involved in the 2010 studies and preparations, and will be one of the major convening and leading bodies in this process.

In order to strengthen specifically ecumenical approaches to mission and witness, the WCC studies will encourage the search for an ecumenical and contemporary understanding of mission as it relates to the churches and contributes to the search for unity. The WCC's own work combines spirituality with the struggle for transformation and will affirm a bold commitment to evangelism, while respecting people of other faiths. A holistic understanding and practice of mission grows out of and leads to communities which live a spirituality of faith and healing, justice and peace. Churches will be faithful to their calling when they offer spaces for pastoral attention, cure and care, which include those whose mental health is affected. The work will continue to foster the healing of memories and reconciliation in church and society.

The influence of cultures of discrimination has often distracted the churches from their fundamental vocation of being a sign and witness of the reign of God. This challenge is now further accelerated by large-scale migration. Experiences, spiritualities and theologies of excluded groups have much to contribute to the transformation of the church and the world and to inform the pursuit of unity and mission. The WCC's work on community and inclusion aims at ensuring that Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, networks struggling to overcome racism, and the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN) will be empowered to articulate, boldly and creatively, a Christian theology to undergird the churches as fully inclusive communities. It aims to challenge the churches to develop spiritualities, theologies, church and community lives which, while being more just, participatory and inclusive, will offer an authentic gospel message and provide a clearer vision of the unity that the WCC strives to make visible. The aim is to cluster efforts developed in two programmes – Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality (P2) and Diakonia, Justice and Responsibility for Creation (P4) – so as to ensure an integrated approach. The Global Theological Platform which is now placed in this project will focus in the coming years on the questions of inclusive communities and the ecclesial challenges posed by migration.

This programme will provide leadership for an increased emphasis on spirituality, so that the spiritual dimension of mission and unity is made visible. Through the projects and related advisory and staff groups, it will encourage the churches to explore new and contemporary forms of spirituality within their own tradition in their liturgical praxis and spiritual life as well as to develop links with ecumenically-based spiritual movements.

As a global fellowship of churches the WCC is able to bring together ecumenically engaged churches and other partners to embody, in its life and work, the diversity of the global Christian family theologically, regionally and culturally. The Faith and Order plenary commission and the commission on World Mission and Evangelism have a long experience of cooperation both with member and non-member churches and partners as well as with other networks related to the activities of the programme.



## Major achievements

*Major Achievement 1* – Member churches have affirmed together the nature and form of the unity they seek, made concrete steps forward and identified challenges on the way towards visible unity. New ways of living unity and ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been clarified and practiced by broadening participation and ensuring coherence through collaboration and defining clarity of roles.

*Major achievement 2* – Member churches, mission bodies and ecumenical partners have reached a common understanding on key ecumenical convictions on the theology and practice of mission and evangelism for today (100 years after Edinburgh 1910).

*Major achievement 4* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been enabled to develop new practices in building healing and reconciling communities on the basis of social justice and ecclesial inclusiveness.

It will also contribute to achievement 8.

## Projects 2010-2013

### Faith and Order: Called to be the One Church (P201)

Faith and Order serves the churches in their efforts to call one another to visible unity in one Church. This call remains – even after decades of ecumenical progress – because although the *Church* is one in Christ, the *churches* remain divided on fundamental theological and ethical issues, by the ordering and structuring of the churches' ministries and by memories of past conflict and division. Divisive forces such as racism, ethnicity and national identity continue to challenge the unity of the Church. The longing for unity as well as the negative impact of disunity are often manifest in matters of spirituality and worship. This project responds to commitments and mandates approved by the churches at the 9<sup>th</sup> assembly, as well as to needs identified by long-term ecumenical partners. Its methods include studies, processes to develop agreed positions and to clarify differences, and building relationships within the one body of Christ.

In 2010, Faith and Order study work will focus on the directions given at the 2009 meeting of the plenary commission on matters of ecclesiology and church unity, moral discernment in the churches, and identifying our common sources of authority. The responses from churches and others on the document *The Nature and Mission of the Church* and on the assembly text "Called to be the One Church" will be analysed and implemented. In the years to come, Faith and Order will also build on the results of two major consultations held in 2008: on the contribution to unity through bilateral dialogues; and by united and uniting churches. Additionally, there is the ongoing work on the reception of the most recent progress made on mutual recognition of baptism.

The project also initiates dialogues to deepen the understanding of our diverse expressions of spirituality as both church-dividing and church-uniting. Faith and Order, with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, will continue to develop and produce materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Finally, Faith and Order is involved in a process aiming at commemorating together outstanding witnesses to the faith from various confessional families.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- The Nature and Mission of the Church – Called to be the One Church
- On the way to visible unity: theological studies
- Agreeing on a common date for Easter
- Moral discernment in the churches
- Tradition and traditions: sources of authority
- One Baptism: towards mutual recognition
- Cloud of witnesses
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Faith and Order Commission

### **Mission and Evangelism (P203)**

2010 marks the centennial celebrations of the 1910 Edinburgh World Mission Conference. As the institutional inheritor of the International Missionary Council which grew out of Edinburgh, the WCC plays a leading role in the study process and in the preparations for the **Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today** celebration. The WCC supports the large participation in this process not only of its members but additionally of constituencies which had not been part of the 1910 conference, such as the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal churches. The challenge is for the WCC to find the optimal balance between openness and coherence in such a process.

The WCC's own study and contribution on mission builds on the results of the 2005 Athens conference, with its emphasis on reconciliation and healing, and on the Porto Alegre assembly's decision to link mission and unity. For the years to come and with a view to elaborating a new document on ecumenical perspectives on mission by the next assembly, work will focus on the following items:

The evangelism consultancy will facilitate the collection, theological evaluation and sharing of significant documents and experiences from churches and practitioners all over the world on the theology and practice of the proclamation of the gospel. Special efforts will be made to highlight ways of evangelism that are respectful of existing church traditions as well as of people of other faith convictions. Cooperation with the programmatic area on Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation (P6) is foreseen for the drafting of an interdenominational code of conduct on conversion.

The WCC's commission on World Mission and Evangelism has engaged in a cooperative study with Faith and Order on the interface of missiology and ecclesiology. Following the first fruits of this process that will be shared at the Edinburgh conference, the study will pursue how the link between church and mission can lead to understandings and practices of witness that encourage the search for visible unity. Both commissions intend to plan together for 2011, taking inspiration from the highlights on mission and on unity which were experienced at the 3<sup>rd</sup> assembly of the WCC in New Delhi (1961).

Based on the provisional results from consultations in 2008 and 2009, work on a spirituality of mission as transformation will connect values and attitudes based on the gospel with movements within and outside the church in their struggles for justice, in the context of economic globalization, financial disorder and the deterioration of creation. This is a cooperative study process with other WCC programmes and ecumenical partners.

Other activities in P203 will facilitate the key role of the healing of memories in processes towards reconciliation and peace in both church and society. Enhanced regional and international cooperation will form an effective network building on the assets of each person and local community, sharing with each other experiences in conflict resolution. The healing mission of the church also requires a continuing reflection on the link between faith and healing, as well as the empowering of local communities to give space to and to integrate people living with mental health challenges. This will be pursued in cooperation with the programmatic area on Justice and Diakonia (P4).

WCC's main contribution to academic mission studies includes the editorial leadership of and work on the *International Review of Mission*, with a special emphasis on its forthcoming 100<sup>th</sup> year of publication.

For its work on the above-mentioned themes, the WCC will count on the advice and cooperation of the commission on World Mission and Evangelism, as well as on small international think-tank groups.

A reserve has been developed for the 2010 Edinburgh conference and related activities.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Preparation of the Edinburgh 2010 celebrations and conference
- Study on mission, evangelism and unity
- Healing of memories and healing communities
- Commission on World Mission and Evangelism

### **Just and inclusive communities: theological contributions (P204)**

The rapidly changing ecclesial and social landscape in the contemporary globalized world calls on the churches to address the consequences of migration and to strengthen their engagement with concerns of excluded groups – Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, the racially discriminated against, people living with disabilities (Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network – EDAN) and migrants (Global Ecumenical Network on Migration – GEM). The search for just and inclusive communities assumes a new dimension in the present context. The WCC as a fellowship of churches is well-placed to facilitate dialogue and the study of and responses to the subsequent ecclesial, spiritual and ethical challenges. The changing landscape, a reality in both church and society, also calls for a revised approach to diakonia, to be in solidarity with and advocate on behalf of excluded persons and groups.

The purpose of bringing together these five areas into conversation with the ongoing discussions on Unity, Mission and Evangelism (P2) is to draw on the experiences, and theological resources of these groups with a view to enrich the traditional understandings of these key concerns of the ecumenical movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. By upholding these communities, the project attempts to challenge churches to effect and become more just and inclusive communities. A core group of representatives of the five networks will act as an advisory group to the WCC staff and help set priorities, recognizing the unique relationship that unites theology and praxis and the need to address them together. The theological issues arising from this work shall interact with and

impact upon the studies on ecclesiology and mission in this programmatic area, while they will contribute to the reflection on prophetic diakonia in Justice and Diakonia (P4).

The placement of the Global Platform for Theological Reflection and Analysis in this programme area will strengthen the contribution of the WCC to ecumenical discussions on major challenges that the ecumenical movement is called to address. Through dialogue, theological reflections, partnership and field visits to the five networks, staff will continue to accompany the individual networks, attentive to their local commitments, taking care to provide the platform for interaction among the five networks wherever possible.

**Main activities that contribute to the above**

- Global platform for theological reflection and analysis
- Theological reflections on justice and inclusiveness
- Churches overcoming racism
- Strengthening the network of migrants (GEM)
- Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples
- Solidarity with Dalits
- Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN)

## **Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace (P3)**

### **Background**

The world today presents complex power dynamics. Violence, social exclusion, political conflicts, competition for natural resources and wars are the order of the day. Each of these issues cannot be analysed or dealt with in isolation as they are inter-connected realities. There is a relationship between political, military, economic and social aspects that affects both the national and international contexts and has an impact on local communities. The WCC is uniquely placed to address these challenges, through its public voice and prophetic witness by *addressing power and affirming peace*, in response to urgent and emerging concerns of the churches in relationship to peace, security and justice. Such challenges and actions are an integral dimension of the WCC's mission as a global fellowship of churches. The WCC carries a long heritage of engagement at the international level and is able to address high-level decision makers. There is an emergency nature to the work of this programmatic area. The WCC retains its capacity to respond to world events and circumstances which often change without warning.

In response to the challenge of **addressing power**, in this phase of its work the WCC will strengthen its commitment to play a convening role, offering a coordinated ecumenical space for the contributions of the churches, regional ecumenical organizations and specialized ministries in the field of advocacy, cooperating with and coordinating their efforts by highlighting and providing in-depth analysis of the global implications of particular contexts and issues. This programmatic area will also provide a coordinating point for advocacy efforts in other programmes of the WCC and will interface with ecumenical partners such as the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) and ACT Development through a working group on global advocacy. This programmatic area also takes responsibility to prepare public statements for governing bodies of the WCC and advises, prepares and accompanies the general secretary on matters that call for the public witness of the churches.

The WCC will continue to play a coordinating role in **global advocacy at the United Nations through a UN Liaison Office** – monitoring political debates and processes at the General Assembly, the Security Council and other similar fora. The WCC will strengthen its efforts to bring the voice of the churches to the UN but also to other intergovernmental organizations such as the international financial institutions, the International Criminal Court and the UN Human Rights Council. Using its consultative presence at the UN (ECOSOC status), the WCC will make the ethical voice of the churches heard at these institutions of global governance, in cooperation with Christian world communions, regional ecumenical organizations and others, to ensure a coherent witness. The office will monitor UN reform and pay special attention to priority country situations such as the Middle East, Columbia, Philippines and the Greater Horn of Africa as these countries are placed on the agenda of the Security Council. The UNLO will also be attuned to respond to unforeseen emergency situations that might arrive at the UN's Security Council where there would be particular interest of the member churches. The WCC will also continue to give leadership for a coordinated ecumenical presence at the World Social Forum and other such secular platforms.

**Human rights to enhance human dignity:** Churches often call on the WCC to accompany them in critical situations to defend human dignity, overcome impunity, achieve accountability and build just and peaceful societies. The WCC's approach addresses civil and political rights, economic, cultural and social rights and the right to development, in an integrated way from an

ethical and theological perspective. The project offers the possibility for the sharing of lessons learned by churches, regional ecumenical organizations, Christian world communions and other ecumenical partners working in these areas so as to strengthen advocacy work to address human rights concerns and to bring the voice of the churches and victims of human rights abuses to the UN's Council on Human Rights in Geneva and other similar fora.

In **affirming peace** the WCC will continue to address violence in its many forms, from the individual level to family life to the international level. 2010 marks the final year of the Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace (DOV), 2001-2010. It is therefore a crucial year for garnering what the churches have contributed in their work on overcoming violence. Within the framework of the DOV, churches and ecumenical partners have over the past ten years responded to overcoming different forms of violence in their own contexts. Inter-religious cooperation has proved to be crucial, drawing inspiration from resources for peace that are embedded in all religious traditions. Involvement of children, youth and women as well as collaboration with civil society actors have been essential as the churches have assessed the spirit, logic and practice of violence and are now being prepared to make joint commitments to overcome violence. The last year of the DOV will focus on a process to develop an ecumenical declaration on just peace and the planning of an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC). The event will help to sharpen the commitment of the churches to issues of peace, healing and reconciliation as well as challenge the ways in which the WCC will continue this agenda in its programmatic area.

For the period leading up to the next assembly the WCC is committed to work for sustainable peace in the Middle East, as a specific case, recognizing that peace in this region is the basis for world peace. The WCC will provide a platform for churches and other ecumenical partners to come together to provide a coherent witness for peace with justice in this region. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) will be a closely related and important instrument for attaining peace in the region.

## **Major achievements**

*Major achievement 5* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have demonstrated through actions and advocacy, in particular at the UN, their ecumenical commitment to justice, peace and human rights. The International Ecumenical Peace Convocation and the Declaration on Just Peace has enabled member churches to agree on and commit themselves to the theology, spirituality and ethics of peace with justice.

*Major achievement 6* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been mobilized to work for peace in the Middle East. An international platform for engagement and action has been established for those working together for peace in the Middle East, including member churches and ecumenical partners in the region and globally. Such work has been done in close cooperation with leaders of other religious communities.

It will also contribute to other achievements related to healing and reconciling communities, diakonia, inter-religious dialogue and cooperation and poverty, wealth and ecology (Achievements 4, 7, and 8).

## **Projects 2010-2012**

### **Building Peace, Overcoming Violence (DOV) (P301)**

The “Ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace” was launched in 2001 and will end in 2010. The efforts to move the concern for just peace “from the periphery to the centre of the life and witness of the church”, has generated many new resources and has set in motion various creative actions and networks. The challenge of violence persists as the DOV ends, but so do the range of church responses that include raising the concern about violence against women, educating children for peace, controlling arms and reducing armaments, and pursuing reconciliation and peace-making as vocations essential to Christian life. Many of these efforts are features of the Decade’s final annual focus on Africa in 2010. The year 2010 will be dedicated to defining the DOV legacy that will shape future ecumenical work for peace. The International Day of Prayer for Peace (September 21) will become an annual ecumenical event to be observed around the world even beyond the decade. The consultative process leading to an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace will culminate in 2011 as the WCC convenes leaders and activists, peace practitioners and peace theologians for an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Jamaica. Plans for these ecumenical initiatives are well underway and enjoy significant resonance among churches within and beyond the WCC. The goal is for the DOV to give birth in 2011 to broader networks of Christian ministries for overcoming violence, promoting reconciliation and building peace. The Living Letters visits to churches engaged in overcoming violence will be continued.

The assembly called the churches to revitalize their commitment to the elimination of the world’s most destructive weapons and engage in inter-religious cooperation to that end. The WCC provides a common platform and policy for advocacy on the elimination of arms and nuclear weapons and brings ethical and theological perspectives to governments and to three UN fora in Geneva and New York: the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the UN Conference on Disarmament and the UN General Assembly’s First Committee. The efforts include statements, public letters, position papers and delegations that promote the peace policies of the WCC member churches.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- The International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)
- DOV networking and coordination
- Living Letters: response to emergency situations

### **Global advocacy and human rights: justice and accountability (P302)**

Apart from this projects’ responsibility to respond to emergency political situations and to advise the WCC on appropriate actions to be taken or statements to be issued by the general secretary and governing bodies, it has two inter-related but specific activities:

#### **Global advocacy for justice and accountability (P302-1)**

The WCC will strengthen the key role it has played in bringing churches, ecumenical organizations and movements together to speak out from an ethical and theological perspective, on critical challenges regarding country situations and regional developments or on thematic foci with global implications. In relationship to the UN in both Geneva and New York, the WCC will continue to offer a platform to convey the different concerns of the ecumenical movement as a follow-up of the UN reform process. The UN Advocacy Week in New York will be an annual

feature. Special emphasis will be placed, in coordination with other ecumenical partners and other project staff groups in the WCC, on economic justice, Indigenous Peoples' legitimate claims, the International Criminal Court, and regional concerns in relation to the annual DOV focus.

### **Human rights to enhance human dignity (P302-2)**

The WCC will continue its efforts to monitor human rights violations and advise the general secretary and governing bodies on appropriate actions and responses. It will accompany and support churches and the ecumenical movement in their efforts to promote and protect human rights and human dignity and contribute to the development of new ecumenical standards for advocacy. It will engage in capacity-building activities (seminars, workshops, meetings at national, regional and global levels). Additionally, the WCC will support churches, ecumenical organizations and victims of human rights violations to give testimony to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, to contribute to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and to other UN mechanisms (special rapporteurs, working groups of the office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, etc.). Churches' insights on reconciliation and victims' rights will be deepened and communicated to relevant actors, like the International Criminal Court. WCC will further develop and implement ecumenical advocacy on human rights issues through research, analysis and documentation, policy development, mobilization of the churches, solidarity campaigns and awareness-raising efforts. Challenges for the next three years will include the need to further develop the inter-religious dimension of responding to rights and dignity, focus the work on victims' rights, impunity, religious freedom and liberty and minority rights, as well as provide a space for the churches to discuss the relationship between justice, human rights and human dignity.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Advocacy week at the UN in New York
- Global advocacy: coordination, networking and research
- WCC UN liaison office, New York
- Advocacy for Indigenous Peoples at UN forums
- Regional conference on human rights in West Africa
- Churches and human rights at the UN Human Rights Council
- Justice, reconciliation and victims rights: International Criminal Court (ICC)

### **Churches and the Middle East: solidarity and witness for peace (P304)**

The Middle East is a region of unique importance to Christians around the world. The churches of the Middle East have their roots in apostolic history. Christianity spread from this region to the world, and its peoples today face unprecedented challenges to peace, security and human rights. The region is torn by wars, conflicts, religious extremism, intolerance and political tensions. Christians are leaving the region in significant numbers, thus weakening the presence and witness of the churches. The main problems facing the Middle East today include: Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories and other Arab lands and its intransigence, the occupation of Iraq and its security dilemma, Israel's nuclear weapons and related proliferation risks among rival states, Lebanon's internal unrest, and the lack of democracy and freedom in most of the countries in the region. All these are fuelled by the question of control of oil and energy resources in the region.



In view of the above, the security problems of the region are likely to become more complex and challenging and could inflame regional wars which threaten global peace. As a major flash point in the world, the situation of the Middle East calls for collective efforts by churches both inside and outside the region and ecumenical partners to work for peace and justice at local, national, regional and international levels. Ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land would not only end much fear, violence and suffering, it could also increase prospects for peace in the region and have positive repercussions on the world at large. The WCC is committed to building the capacity of churches to witness for peace, undertake advocacy work at the local and national levels, and coordinate their efforts in international advocacy for peace as well. The Jerusalem Inter-Church Centre (JIC) is a local instrument to strengthen collaboration among the heads of churches in Jerusalem, the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) and the WCC. The WCC Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum is an international platform for inter-church actions promoting peace with justice in the Middle East.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF)
- World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel (formerly ICAPPI)
- Jerusalem Inter-Church Centre (JIC)

### **Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) (P305)**

EAPPI is an ecumenical initiative working in an integrated way with international and local churches and partners. The programme seeks to support local and international efforts to end the Israeli occupation and bring a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. This is done through offering protective presence. For vulnerable Palestinian communities, expressing solidarity with the churches and other Palestinian and Israeli partners who work non-violently to end the occupation and through developing concerted advocacy actions worldwide calling for just peace in the region.

Ecumenical accompaniers (EAs) are placed in local communities and coordinated by a staff team based in Jerusalem and Geneva. Through the work of the EAs and the local partners, EAPPI develops international awareness around the aspirations of the churches and peace groups for a just and peaceful resolution to the conflict. Through their reports, EAs help expose the violence of the occupation and violations of human rights and humanitarian law. They also become advocates on their return home, highlighting the needs and desires of the communities they work with in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel for a just end to the occupation. These reports are available on the web and emailed through the national coordinators, and so provide information to the WCC's constituencies in order for them to influence public opinion and affect their governments' foreign policy on the Middle East.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Accompanying Palestinians and Israelis in their non-violent actions to end the occupation
- Carrying out concerted advocacy efforts in home countries
- Monitoring and reporting on violations of human rights at UN agencies, ICRC and other human rights organizations
- Offering protection through non-violent presence

## ***Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation (P4)***

### **Background**

Churches today are confronted with the effects of globalization more strongly than ever before. The socio-cultural, economic and political processes in the different communities and nations throughout the world are increasingly interrelated. For example, the financial crisis which started in 2008 in a particular sector in one continent has gradually affected the economies in many parts of the world and is hampering the struggle to overcome poverty in many countries and communities. In a similar way, throughout the world women, men and children are feeling the impact of climate change in their day-to-day life, and the lack of access to clean water. These unprecedented changes in the world were induced by those economies where the common goods have been irresponsibly used for the benefit of the richer, industrialized societies and some sectors of society.

Globalization, especially economic globalization, calls for a renewed reflection and the search for new approaches by the churches and ecumenical partners. Today the beaten tracks of development cooperation are inadequate to reverse the ongoing processes of wealth creation and increasing poverty in the developed and developing parts of the world. Similarly, the traditional diaconal approaches of charity and social service no longer offer solutions for new forms of exclusion, especially in situations where communities suffer marginalization and disintegration because of intense forms of rapid socio-cultural transition, political conflicts, and growing migration. Churches and ecumenical partners are challenged to formulate responses which translate the Christian faith and God's promise of fullness of life into practical ways of support of the most vulnerable.

From the Christian point of view, the socio-cultural, economic and political processes in any society cannot be considered as being autonomous. Neither can they be left to the forces of so-called "free markets". The present situation clearly shows the need to develop alternatives to the existing global economic and financial architecture. Basic values such as justice, care and responsibility have to give direction to this. These values are based on the Christian understanding of community life, human dignity, the integrity of creation and respect for God.

These values provide the shape for the WCC's work in the programmatic area on *Justice, diakonia and responsibility for creation*. Work in this area builds further on the long-standing involvement of the council in the struggles for justice, participation and sustainability and in its work with churches in their diaconal ministries. By bringing together work on justice and diakonia, the WCC will deepen the conceptual and theological understanding of the interconnection between transformative justice and prophetic diakonia. Transformative justice underlines deep processes of change towards building just and sustainable communities. It holds together the different dimensions of justice such as the struggle against economic injustice, the right to full participation, and the urgent need for sustainability and eco-justice. It is a process whereby current patterns of exclusion, oppression and exploitation are transformed into relationships, structures and behaviour based on trust, solidarity and mutual responsibility. Prophetic diakonia, starting with care for the vulnerable, relates to the need for structural change to eliminate the root causes of poverty, illiteracy and lack of health care. The fundamental interconnectedness of transformative justice and prophetic diakonia forms the basic approach of all the projects in this programmatic area.

This integrated approach responds to the churches' own commitments to develop a more holistic and effective response to today's challenges. Churches have to deal with situations in which people struggle to survive, whether they are migrants; Indigenous Peoples facing exclusion, discrimination and racism; women, men and children in a day-to-day search for food and shelter; or communities torn apart by violence, natural disasters and ongoing pandemics like HIV and AIDS.

Aware of its limitations, the WCC can focus on only a few areas of work, applying effective and efficient methodologies to achieve this work. Instead of developing its own activities in the regions, the WCC will work with and support the churches and ecumenical partners in defining their responses to the challenges of today. Experiences from the past have been evaluated and there is an emerging understanding that financial support, which was the basis of traditional forms of diakonia, is inadequate: it does not sufficiently engage churches and communities in the struggle against the root causes of poverty and injustice. The WCC therefore accompanies churches and ecumenical partners to strengthen their capacity in taking ownership in developing alternative ways of addressing the challenges they face today. The project on regional relations and transformative justice is aimed at developing this participatory approach.

This methodology of convening and accompaniment will be applied in a few limited areas as the WCC will increasingly focus on a few priority areas of concern. These issues will be determined by what churches see as most crucial in their struggle for transformative justice and prophetic diakonia. They are related to the basic needs of every human person: an inclusive community, a just and sustainable livelihood and basic health care.

The first project in the programmatic area of Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation aims at strengthening the relations with the regions through the common management of the Ecumenical Solidarity Fund (ESF) and the former Scholarships project. This will ensure that the limited scholarship possibilities of the WCC be redirected to the strategic needs in capacity building in the churches for more efficient engagement in diakonia. The second project, Diakonia for transformative justice and regional relations, will work in close cooperation with the programmatic area WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century (P1) in building a centre of competence in ecumenical relations. It aims at supporting the churches in developing their capacity and engagement in transformative justice and prophetic diakonia. The third project supports churches and ecumenical partners in working towards justice and sustainability, addressing issues of wealth, poverty and ecology, taking into account the causes and effects of climate change and of the lack of access to clean water through the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN). The last two projects help churches to address the need for health care, with a special focus on primary health care and the struggle against HIV and AIDS in Africa (EHAIA).

## **Major achievements**

*Major achievement 8* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been engaged in joint reflections and actions on wealth, poverty and ecology. They have been enabled to understand more deeply the inter-relatedness of wealth, poverty and ecology, and have cooperated with other faith communities in developing a common framework for action on poverty eradication and climate change through a renewed understanding of and commitment to diakonia.

*Major Achievement 1* – Member churches have affirmed together the nature and form of the unity they seek, made concrete steps forward and identified challenges on the way towards visible unity. New ways of living unity and ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been clarified and

practiced by broadening participation and ensuring coherence through collaboration and defining clarity of roles.

*Major achievement 4* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been enabled to develop new practices in building healing and reconciling communities on the basis of social justice and ecclesial inclusiveness.

It will also contribute to other achievements related to ecumenical formation, global advocacy and inter-religious dialogue and cooperation. (Achievements 3, 6 and 7)

## **Projects 2010-2012**

### **Ecumenical Solidarity Fund (ESF) / Scholarships (P401)**

This project aims at helping churches and related organizations around the world to equip individuals and groups to fulfil their mission and response to the current challenges.

The ecumenical solidarity fund supports strategic initiatives which help develop the capacity of churches, ecumenical or church-related organizations and initiatives which strengthen their impact in civil society through training in areas such as study and analysis, communication and working with the media, campaigning, advocacy, community development, environmental protection, HIV and AIDS education and human rights education. Its global outreach gives it the ability to respond to the ecumenical and regional diversity of its member churches and church-related organizations.

The ecumenical solidarity fund has been strengthened in 2009 by bringing it together with the WCC Scholarships project. Through individual scholarships and group grants, the fund contributes to leadership development within the ecumenical movement. It promotes the exchange of innovative ideas and good practices and supports formation and training opportunities.

Candidates recommended from different parts of the world are selected and given financial support for approved courses or training opportunities aimed at strengthening the diaconal capacity of churches.

As a council-wide initiative based in the Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation programme, the fund is managed and monitored by an inter-programme staff group, in close relation with the donating specialized ministries, to ensure a coordinated and transparent approach to the support of ecumenical initiatives.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Support for strategic initiatives in capacity building and advocacy
- Individual scholarships

### **Diakonia for transformative justice and regional relations (P402)**

In 2009, in cooperation with member churches and specialized ministries, the WCC initiated a new process of enhancing the diaconal work of churches. This process aims at strengthening the

capacity of churches to develop local expressions of diakonia, involving local churches and building on their ability to engage in struggle against poverty, deprivation and injustice. On the basis of the results of this process and the mapping of good practices, networking among the churches and identifying the needs for further diaconal training will be developed.

Apart from this new initiative, the WCC accompanies churches in their cooperation with specialized ministries and NGOs which are engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy, for instance through participation in round tables and national fora of ACT Development. As the ACT Alliance is formed, the WCC will continue its close cooperation with it.

The programmatic areas on the WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P1) and Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation (P4) both focus on strengthening relations with member churches, regional groups and ecumenical partners in the regions. This shared responsibility leads to the formation of an integrated activity on regional relations with a coordinated planning and budgeting process while maintaining each context's specific foci.

In this project the focus of the work will be on responding to the diaconal needs of the churches in the regions. The aim is to improve the capacity for analyzing the situation in the regions and for strengthening and deepening the fellowship and fostering the coherence of the ecumenical movement, while maintaining the emphasis on specific approaches to the regions in response to the different contextual realities.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Developing networks of diaconal support
- Developing new forms of diaconal training
- Facilitating or participating in national or regional development structures such as the round tables or ACT fora
- Strengthening relations with member churches
- Strengthening relations with regional and national ecumenical councils and conferences
- Facilitation of regional partnership groups

### **Social and ecological justice in the context of globalization (P405)**

The earth's distress is closely tied to human misery. Ecological justice asserts that commitments and struggles for ecological sustainability and socio-economic justice are in fact inseparable, rather than being competing or mutually exclusive agendas. It holds that promoting socio-economic justice among and within nations, communities and people entails caring for the environment. The major ecumenical challenge in this context is therefore to integrate the issues of poverty, wealth and ecology as a concrete way of analyzing, reflecting and acting against economic injustice and unsustainability while encouraging churches to advocate for alternatives and to share good practices based on the vision of "just, participatory and sustainable communities".

The WCC has the potential to develop a new paradigm that draws together the synergies between the different positions. This project will therefore bring together churches and ecumenical partners from the north, south, east and west to analyze, reflect and act together on discovering new and creative ways on how global, regional and local wealth can be used to eradicate poverty. Millennium Development Goal No. 8, which challenges countries to increase resources for

meeting the other goals, will be addressed, while the WCC will monitor the real progress in eradicating poverty. The Overcoming Poverty in Africa (OPA) initiative will be enhanced together with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). The relationship between poverty, wealth and ecology in the context of the “Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth” (AGAPE) call to action will be followed up by joining hands with ecumenical partners and churches in responding to just trade, ecological debt, decent work, and other similar concerns. It is also proposed to produce a “consumption and greed line” alongside the “poverty line” as a guideline for Christians.

This project includes the WCC’s work on climate change and the Ecumenical Water Network. Climate change affects people all around the world. Violent storms, droughts, floods and the rising sea level have devastating consequences, especially on poor and vulnerable communities. The WCC’s policy and work stresses the theological and ethical dimensions of the climate change crisis, building on the theology of creation and climate change as a justice issue. Activities include strengthening churches’ work on climate change-related issues and coordinating ecumenical advocacy on climate change, especially at the UN level. In 2010 special attention will be given to the preparation of the “Peace with the Earth” component of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation and to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Ecumenical Convocation.

**The Ecumenical Water Network (EWN)**, having profited from the experience of partners working on climate change, will continue to involve specialized ministries, regional ecumenical organizations and churches in work focusing on the right to water and community-based initiatives. The EWN will support and build upon the diakonia of its participants by promoting the sharing of resources, knowledge and experiences. Common advocacy, for example at the United Nations’ Human Rights Council and other relevant international fora, will be facilitated. At the same time, regional encounters will encourage and capacitate churches to voice concerns related to water, justice and sustainability in their own regional and national contexts. The specific contribution of the ecumenical movement to this network is in defining the ethical and theological imperative for the churches’ engagement on climate change and water as, for the churches, these issues are matters of faith.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

**Poverty, wealth and ecology (P405-1):**

- Church encounters on wealth and poverty: impact of economic globalization
- Participation in the World Social Forum
- Ecological debt case study
- Accompanying churches on economic justice
- WCC/WB/IMF encounter case studies

**Climate change (P405-2):**

- Accompanying churches on climate change actions
- Ecumenical advocacy at the international arena

**Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) (P405-3):**

- EWN annual conference and workshops

- Ecumenical participation in relevant international fora
- Advocacy for the human right to water and sanitation

### **Health and healing (P406)**

The project will accompany churches and communities to respond to public health challenges, so as to contribute to the transformation of society by being healing communities in our world today. The work aims to empower individuals, churches and communities through critical reflection, advocacy and sharing of resources and experiences to take responsibility towards greater partnership in Christian healing mission. The focus will be on strengthening linkages between the healing ministries of the churches and partners and civil society to enhance effectiveness and promote advocacy on key issues of relevance to communities. The work will be participatory and knowledge-based to generate a dynamic orientation and to energize the ecumenical platforms and mechanisms of cooperation in the churches' healing ministry. The work will also promote dialogue and discussion on the key issues on which the ecumenical movement needs to focus given the changing global health situation. The project will focus on critical areas such as HIV, primary health care and the alignment of the health assets of churches and related institutions to promote health for all.

The project includes the theological and ethical reflection on stem cell research that was started in 2008, as this reflection is strongly related to health and healing. Major work has already been done to offer material to accompany the churches in their reflection on these issues. Instruments have been developed to involve young people in the ethical reflection on biotechnology. In 2010 the work in this area will be concluded with the publication of the findings.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Advocacy at the World Health Organization
- *Contact* magazine
- Work with Christian health associations
- Promoting the concept of "HIV-competent church"
- Publication of theological and ethical reflections on stem cell research

### **Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) (P407)**

Through training of trainers (ToTs) workshops, seminars and conferences for senior church leaders, exchange programmes and publications, EHAIA will contribute to the strengthening of the ability of churches in Africa to respond to the HIV pandemic and other related social injustices in their communities. EHAIA works with the churches, theological institutions, councils of churches, alliances and fora of Christian and interfaith networks and associations of people living with HIV. EHAIA specifically focuses on promoting care and providing counselling for those affected, working for the elimination of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV, and strengthening the theological and ethical reflection on the religious and faith dimensions in the pandemic. Churches, theological institutions and communities will be empowered to interpret and practice their faith through worship, contextual biblical and theological reflection, education and action in the context of the pandemic. Ecumenical and global networking and advocacy to enhance peer support, sharing of experiences and resources within and across the regions and mobilizing international ecumenical solidarity to overcome HIV and AIDS are integral to the initiative.

The initiative specifically functions under five broad-based objectives:

- The teaching and practice of churches clearly indicate that stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV is a sin and against the will of God.
- Churches, their leaders and their members, and other ecumenical partners have a full understanding of the severity and challenges of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Africa, with special attention to human sexuality, gender, culture, sexual violence and violence against women and children.
- Churches in Africa reach out and respond to collaborative efforts, reinforcing those that already exist, in the field of HIV and AIDS.
- Churches in Africa strengthen their capacity to promote and implement evidence-based prevention of HIV taking into consideration pastoral, cultural and gender issues.
- Churches in Africa mobilize and utilize their resources and structures efficiently and effectively, collaborating with other service providers where appropriate, to provide holistic care and support for people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Support of churches and ecumenical organizations through accompaniment, workshops, training done by regional coordinators in Africa
- Enhancement theological reflection and training of pastors and theologians by the regional theological consultants in Africa



## ***Education and Ecumenical Formation (P5)***

### **Background**

Ecumenical formation is vital for the continual renewal and growth of the ecumenical movement. However, many leaders in the churches and in ecumenical networks and organizations lack opportunities to gain ecumenical formation and experience. The vision of ecumenism which drove the development of the ecumenical movement needs to be renewed. In underlining this, the 9<sup>th</sup> assembly called for ecumenical formation to be a programme priority and an aspect of all that the WCC does.

After the 9th assembly, the WCC's work on ecumenical formation has been integrated as one programmatic area and is situated at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey. This has ensured coherence between the two strong, yet differently focused, traditions of supporting and offering education and ecumenical formation in the WCC. Coherent, clearly focused, interrelated and integrated projects that serve the programmatic area on Education and Ecumenical Formation have been elaborated.

Apart from the academic work, the Ecumenical Institute provides expertise and participates actively as appropriate in other projects and activities of this programmatic area. It continues the work of research and reflection on sensitive topics of the ecumenical movement today, thus keeping alive the vocation of the institute as a laboratory and avant-garde of the ecumenical movement.

Its uniqueness in ecumenical formation has been for decades the shared life in community and worship. This will continue and will be further strengthened. The recently added component of "ecumenical spirituality" practised by a small community of religious sisters from the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions is meant to keep alive the chapel as the centre of ecumenical formation in Bossey and to give vitality and new ecumenical enthusiasm to resident students and to visiting groups. The development of the old barn in Bossey, into a functional centre will provide additional conference facilities and accommodation.

The ecumenical theological education (ETE) project has also been further consolidated and integrated. The project will focus on strengthening networks and accompanying theological education associations which are the main actors and coordinators of theological education in the regions. The hope is that the global network of theological associations – World Organization of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) – will continue to be the instrument for global reflection, mutual enrichment and coordination of Ecumenical Theological Education worldwide, and will strengthen its cooperation with ETE.

The lay formation project has been further developed with the offering of short intensive courses, both of a more informal nature as well as formal continuing education programmes with accreditation from the University of Geneva. Short courses on different cutting-edge issues and contemporary topics that confront churches and societies today will be organized (examples are the school on interfaith living, water, ecology, and eradicating poverty). Such programmes will take place both in Bossey and Geneva, as well as in the regions as ecumenical formation by extension.

Education and ecumenical formation are inclusive as they are meant for all God's people. Particular attention will be given to the integration and participation of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, people with disabilities and other excluded groups. Education and ecumenical formation are holistic, multifaceted and interdisciplinary. For this reason, this programmatic area will be intentionally related to all of the WCC and its staff will be linked with other programmatic areas. Similarly, other WCC staff will participate actively in the project on ecumenical lay formation.

## **Major achievement**

*Major achievement 3* – Member churches and ecumenical partners have been facilitated in the formation of a new generation of ecumenists and their participation has been enhanced in the ecumenical movement. New and creative models of ecumenical formation and participation have been developed. The Ecumenical Institute in Bossey has maintained its laboratory character in dealing with challenging ecumenical themes.

It will also contribute to other achievements related to unity and mission, diakonia, public witness, healing and reconciliation and inter-religious dialogue and cooperation. (Achievements 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8)

## **Projects 2010-2012**

### **The Ecumenical Institute, Bossey (P501)**

Through its worship, community life and formal study, Bossey provides a unique experience of ecumenical formation. It offers certificated academic formation in ecumenical studies for participants from WCC member and other churches; courses provided relate to the University of Geneva to which Bossey is affiliated. Through its range of activities, Bossey creates opportunities for engagement by church groups, issue-based networks, church leaders and theologians. The barn development project will augment the facilities in Bossey. As a laboratory for the ecumenical movement, Bossey will continue to create spaces for the exploration of challenging issues in the ecumenical movement.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Academic courses (Graduate School; Master of Theology in Ecumenical Studies; Master of Advanced Ecumenical Studies; PhD in Ecumenical Studies)
- Ecumenical spirituality

### **Ecumenical lay formation (P502)**

This project embodies three strategic approaches in encouraging and supporting ecumenical and faith formation in the ecumenical movement: a network of practitioners, intensive short-term continuing education programmes, and opportunities for exchange. Existing networks and partnerships will be used to build a dedicated network of practitioners of ecumenical formation from churches, institutions and individuals. This will be a network of commitment to good practice and action-research, with the sharing and joint development of concepts, methodologies, curricula and resources. Intensive short courses for certificated continuing education will be

organized in and for the constituency to form key personnel of churches, specialized ministries and related organizations. Good practices in ecumenical formation will be disseminated. The Bossey Ecumenical Institute is recognized as a space for interfaith living together and learning – this dimension of its work will be strengthened in the next few years.

Main activities that contribute to the above:

- Lay formation and leadership training encounters
- Building lay networks and strengthening sharing
- Building an interfaith community

### **Ecumenical theological education (P503)**

Future church leaders and pastors need to be formed in such a way that they are able to engage ecumenically and theologically with the issues that confront their society. However, theological institutions often lack an ecumenical orientation and the necessary capacity and skills to offer ecumenical formation. This project will work to engage and strengthen the ecumenical focus of theological educators and institutions. Ecumenical relations with institutes of higher learning and theological schools around the world will continue to be strengthened.

The legacy of ETE will be continued and will remain a priority for the WCC, but its shape and emphasis will be adapted to the new situations and present day realities. The process of consultation with the regions, theological associations and major donors on a more viable future structure of ETE is well under way. By September 2009, the WCC's central committee will make a final decision on such a future structure. Activities will be proposed and elaborated for the years to come soon thereafter.

Within a general overview and subject to the central committee's recommendations in September, some of the activities will be as follows:

- Accompanying the programmatic work of the World Organization of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI)
- Strengthening regional networks and associations of ecumenical theological education
- Regional ecumenical formation for theological educators

## ***Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation (P6)***

### **Background**

The 9<sup>th</sup> assembly of the WCC at Porto Alegre (2006) signalled an important shift in WCC's engagement with other religions. To the programme of Inter-religious Dialogue, the assembly added the component of "Cooperation". This change was an indicator of the ecumenical community's responsiveness to the changing realities on the role of religion in society and its attention to the emerging trends in the inter-religious dialogue movement. As a way to programmatically implement this change, the assembly urged the WCC to focus attention on accompanying churches in situations of conflict.

Living with this new reality since the assembly has provided new methodological insights. Among them is the fact that accompaniment engages churches and other religious communities in their local and national contexts. For much of its history, the WCC's programme on inter-religious dialogue has engaged in centralized conversations. While such consultations are important and necessary and will continue, the focus now shifts to local and national contexts.

In many countries, people of different religious traditions have lived side-by-side in peace and harmony for centuries. In this new era of migration large numbers of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and people of other religions move to areas traditionally dominated by Christians and vice versa. With such demographical changes new challenges arise as they form new communities and learn again to live with the religious "other".

The programme is based on the WCC's commitment to building and strengthening trusting relationships among religious communities, to create the space for Christian conversations on Christian self-understanding amid other religions, and to accompanying churches in situations of conflict. Towards this end, the WCC will provide space for specialized activities for Christian relationships with Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists as well as Indigenous religious traditions.

Intra-Christian conversations about how Christians should relate to people of other faiths have occupied the ecumenical movement at least since the 1910 World Missionary Conference meeting in Edinburgh. Since 1970, the WCC has been engaging in direct dialogue with people of other religions. The continuing intra-Christian conversations were enriched by the concurrent dialogues with Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Buddhists. Similarly, inter-religious dialogues were strengthened because Christians came into the dialogue with the added benefit of the intra-Christian conversation. This question of Christian self-understanding amid other religions, which occupied ecumenical conversations for almost a century, needs to be renewed for each generation and in each context.

For example, an open letter from 138 Muslim scholars entitled "A Common Word between Us and You," issued in October 2007, enhanced the WCC's continuing work on Christian-Muslim dialogue in two respects. First, a commentary on the letter addressed to the churches entitled "Learning to Explore Love Together" offered perspectives and suggestions to the churches as they engage their Muslim neighbours in dialogue. Second, an intra-Christian consultation was held in October 2008 with representatives of the Christian World Communions on the question of Christian self-understanding in relation to Islam.

The WCC will continue to sponsor such centrally organized dialogues, convening church leaders and theologians as well as other religious leaders and scholars.

The work of accompanying churches in situations of conflict takes the work on dialogue to the local context. While centralized dialogues are important, accompanying churches in their own local contexts creates opportunities for the churches to grapple with questions of Christian self-understanding in relation to other religions that are specific to their experience and to this particular time. It also means creating opportunities for building and strengthening dialogical relationships with partners of other religious communities, where together they would engage in critically analyzing their current situations of conflict and seek ways to engage in cooperative action.

The mandate to accompany the churches given to the programme of inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation requires it to engage with churches caught in the midst of conflicts where religions play a role. The WCC will engage in a few selected countries and will seek to enable the churches to cooperate with partners from other religions, so that they might together work towards resolving conflicts, create opportunities to facilitate reconciliation, and build and strengthen structures that provide peace with justice.

In order to support and encourage this joint work of religious communities, the WCC will work to increase the capacities of the churches to work with national councils of churches, other ecumenical agencies, and grass-roots inter-religious dialogue practitioners, activists and community organizers. The WCC will act as a catalyst to mobilize such a grass-roots network for effective inter-religious cooperation.

## **Major achievements**

*Major achievement 7* – Member churches have gained a clearer self-understanding amid many religions, and have been engaged in dialogue and cooperation with people of other faiths. Bilateral and multilateral relationships and dialogues have been further developed. Member churches have been accompanied in situations of conflicts that are related to religion.

It also contributes to the achievements on unity and mission, healing and reconciliation, and on public witness. (Achievements 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6)

### **This programmatic area includes the following activities:**

#### **1. Intra-Christian dialogues**

Continuing in its long tradition of engaging the churches in intra-Christian dialogues on the question of Christian self-understanding amid other religions, the WCC will engage the churches in the following centralized activities.

##### **a) Christian self-understanding amid other religions:**

It is hoped that a comprehensive document on Christian self-understanding amid other religions can be created that would be relevant to this time as a resource to the churches. In consultation with CWME and Faith and Order a small group of church leaders and theologians, acting as a reference group, will both help create the document and accompany the process giving it guidance and direction.

In 2010 the programme will do the following activities:

- i. hold a meeting of the reference group
- ii. hold an intra-Christian consultation on Christian self-understanding in relation to Judaism
- iii. follow up on the process initiated at the 2008 consultation with representatives of the Christian world communions on Christian self-understanding in relation to Islam.

In future the programme will hold intra-Christian consultations in relation to Hinduism and Buddhism.

#### **b) A code of conduct on conversion**

Since 2006, the WCC, together with the Vatican (Pontifical Council of Inter-religious Dialogue) and the World Evangelical Alliance prepared a draft Code of Conduct on Conversion. In 2010, the document will be sent to the member churches to get their feedback. It will be submitted for approval to the WCC governing bodies in 2011.

## **2. Inter-religious dialogues**

Continuing in the long tradition of inter-religious dialogue, the WCC will engage other religious communities in centralized conversation on matters of mutual interest, seeking to strengthen trust and understanding between religious communities. In 2009, the WCC brought together Muslim scholars for an international dialogue consultation.

In 2010:

- a) In the area of Christian-Muslim dialogue, the programme will undertake the following activities:
  - i. continue to build bridges and strengthen relationships with Muslim communities, regional Christian-Muslim groups and religious organizations.
  - ii. follow up on the process of dialogue and networking between Christian and Muslim women. Publish a resource book produced by the group about the role of women in peacemaking and inter-religious dialogue, and make use of the Christian-Muslim women website for sharing resources and for engaging in dialogue with wider women networks.
  
- b) In the area of Christian-Jewish dialogue, the programme will engage in dialogue with Jewish communities, re-establishing and strengthening relationships of trust.

## **3. Accompanying churches in situations of conflict**

In the area of accompanying churches in situations of conflict, the emphasis has shifted to the local context. The intra-Christian work of Christian self-understanding, the inter-religious work of building and strengthening trusting relationships with other religious communities will take place.

The focus in the past two years has been on churches of three countries that had sought accompaniment from the WCC: Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iraq. As follow-up and in consultation with the churches in these countries, one or two activities with clear and manageable goals and time-lines will be agreed on. In 2010-2013 the WCC will seek to involve churches from other

parts of the world to help implement these plans. Based on the outcome of this process, the activity might be expanded to other countries.

#### **a) Engaging local churches**

In the framework of the process described above, the following activities are proposed for 2010:

- i. Intra-Christian dialogues and inter-religious dialogues on cooperative action will be held in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iraq, engaging the issues that are relevant to each context.
- ii. Engage churches in other parts of the world in projects agreed upon together with the local churches.

#### **b) Cultivating global inter-religious relationships**

##### **i. Engaging inter-religious platforms**

The WCC will facilitate meaningful participation of the churches in global inter-religious platforms such as Religions for Peace and the Parliament of the World's Religions. In addition, when other religious communities or countries call for bilateral or multilateral inter-religious dialogues the churches presence will be ensured. The WCC has taken a leading role in facilitating an inter-religious coalition that advocates for a UN Decade on Inter-religious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation for Peace. In 2010, the WCC will continue to participate in this and similar initiatives.

##### **ii. Catalyzing a grass-roots network for inter-religious solidarity**

Since gatherings of religious leaders do not seem to be sufficient to create structures for conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace with justice, the WCC rather encourages conversations with grass-roots inter-religious dialogue practitioners, activists and community organizers, creating a network of inter-religious solidarity.

The growing trend in identity confusion, evidenced for example, by Christians of Asia and the Middle East being perceived to be related to the west, and the growing trend of global interconnectedness evidenced for example by the increasing Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist populations in Europe and the United States, require the engagement of the churches across national and cultural boundaries, not only for inter-religious relations and dialogue, but so as to explore new forms of solidarity. In 2010, this work will require one event that gathers inter-religious dialogue practitioners and activists in South Asia to be expanded later to other regions.

#### **4. Current Dialogue**

Working together with the Communication department of the WCC, the programme will produce communication tools that help churches and the general public to be informed about and engage in the work of inter-religious dialogue and cooperation. In 2010, a Current Dialogue blog will offer short analytical pieces on current issues on inter-religious relations. The Current Dialogue journal, an annual web-based journal, will present print-ready material that can either be read online or printed locally as needed.

## **C1 – Communication**

### **Background**

The goal of the WCC Communication department is to promote the work of the WCC with the aim of raising its profile while enhancing and building the ecumenical movement and witness of the churches in the world. Through the promotion of the WCC core values, programmatic areas, projects and activities, the department works to educate, inform and gain the support of a broad international audience, including the WCC membership and its committees, boards and commissions and the church and public at large.

Much of the work of the WCC requires some level of communication work, whether it is a basic introductory brochure, a consultation, conference, assembly, advocacy initiative, or speaking in the public and church media. This communication must be clear, concise and effective if it is going to contribute to the overall profile and image of the WCC.

In February 2008, the WCC central committee approved a 5-year communication strategy which lays a foundation for developing a long-term approach toward strengthening the role of communication within the overall vision and purpose of the WCC. This strategy was developed in response to a September 2006 central committee call for the strengthening of the role of communication within the WCC.

The fundamentals of this strategy are focused in the following areas:

- Strengthen the overall profile, brand and image of the WCC
- Find agreement on a focused message to reinforce the WCC profile and image
- Link communication work more closely with fundraising
- Build internal and external communication skills among staff
- Provide WCC programmatic areas with strategic communication planning
- Develop advocacy communications to strengthen the witness of WCC
- Improve communication impact and reach with WCC member churches
- Restructure the communication department to meet needs of this strategy

### **Objectives**

- Ca.* The WCC has set in place leadership and staff that develop strategy for and implement a coordinated and effective communication strategy.
- Cb.* Communication is an integral element of each programmatic area and is carried out interactively with key constituencies.
- Cc.* The WCC has a clear public profile and has raised the voice of the churches on important public issues that require the ethical and moral response of the churches.
- Cd.* Communication contributes to major achievements of the WCC.
- Ce.* The WCC has, in cooperation with sister organizations in the ecumenical centre, set up effective and up-to-date technical capacity to support efficient communication.

### **Major achievements**

Through its service to all programmatic work area the Communication department work relates to all of the major achievements. More specifically the department contributes to the following achievements:



*Major Achievements 1 - 3* – Communication contributes to the effort of “Living out Christian unity more fully” through a variety of efforts, such as construction and maintenance of the WCC member church pages on the website; reporting and promoting the work of programmes focusing on these achievements through media, publications and online features; and with the general promotion of the WCC through the themes of Unity, Witness and Service.

*Major achievements 4 - 7* – Communication continues to promote the work of the various programmes focused on “Being neighbours to all” through a variety of media venues. More specifically, the team has become involved in the planning of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC), provided communicators for most of the Living Letters’ visits, assisted in the development of an expert consultation on media violence and the sponsoring of a media tour to the Middle East. As these materials are distributed to member churches, the expectation is that through education and sharing the churches become more aware and involved.

*Major achievement 8* – Communication continues to promote the issues of water, climate change and other concerns related to “Taking greater care of creation” through the dissemination of media resources. Specifically, the department has assisted in the production of videos for the Ecumenical Water Network, ongoing work on a Climate Change booklet, organizing with other programme media events around the Copenhagen Climate Change summit, etc.

## **Projects and activities 2010-2012**

### **Communicating the WCC (C101)**

#### **Director’s Office (C101-1)**

The director of Communication is a primary link between WCC leadership and programmatic areas for the Communication department. The department provides leadership, vision, continuity and inspiration to the entire communication process within the WCC. Some of the specific activities involving the director are the management and implementation of the WCC visual identity, monitoring the various projects throughout the department such as the web homepage redesign, transition of the WCC journals to co-publishers, and setting the working with staff to assure communication coverage of upcoming major events as WCC central committee meetings, Edinburgh 2010 celebrations and the IEPC. The WCC continues in its participation in the Ecumenical News International (ENI) both financially and through its director of Communication who serves in the ENI staff advisory group and is an ex-officio member in the ENI assembly and executive committee.

#### **Language Services (C101-2)**

Language service ensures consistency and quality in translation of WCC material into various languages as required. The service maintains networks of freelance translators, editors, and interpreters familiar with church, theological and ecumenical language. It maintains lists of ecumenical terminology and reflects on language and documentation policy and strategy. The terminology project will continue to be a priority until its completion.

#### **Press Office (C101-3)**

The Press Office positions the WCC in the public eye through consistent and reliable news and information pieces. It creates various media products, manages media opportunities for staff and programme and builds relationships with media. The office works to make certain the WCC’s

name and interest are reflected in the media. It works closely with outside media providing accurate and reliable information.

#### **Publications (C101-4)**

WCC Publications provides a productive and well-functioning publishing environment for the WCC and by extension the ecumenical movement. It publishes books, journals and programme material which contribute to the global ecumenical context and profile of the WCC. The work is done with each of the programmatic areas and a publications review board to establish strategic thinking around WCC publishing activity.

#### **Visitors to the ecumenical centre (C101-5)**

During any given year upwards of 2000 guests visit the ecumenical centre. For many their introduction to the WCC and the ecumenical centre is through this activity. It shares the story of the WCC, the ecumenical movement and the ecumenical centre through presentations, lectures, tours and printed material. It is often a first source of information for many people interested in the ecumenical movement. Without this the ecumenical centre becomes nothing more than just another Geneva office building.

#### **Visual Arts and Design (C101-6)**

The visual arts and design section presents the visual story of the WCC through the gathering and dissemination of WCC photos and video. With the director's office it maintains the consistent use of the WCC visual identity and the ongoing gathering of photographic images which tell the story of the WCC and ecumenism. This valuable visual source of information provides valuable documentation of the church today and the ability to share the images broadly.

#### **Web Office (C101-7)**

The web office is responsible for the WCC's public image on the internet and related electronic media. This responsibility covers both editorial work (text, pictures, multimedia) and web technology. The web has become a frontline source of information for the increasingly web savvy world on the WCC.

#### **Library and Archives (C102)**

The Library and Archives provide a vital service to the WCC as the "keeper of the organizational memory" through the management of the WCC archives and as an educational and research resource through its library functions. The library and archives offer the ecumenical community a unique source for ecumenical history and thought. They have the capacity to provide important research materials related to ecumenical formation for theological schools.

## **Finance Services and Administration (FSA)**

### **Background**

Responsible stewardship of human, financial and physical resources is a priority of the council requiring effective management at all levels.

The key task of the FSA teams is to provide the practical means and support for programme staff to implement and report on the activities within their mandate. The support service teams are staffed by persons with professional skills and experience in the management of a particular type of resource, the administration of which is essential for the activities of the WCC.

The FSA teams provide services to the council, certain sister organizations and other third parties in the ecumenical centre. FSA is organized into four teams. The four teams and their principal responsibilities are as follows:

**Human resources** focuses attention on staff development, staff welfare, staff rules and regulations and personnel policies, and supports the leadership group in staff planning.

**Financial management services** deliver accounting, treasury, financial controls and reporting as well as planning and budgeting functions. Focus is placed on meeting the financial service needs of the programmes, and on training and sharing experience with programme and other management staff to foster the understanding of controls and policies.

**Computer and Information Services (CIS)** manages and develops information technology for the mission of the council, working interactively with all teams.

**House services** manages the ecumenical centre facility including rental of office space to sister organizations and other tenants. The team plans and oversees capital expenditure projects for the maintenance and development of WCC's buildings and equipment.

### **Goals and criteria for achievement**

*Goal a:* The council has developed a common working culture grounded in mutual trust and sharing, encouraging creativity and proactive change.

- There is evidence of a working environment that both fosters respect and values diversity.
- Staff are motivated and encouraged to increase their capacities and competencies to achieve higher performance through an open training and development programme especially in the areas of programme and project management and leadership skills.
- Staff in FSA teams collaborate with programme staff to implement a new working tool or method together, with direct impact on project results and/or the manner of delivery or communication of the project.

*Goal b:* The council has defined management policies and processes supported by leadership, introduced and sustained through ongoing training and accompaniment, owned by all, and implemented with accountability for all.

- Management policies are updated according to a plan, and are issued.
- General training sessions on policies are implemented.
- Processes are in place which foster learning from practice and experience.

*Goal c:* The council has developed, implemented and managed an integrated tool-set to plan, budget, monitor, evaluate and report on the council's programme activities.

- The tools are implemented.
- Staff are trained in the use of the tools, or those elements of the tools which are necessary for their function.
- It is evident to the member churches and partners that the quality and efficiency in management, monitoring and reporting of project work is sustained.

Each of the FSA service teams has planned and participated in project work which focuses on fulfilment of the overall goals above.

## **FSA projects**

In 2007, in the spirit of the new integrated way of working, as encouraged by the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> assembly, FSA merged two teams into one integrated financial services unit.

The assembly had also required that there be renewal of the tools and processes used by the council to accomplish its work.

The following activities have been achieved:

- Implementation of a database for the management of contacts and events (by CIS)
- Documentation of the internal control system to meet the requirements of the Swiss Code of Obligations article 728 (a) (Finance)
- Upgrade of the accounting system and resultant improvement of the financial reports (Finance and CIS)

### **Project 1: Upgrading working tools**

The following ongoing activities are planned for 2010-2013:

- Video conferencing system (CIS)
- Review of staff rules, regulations and policies (Human Resources)
- WCC Manual: Policies and Procedures

### **Project 2: Strategic developments**

This new project includes the following activities:

- Management of the renovation of the ecumenical centre with a particular focus on fire security (House Services)
- Management of the general renovation of the main hall in the ecumenical centre (House Services)

- Management of the development of conference facilities at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey (House Services)
- Review of services provided to sister organizations (Human Resources, Finance, CIS, and House Services)

### **Infrastructure costs**

FSA costs, together with the costs of Income Monitoring and Development and PMER, are charged to the programmatic areas after deduction of income earned on rental and other FSA services. The infrastructure costs are charged to the projects and activities following an activity-based costing method. The infrastructure costs are set out in the financial summary of each programmatic area.