



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF DENMARK**  
*Danida*

# THE WORLD WE SHARE

## DENMARK'S STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



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# A WORLD UNBALANCED

We live in a time of global upheaval. The COVID-19 crisis, climate change and conflicts reverse progress and development. Poverty and inequality are on the rise. Far too many people are left behind, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas. People are forced to flee from their homes to an unprecedented extent. Thousands risk their lives as they try to reach Europe. Climate change and the exploitation of the world's natural resources amplify the challenges and threaten our common future. Democracy and human rights are increasingly under attack in step with the resurgence of authoritarian regimes. Developing countries, particularly in Africa, are the new geopolitical battleground. This poses a challenge to the international level playing field and the values in which we believe.

A Syrian boy with the Al-Nuri Mosque in the background. The terrorist group ISIL bombed the Al-Nuri Mosque in the final phase of the battle for Mosul in 2017.

Photo: Ritzau Scanpix



We have shaped a prosperous and peaceful society in Denmark, where sustainable economic development and global climate responsibility go hand in hand. Denmark possesses the knowledge on and the solutions to many of the world's key challenges. We have an active and diverse civil society as well as a responsible and sustainable business community ready and willing to contribute. The Danish people support and are actively involved in Denmark's development cooperation. All of which commits us to act. We must take the lead and change the world for the better. A world with which Denmark is closely interconnected. We take care of Denmark when we take care of the world.

## **THE DECADE OF ACTION**

The Decade of Action calls for accelerating progress to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Our actions today determine whether we achieve the goals by 2030 and fulfil the Paris Agreement's climate ambitions. "The World We Share" – Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation – sets out how to tackle some of the great challenges of our time: the climate crisis, displacement, and irregular migration.

## **DENMARK MUST LEAD THE WAY**

Denmark will use this strategy to prevent and fight poverty and inequality, conflict and displacement – and thereby mitigate irregular migration. First and foremost by creating hope and opportunities for the individual. And by supporting the building of just and resilient societies. We will lead the fight against climate change in the poorest countries. We must create a planet in balance with a richer and healthier natural environment. Our overall development interventions will rest on democratic values and human rights. We will protect the most vulnerable. And we will make a particular effort to advance gender equality, promote and protect the rights of girls and women, and maintain focus on marginalised groups.

Our efforts will focus on where the needs are greatest. We will provide better help to more people in countries and regions neighbouring conflict zones and in fragile countries. And we will work for a more just and humane asylum system for those who need it.

## **SHARING THE WORLD THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS**

"The World We Share" is fundamentally about solving the great challenges of our time together with our partners. Our partnership with the UN and the multilateral partners is vital for Denmark. Based on our shared Nordic values, we must stand guard over human rights and international rule-based order. We wish to form partnerships with carefully selected partner countries where the needs and challenges are greatest. A focused engagement through the EU will equally widen Denmark's reach across developing countries.

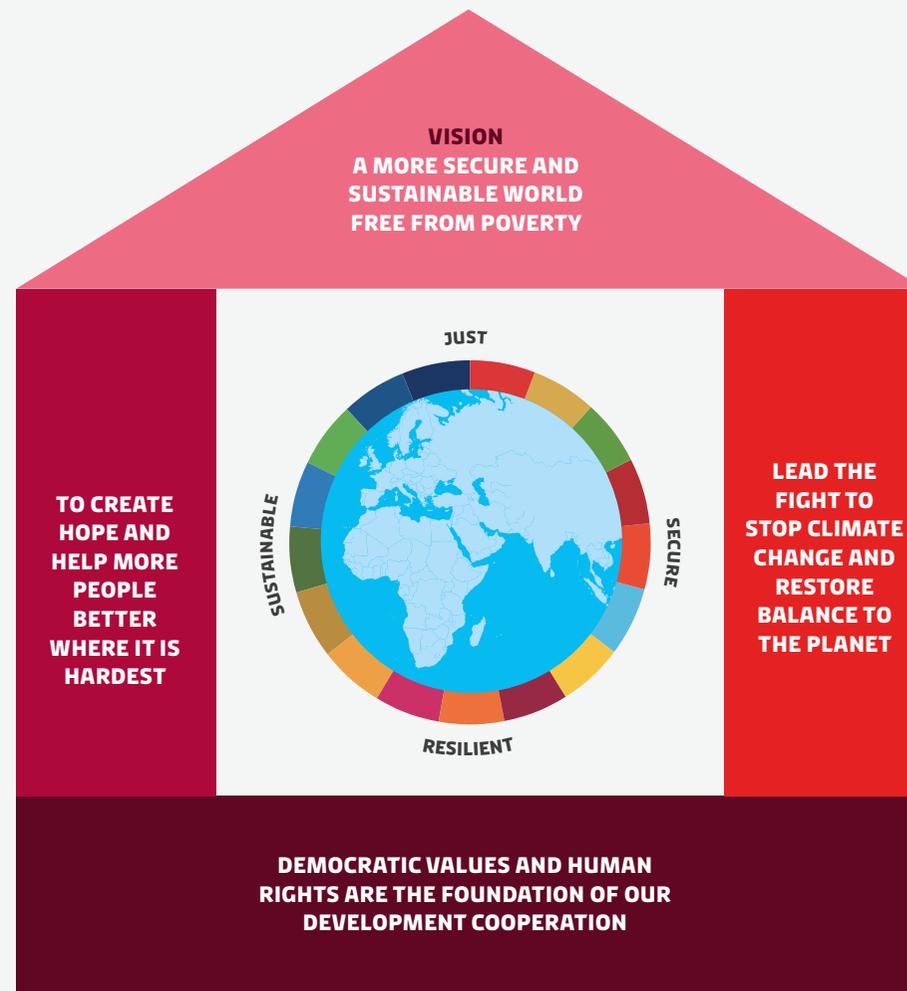
The whole of Denmark must pull together. We must utilise the skills and expertise across the Danish authorities. Strengthen cooperation with Danish civil society and the private sector. Engage Danes in development cooperation. Our partnerships must be innovative. They must bring the combined knowledge and solutions of Denmark into play and mobilise resources beyond development assistance. This is how we will deliver the greatest benefit. This is how we will reach more people better and ensure that no one is left behind.

## VISION

The vision for Denmark's development cooperation is: A more secure and sustainable world free from poverty, based on international binding cooperation as well as just and resilient societies that fight inequality and create hope and future opportunities for the individual, with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement as beacons.

### THE FOUNDATION OF DENMARK'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

**Democratic values and human rights.** The basis of democracy is human rights, the rule of law, gender equality and an independent civil society. Absence of freedom diminishes people's hope, drive and dignity. Therefore, we must take a human-centred approach. We must protect the most vulnerable and make a particular effort to promote and protect the rights of girls and women.



Pictured are schoolkids in Uganda.

Photo: Bill Wegener, Unsplash

## WE WILL USE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION TO

**Prevent and fight poverty and inequality, conflict and displacement, irregular migration and fragility.** We will tackle the root causes. And we will create hope and opportunities for people in need. We will help people when disaster strikes. We will help more people better in regions neighbouring conflict zones and in fragile countries.

**Lead the fight to stop climate change and restore balance to the planet.** We will invest heavily in climate adaptation and strive to improve nature, the environment and biodiversity. We will strengthen resilience to climate change, with focus on poor and vulnerable countries and people. We will reduce global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and promote a socially just green transition. And we will ensure that increased climate ambition in developing countries and fulfilment of the Paris Agreement deliver sustainable development and growth for the world's poor.



## PRINCIPLES FOR OUR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Development cooperation must fight poverty and inequality and promote democracy, sustainable development, peace and stability. It must take place in conformity with the Danish Act on International Development Cooperation, the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN conventions on human rights, and with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the central pivot.
- Development cooperation is a cornerstone of Denmark's comprehensive global engagement alongside our foreign and security policy and our economic diplomacy.
- We will meet the UN target for the world's rich countries to provide at least 0.7 per cent of GNI in development assistance.
- We will focus on prevention, long-term development cooperation and on creating opportunities in order to ensure tangible alternatives to displacement and irregular migration. We adopt a long-term perspective from the outset of our presence.
- Across Denmark's development cooperation, we will take the lead on implementing the Paris Agreement and contribute to creating sustainable development and growth for the world's poorest.
- We will meet our international climate commitments, including in relation to climate finance.
- We will provide considerable funding in places where the needs are greatest, including in places where it is hard to operate. We are ready to accept that there are financial, political and security risks, and that not everything will succeed.
- We have zero tolerance for corruption. Misuse of Danish funds must have immediate consequences.
- We will respect and comply with international humanitarian law, international refugee law and the principles for humanitarian assistance.

- We maintain that human rights are universal and that no one must be left behind. We place human rights at the heart of all our activities. We will have particular focus on women and girls as well as marginalised groups.
- We will cooperate with the partners best positioned to bring about development and change, and we place emphasis on strengthening local involvement and ownership as much as possible.
- We will insist on mutually binding partnerships with our partners and partner countries. We are ready to step away if reciprocity is lacking and fundamental values are not respected.
- We will generally not provide long-term development assistance to states that refuse to readmit their own citizens.
- We view binding cooperation in the Nordic countries, the EU, the UN, and the multilateral system as crucial for reaching and promoting our development policy goals.
- We create solutions in collaboration with and between the public sector, private companies, foundations and civil society. Strategic sector cooperation involving Danish authorities in international cooperation will be a key instrument.
- We will mobilise funding for sustainable development from a range of different sources, particularly the private sector, through innovation and public-private partnerships. The Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement are not achievable through development assistance alone.
- We will involve and engage the whole of Denmark in the development cooperation. Through cooperation with, for example, educational institutions, civil society organisations, companies and media outlets, we wish to strengthen involvement of Danes in Denmark's development cooperation and in the work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

## LESS THAN 10 YEARS TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2015, the world set itself the target of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals within 15 years. These goals are a common global ambition. They assign all countries in the world a responsibility to tackle the planet's common challenges. Denmark leads the way in promoting the agenda both nationally and internationally. However, both rich countries and developing countries are a long way from achieving the goals. Therefore, the UN Secretary-General has proclaimed that the remaining 10 years up until 2030 will be the 'Decade of Action'.

Rich countries face major challenges achieving the goals on sustainable development and climate, whilst developing countries are not on track to achieve the social goals on poverty, hunger, education and health. Many countries face challenges upholding the principles of democracy, justice and respect for human rights. Though the challenges vary, they are interlinked. We will work towards solutions that address several problems at once. Suppression of rights combined with hunger and massive unemployment risk triggering displacement and irregular migration. These challenges also risk striking Europe in the form of more refugees and migration pressure. At the same time, social tensions in developing countries increase when climate change causes soil degradation and increased pressure on water resources. Emissions from growth economies and rich countries is the primary cause of climate change.



Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation and its specific goals contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals contribute to creating a common vision and understanding of the important contexts and correlations between the differ-

ent initiatives. This figure shows how the Sustainable Development Goals are relevant for the Strategy's overall vision and two priorities. Sustainable Development Goal 17 on Partnerships is crosscutting.

## THE COVID-19 CRISIS SHOWS HOW THE CHALLENGES ARE INTERLINKED



The COVID-19 crisis and its repercussions have hit Africa and other fragile parts of the world the hardest. And in particular the most vulnerable people have suffered. These comprise the poorest, refugees and internally displaced people, marginalised groups, as well as girls and women.

The COVID-19 crisis demonstrates that the inextricably intertwined global challenges can only be tackled in an integrated manner. Rising temperatures due to climate change enables organisms that carry disease to spread to completely new areas. In the coming decades, millions of people will be displaced as a result of climate

Calvin Shikulu from the Mathare slum in Nairobi, Kenya, fears the spread of COVID-19. During the pandemic, he has used social media to communicate how to avoid being infected and how his local community has handled the COVID-19 crisis.

Photo: PlanBørnefonden

change, which will further increase the risk of spreading disease. At the same time, increased population density in urban areas risks creating new health challenges, including pandemics. By 2050, around two-thirds of the planet's population is expected to live in urban areas. The nature and biodiversity crisis is a reinforcing factor. The destruction of the natural habitats of animals leads animals to move closer to populated areas and thereby closer to people. Combined with the industrial production of animals, this creates conducive conditions for the emergence of new diseases. If we are to bring about sustainable development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we need to examine these interlinkages and apply a holistic approach to addressing the challenges. The COVID-19 crisis has emphasised the need for strengthening global vaccine preparedness and response and ensuring an equitable distribution of vaccines in order to keep everyone safe.

## NO ONE MUST BE LEFT BEHIND – PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THOSE WHOSE NEEDS ARE GREATEST

A crosscutting principle in the 2030 Agenda is the focus on those who are most vulnerable and least able to have their needs and rights met. A particular effort must be made in fragile countries and countries affected by conflict. It is in these countries that entire populations are left behind. This occurs when states are unable to provide security, freedom, access to basic services such as healthcare and education, as well as access to clean water and energy, jobs and future opportunities.

Everywhere we work, there are people in urgent need of our help and attention. Especially in countries and

regions neighbouring crisis and conflict zones. This applies to groups of people who are persecuted, subjected to violence and stigmatisation, or excluded from society due to gender, age, disability, disease such as HIV/AIDS, political view, professional or activist involvement, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, employment, religious faith or absence of such. We will focus particularly on these groups in our efforts. Together with our partners, we will fight for their cause locally, nationally and internationally – even when it is difficult to do so.

# DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

People have an innate dignity and right to be human. People have the right to live in safety, to have freedom to think, speak and believe, to be free of oppression and free to participate in local community life. Therefore, human rights and democracy are goals in themselves. However, they are also a means to creating a more safe, just, resilient and sustainable world. This is vital at a time when people are impacted by poverty, inequality and climate change.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Directly contributes to:



Also contributes to:



Protest against the military regime in Myanmar.

Photo: The Irrawaddy

Countries that have well-functioning democracies and diverse civil societies, where people can organise themselves freely, for example in trade unions or political parties, enjoy greater prosperity. The gap between rich and poor narrows when everyone can participate in open political processes and corruption is low.

Throughout the world, rights and democracy are under increasing threat from authoritarian forces. Power is often exercised arbitrarily. The pressure on rights and democracy has only increased during the pandemic. New technologies increase opportunities for authoritarian regimes to monitor and oppress their citizens and manipulate information. Civil society, media outlets, trade union leaders and advocates of rights, democracy, climate and environment are subject to attacks and harassment both online and offline and are prevented from having real influence.

The threat is particularly serious in developing countries where democratic institutions are fragile. Lack of trust between citizen and state blocks an efficient and accountable public sector that protects people's rights. This is a particular problem in places where corruption is endemic.

These developments are unjust and create poverty and inequality – for the individual, for groups and for society.

Moreover, they contribute to creating crises, conflict and instability, which in turn drive people to flee their homes and cause irregular migration. Massive population growth and large youth generations in Africa are demanding a different life that offers inclusion and equal opportunities. They want education, jobs and opportunities. And their frustration increases when they are met with resistance or inaction.

Fortunately, there is also reason for hope. In many places, protest movements are flourishing. The climate crisis inspires renewed democratic involvement around the world. In particular, young people are once again taking an interest in democracy and politics. And they are taking part in informal movements and campaigns on an unprecedented scale. Digital platforms help development move forward. People are able to mobilise for a cause from one day to the next.

Denmark utilises its unique strengths to advance democratic values and human rights in its development cooperation. The Danish and Nordic model of society is embedded in values such as freedom, equality, participation in decision-making, local democracy, strong communities, gender equality, respect for human rights, transparency and low corruption. These values are manifested when we advocate for labour rights, including the right to strike and access to collective

bargaining. And we are a strong voice for an active, diverse and independent civil society. Denmark is one of the world's most digitised democracies and a global leader within technological diplomacy.



## DANISH INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON RIGHTS

Through our development cooperation, Denmark is a consistent and strong voice for democracy and for a world characterised by international rules-based order. We will actively join in the global fight to promote and protect the values upon which international cooperation rests. We will promote and defend human rights, with particular focus on the rights of girls, women and marginalised groups. With our partners, especially the EU, the UN and like-minded countries, as well as Danish and global civil society, but also regional organisations such as the African Union, we will strive to ensure that everyone can contribute to developing equitable and safe societies.

We will contribute to good governance and democratic, transparent institutions. This is fundamental for delivering social services and broad-based economic development, anti-corruption and protection of rights.

### **BASED ON A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, WE WILL STRIVE TO SECURE:**

**Democracy, human rights and free civil societies in the era of digitisation.** Diverse and independent civil societies, popular movements, political parties and cross-party parliamentary networks, human rights institutions, media outlets, etc. can hold those in power

to account. They can contribute to preventing corruption and ensuring access to credible information and participation. We will maintain strong and targeted support for defenders of democracy who are subject to harassment and attack – both online and physically. These include human rights advocates, journalists, trade union representatives, faith-based actors, environmental activists, etc. We will engage civil society in tackling the dark sides of digitisation and help build digital resilience. We will bolster open debate, freedom of opinion and freedom of expression in the digital era partly by supporting a free media. We will contribute to strengthening democratic institutions, including political parties, and, especially empowerment of women and young people, as an important part of democratic processes. And we will strengthen our interaction with public authorities, civil society and the business community in order to ensure progressive, responsible, democratic and safe development and application of technology with respect for human rights.

### **Rights and dignity of marginalised groups.**

Denmark is well renowned for safeguarding the rights of indigenous peoples, minorities, LGBTI persons, and vulnerable groups, and will continue to do so. We will expand the role of faith-based actors in promoting respect for human rights and democracy, including continued efforts to promote freedom of thought,

conscience and religion for all religious communities, non-believers and minorities. We will fight discrimination, stigma and persecution of minority groups, including Christians and persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. We will provide knowledge, networks and resources to assist the work on eliminating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. And we will provide a voice for people with disabilities.

**Gender equality, girls and women's rights.** Gender equality and women's economic and political empowerment contribute to increasing economic growth and creating more equal and democratic societies. However, the rights of women and girls are under increasing threat from reactionary forces. Gender equality, girls and women's rights remain a cross-cutting priority in our humanitarian work and development interventions. A long-standing Danish core priority. Gender equality is not only about girls and women having equal access to healthcare and education, but also about men assuming their responsibility at home when women enter the labour market. We will continue to lead the way in the global fight for gender equality and protection of girls and women's rights. We will focus particularly on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). We will participate actively in international negotiations and forge strong political alliances. We will support gender equality and SRHR initiatives locally

#ChalkBack is a youth-led campaign committed to ending gender-based street harassment in Kenya, where activists write their messages in chalk on the street. The activists work together with local leaders and the police to make sure their city is a safe place for children and youth.

Photo: PlanBørnefonden

and during humanitarian crises. We will partly do so through education, focus on girls and women's economic and political empowerment, as well as through fighting sexual and gender-based violence.

### Meaningful participation of young people.

The world's largest generation of children and young people to date is an enormous resource for delivering sustainable and lasting change. Therefore, it is vital that young people participate in directing and delivering the development cooperation and are not just beneficiaries. Throughout the world, young activists take the lead in fighting for equality, democracy, human rights and the climate. They are organised in youth organisations, movements, and loosely structured networks. Across our development interventions, we will support the young people working to bring about positive change. We will ensure their voices are heard and that they are treated meaningfully as equal citizens in the decision making processes and actions to develop their communities. We will strive to support young people's participation and voice in decision-making that affects their future. At the same time, we will work to ensure opportunities and prospects of a better future through education, innovation and decent jobs for the large generations of young people, particularly in Africa.



### Effective, democratic and responsible states.

When conflicts in fragile states, particularly in Africa, become cross-border, they cause both internal and external tension. This can trigger irregular migration or force people to flee their homes. Therefore, we will support the ability of public authorities to, effectively, openly and responsibly, ensure respect for human rights and to provide healthcare, education, and social protection for their citizens. In this regard, local tax systems play a role in financing social services. We will help the state to strengthen its popular legitimacy and support in fragile areas. This entails delivering security and safety for its citizens effectively, transparently and responsibly. We will focus on the state's responsibility

to respect and promote freedom of association, assembly, faith, religion and expression, as well as provide space for political participation and reasonable conditions for running associations and media outlets. We will support the state's ability to improve the conditions for sustainable growth, which also represents a competitive advantage for the Danish business community. We will fight corruption and tax fraud and evasion by strengthening international norms and standards. And within the specific countries we will focus on activities that promote accountability and fight corruption, as well as support decentralisation and local participation in decision-making.

## INCREASED PRESSURE ON DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM RIGHTS

Over the past 15 years, the global pressure on democracy, civil society and freedom has increased. In Denmark, we almost take democracy and human rights for granted. However, in 2020 more than 40 per cent of the world's population lived in countries with limited space for civil society and media. And less than 4 per cent of the world's population live in countries where people can freely assemble and take part in the development of their society. Strong societies – independent institutions, civil society organisations and, in particular, free and democratic trade unions, as well as a free and independent press – are crucial for enabling citizens locally to change their societies bottom-up and with legitimacy.

Defenders of democracy and rights are subject to violence and harassment. In 2019, at least 250 journalists were arbitrarily imprisoned. And in 2020, at least 331 activists were killed in 25 different countries. Environmentalists are in the frontline. Women human rights defenders are particularly vulnerable and are often subject to harassment and violence because of their gender. The number of countries where employees are not permitted to set up or organise themselves in trade unions is increasing. The right to strike is infringed upon in 85 per cent of the world's countries, and 80 per cent deny collective bargaining access to some or all employees.

Digital rights and online freedom are also under pressure. In 2020, the internet was deliberately shut down 155 times around the world in order to limit freedom of expression and access to information. Often in connection with demonstrations or other government-critical activity.

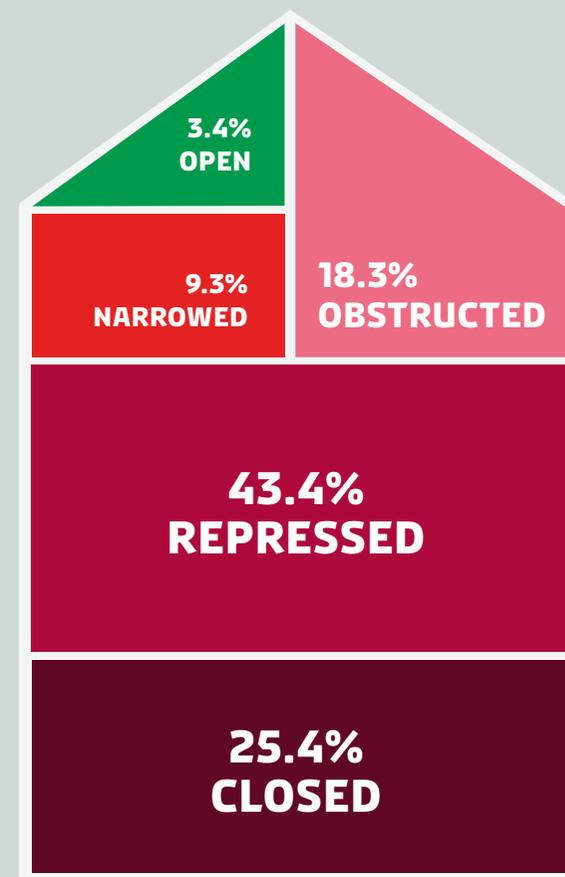
## CIVIC SPACE IS UNDER PRESSURE

Only 3.4 per cent of civil society organisations in 196 countries live in countries with open civic space. At the opposite end of the spectrum, almost 70 per cent of civil society organisations experience repression or even closure of civic space.

The CIVICUS Monitor rates the conditions for civil society or civic space and provides ratings for civic space in 196 countries. CIVICUS defines civic space as the respect in policy and practice for the freedoms of assembly, association and expression, which are underpinned by the state's duty to protect civil society.

The figures are based on the 2019 World Bank Population Data.

Source: CIVICUS: Monitor Tracking Civic Space



## FIVE PRECONDITIONS FOR A GOOD LIFE

### 1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

such as freedom, non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability are the foundation for ensuring the right of children to school education, the right of sick people to receive treatment, and the right of people to participate in the political system, to organise themselves, and to hold those in power to account.

### 2. A HEALTHY PHYSICAL AND MENTAL LIFE

is essential for enabling people to unlock their life opportunities, for example through participation in the labour force. Access to basic healthcare services is important for preventing disease and for helping people in urgent need. This access has become even more imperative during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated the pressure on already weak health systems and reduced the life opportunities of millions of people – particularly vulnerable and marginalised groups.

### 3. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

and particularly the quality of education is important for enabling each individual to exercise their rights. The ability to read makes it easier for a citizen to claim their rights to health treatment, engage in meaningful political participation, and start their own company. Like health, education is a lever for ensuring social equality.

### 4. A SOCIAL SAFETY NET

provides an opportunity to escape poverty and withstand shocks and crises, even for those who are most vulnerable. Cash assistance, which, among other things, provides labour to build a road to the village, has helped millions to withstand poverty and crises. Future climate challenges could make social safety nets even more relevant. For example, for people finding it difficult to grow crops due to drought.

### 5. GREEN AND DECENT JOBS

aim to contribute to sustainable growth and a way out of poverty. Without a flourishing private sector, long-term development is impossible. It is vital to focus not only on the welfare of the individual but also on contributing to society's overall prosperity, in which weak and vulnerable groups who are temporarily unable to care for themselves have access to help.

## GIRLS AND WOMEN

Women and girls' rights are under particular pressure from religious and reactionary forces. Around the world, 830 women die in childbirth each day, 33,000 girls under 18 are married each day, 200 million women and girls do not have access to contraception, and each year at least 3 million women and girls are at risk of female genital mutilation. One out of five displaced women is subject to sexual violence or harassment. Gender equality and girls and women's rights are therefore a cross-cutting priority in Denmark's development cooperation. Gender equality and women's economic and political empowerment contribute to increased growth and more equal, free, safe and democratic societies.



**1 OUT OF 5** displaced women is subject to sexual violence or harassment

Source: Women Refugees and migration, UN Women

# WE CREATE HOPE AND HELP MORE PEOPLE BETTER WHERE IT IS HARDEST

Denmark meets its international responsibility when we fight poverty and inequality. And when we contribute to creating hope and opportunities. It requires addressing the fundamental causes of crises and hardship for millions of people. We must do more to prevent conflicts and crises, and we must react promptly when they erupt. We provide humanitarian assistance and implement initiatives that promote peace, stability and development.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Directly contributes to:



Also contributes to:



Internally displaced people in Ethiopia.

Photo: Ritzau Scanpix



Within the framework of the Refugee Convention, we must take action to help people in fragile countries and in regions of origin. This is where poverty is increasingly concentrated. And this is where the climate crisis has the hardest impact. Displacement and irregular migration stem from the inability of fragile and conflict-affected societies to provide their citizens prosperity, jobs, rights, democracy and security. Fighting poverty and creating new opportunities for people in regions of origin and in fragile countries helps to prevent irregular migration towards Europe. Irregular migration has devastating human impacts and undermines the asylum system intended for refugees needing protection in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention and international human rights conventions.

Fragility, conflict and violence – often reinforced by climate change, poverty and extreme inequality – lead to large-scale hunger and food insecurity and destroy people's opportunities for a dignified life. In many countries, the state authority is weak or has completely disappeared. Violent extremism and terrorism thrive, and large areas in already weak countries are controlled by non-governmental groups. Consequently, increasingly more people are displaced. Pandemics rage out of control. Today, more people than ever before need humanitarian assistance. But the world's protracted crises require more than humanitarian assistance. We need to

strengthen conflict prevention and peace-building. And along the migration routes and in countries and regions neighbouring humanitarian crisis and conflict zones, we need to find sustainable solutions that harmonise with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.

Social, political and economic inequality, population growth, climate change – and most recently the societal impacts of the COVID-19 crisis – in the world's poorest and most fragile countries hit people hard. The suppression of rights and democracy exacerbates the situation, increasing the irregular migration flows.

**MORE THAN**

**80 MIL.**

The increase partly reflects the rise in the number of armed conflicts, which is now higher than at any time over the past 30 years. In addition, today's crises and conflicts are becoming ever more complex and protracted. As a result, countries are perpetually affected by fragility, conflict and violence, and countries and regions neighbouring conflict zones often end up hosting large groups of refugees not just for a few years, but for decades.

Source: UNHCR, Refugee Statistics

**PEOPLE DISPLACED  
– A 50 PER CENT INCREASE  
OVER THE PAST DECADE**



Similarly, the World Bank estimates that more than 143 million people in Africa, South Asia and South America will be displaced due to climate change by 2050.

People abandon their homes not only to seek refuge and livelihood, but also to escape suppression of their basic human rights. Many suffer a terrible fate. Thousands of people die attempting to reach Europe. And even more face violence and harassment along the way. Many get trapped in North Africa. At the same time, people smugglers make billions in profit on the misfortune of others.

Europe may also experience an increased influx of migrants and refugees that will require us to improve our migration management system and which risks endangering the EU's and Denmark's cohesion. EU Member States invest considerable resources in processing the asylum applications from those who succeed in reaching Europe, many of whom are irregular migrants who, according to the Refugee Convention, are not in need of protection. These resources could help more people better in countries and regions neighbouring crisis and conflict zones, regions of origin, where the majority of vulnerable refugees are located.

Ethiopian refugees cross the Tekeze River into Sudan

Photo: © UNHCR/Olivier Jobard

## INCREASING NEED

# 155 MIL.

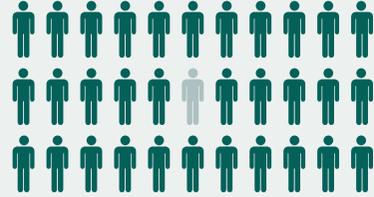
### PEOPLE WERE ACUTELY FOOD INSECURE AND IN NEED OF URGENT ASSISTANCE IN 2020

It represents an increase of nearly 20 million people in just one year (2019 = 135 million)

Source: United Nations World Food Programme: People in food crisis or worse, 2021

## 1 OUT OF 33

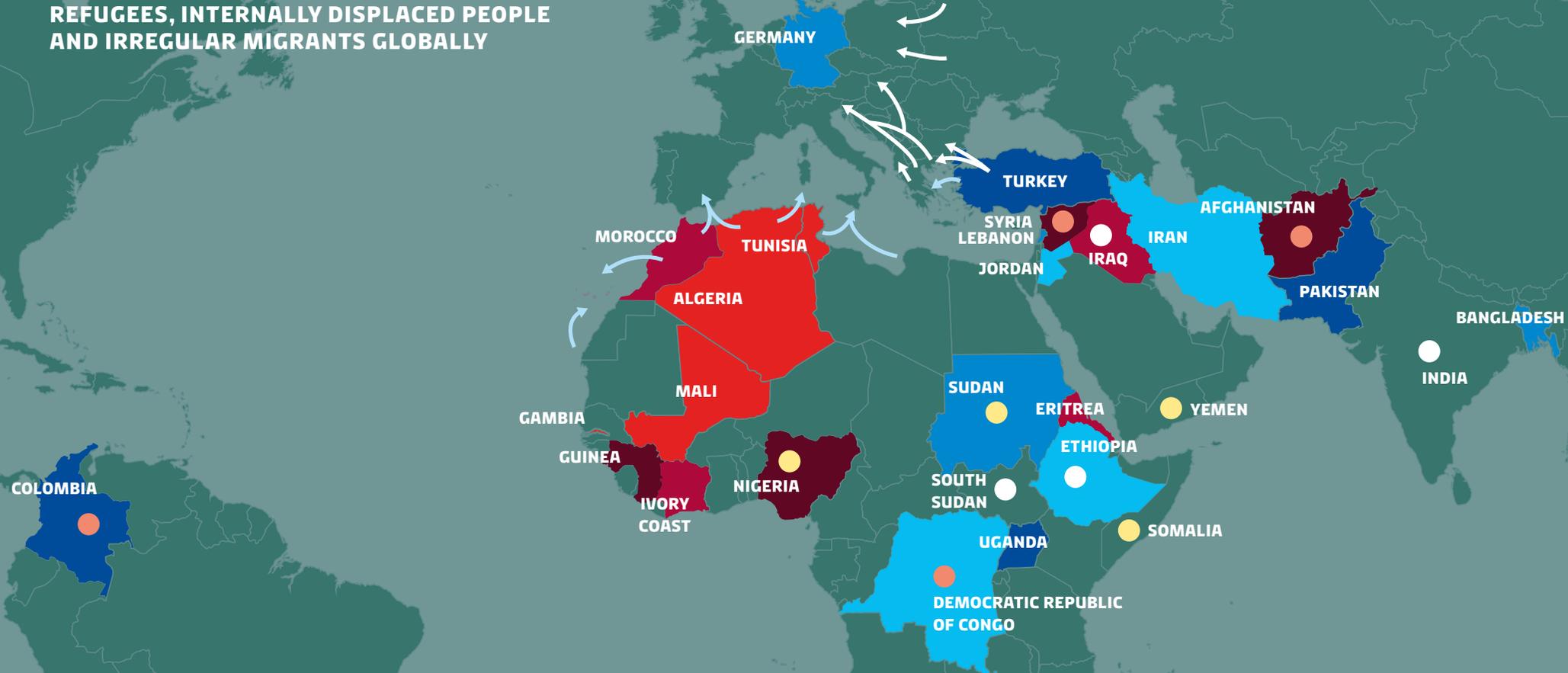
people worldwide will need humanitarian assistance in 2021 – a number tripled since 2014.



Source: OCHA, Overview of Global Humanitarian Response 2014 and Global Humanitarian Overview 2021



# REFUGEES, INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE AND IRREGULAR MIGRANTS GLOBALLY



Main countries of origin for refugees and irregular migrants to Europe for the period 2016-2021\*

- TOP 4
- TOP 5-8
- TOP 9-12

Top 12 countries hosting the most refugees

- TOP 4
- TOP 5-8
- TOP 9-12

Top 12 countries with most internally displaced people (IDP) due to war, conflict and disasters

- TOP 4
- TOP 5-8
- TOP 9-12

Main land and sea routes used by refugees and irregular migrants to reach Europe. Note that the majority arrive by air.

- ← BY LAND
- ← BY SEA

\*1 January 2021 – 31 May 2021  
Source: Based on data from the African Center for Strategic Studies, Statewatch and Europol

## DENMARK'S STRENGTHS

Denmark is among the world's leading and, in relative terms, largest humanitarian actors. We are among the leaders in developing more sustainable solutions for refugees, internally displaced people and local host communities. We do this in close cooperation with the affected countries, local, international and Danish civil society organisations, the EU, the UN, and the development banks.

Together with our partners, particularly the UN, Denmark leads the way in integrating interventions, whereby we ensure relevant linkages between development cooperation, humanitarian action, diplomacy as well as peace and stabilisation initiatives. This ensures a far stronger focus on prevention and early response, with active support provided in particular to both UN and EU conflict-prevention and peace-building activities. In addition, the Danish Peace and Stabilisation Fund, through the government-to-government initiative of strategic sector cooperation, is an effective instrument that often works in interaction with other development instruments, including bilateral development programmes and humanitarian action.

Denmark is present along key migration routes. We cooperate with the UN, the EU and international organisations on activities targeted at protection (asylum) and



fighting smuggling and trafficking of human beings. Denmark has valuable experience of promoting voluntary repatriation and reintegration of rejected asylum seekers without legal residence in Denmark.

We will build on these strengths and, in cooperation with our partners, focus our efforts on preventing and reducing poverty and inequality, fragility, conflict, gender discrimination and violence that leads to forced displacement and irregular migration. We will work to secure long-term and sustainable solutions that reduce humanitarian needs and strengthen resilience. This applies, for example, to education and health-sector initiatives targeted at refugees and displaced people, if possible through building capacity in the national

Gender equality and the rights of women and girls are a crosscutting priority in Danish development cooperation. It is an important element in creating opportunities, hope and worthy solutions. The girl is from Afghanistan, where forced marriages continue to be very common – often before the age of 16.

Photo: Kabul Wakil Kohsar, Ritzau Scanpix

systems. Our goal is to reduce humanitarian needs as much as possible and prevent crises, conflict and violence. We must prevent people from being forcibly displaced and reduce the number of irregular migrants. Although it is a major and complex task, we will create opportunities, hope and dignified solutions closer to home for the millions of people badly affected.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

The people moving along the migration routes are a mixture of refugees and irregular migrants. Distinguishing between regular and irregular migrants and refugees is important due to the different requirements regarding protection. Asylum seekers have a convention-based right to protection while their asylum application is processed and thus by definition are not irregular migrants. Persons who have crossed a border to seek asylum in another country which

recognises them as refugees in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention have a right to protection. Persons who have not sought asylum or have had their asylum application rejected are not entitled to protection according to the Refugee Convention, but remain protected by human rights law on equal terms with other citizens. States are obliged to readmit their own nationals who do not have legal residence in another country. Irregular migration leads to, for example, traf-

ficking in humans, forced labour as well as sexual and economic exploitation. Orderly migration has benefits, but irregular migration undermines an international asylum system to the detriment of the world's weakest and most vulnerable.

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

Internally displaced are people who, for example, due to conflict, hunger or natural disasters have fled their homes, but stay within their home country. They are not officially recognised as refugees and do not fall under the Refugee Convention, but instead basic human rights law. The number of internally displaced people is rising. The UN estimates that 48 million people were internally displaced in 2020.

Denmark provides emergency assistance to internally displaced people in many regions of origin through humanitarian action. Important partners in these efforts

include, for example, the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, and a number of Danish civil society organisations, as well as the UN's country-based pooled funds. We also work on preventing internal displacement and promoting sustainable solutions. This is achieved through activities designed to create stability and sustainable development as well as build the resilience of local communities.

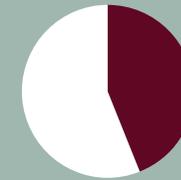
Internally displaced people from the Somali Region in Ethiopia awaiting food distribution.

Photo: Ritzaou Scanpix



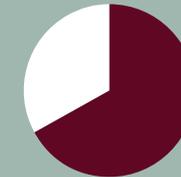
## THE WORLD'S EXTREMELY POOR ARE CONCENTRATED IN FRAGILE COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Poverty is increasingly concentrated in fragile countries and regions. In 2020, approx. 44 per cent of the world's extremely poor lived in fragile countries and regions, corresponding to 333 million people. By 2030, the proportion is expected to rise to at least 67 per cent, corresponding to 360 million people. In the same period, the number of extremely poor people in other countries is expected to fall from 418 million people to 210 million people. Poverty will therefore primarily be a problem for fragile countries. At the same time, fragility, conflict and violence cause the displacement of more than 82 million people – a number that has doubled over the past decade. The UN estimates that one out of 33 people globally will need humanitarian assistance in 2021 – triple the number in 2014.



**2020**

Approx. 44 per cent of the world's extremely poor lived in fragile countries and regions in 2020.



**2030**

The proportion is expected to rise to at least 67 per cent by 2030.

Source: Brookings, Poverty and Fragility: Where will the poor live in 2030?

## FRAGILE AREAS AND REGIONS OF ORIGIN

Fragile areas implies countries or communities which politically, economically, socially, environmentally and from a security perspective have limited capacity or resilience to prevent and tackle crises. Fragility can have major adverse consequences, such as violence, conflict, poverty, inequality, displacement and biodiversity degradation. In relation to fragility in Africa, distinctly fragile countries and regions include Mali in the Sahel and Somalia on the Horn of Africa. However,

there are also pockets of fragility in many other otherwise stable countries, such as Ethiopia and Nigeria.

The term 'regions of origin' is applied in Danish foreign and development policy both as a geographical and a thematic term. The geographical dimension comprises countries and regions that border conflict areas and are affected by the conflict in the form of a massive influx of refugees and internally displaced

people. In 2021, there are half a million refugees in Kenya, 1.4 million in Uganda, and approx. 1.7 million in Lebanon, as well as 1.2 million internally displaced people in Burkina Faso, 4.8 million in Afghanistan, 3.5 million in Ethiopia, and 3 million in Somalia. The thematic dimension comprises the broader activities, which also address mixed migration flows composed of both irregular migrants and people fleeing, and irregular migration along the routes.

## THE LINK BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

**Denmark shows an ability to act, bring all instruments into play, and draw on decades of presence in fragile regions.** Denmark's engagement in, for example, the Sahel and Afghanistan builds on close interaction between foreign policy, development policy, security policy and humanitarian assistance. Both in Afghanistan and the Sahel, Denmark has long-term development programmes, peace and stabilisation programmes, region of origin initiatives, humanitarian activities as well as military contributions to UN military missions (currently being phased out in Afghanistan). We combine the Danish instruments and use them complementarily to achieve common objectives.

**Denmark contributes to strengthening an integrated approach – and thinks long-term from the outset.** For example, both the Sahel and Afghanistan face enormous challenges, including active conflict, fragile governments, substantial humanitarian crises and a large number of refugees and internally displaced people. We work towards long-term and sustainable solutions, but we are also ready to respond quickly in the face of changing realities. Denmark does this partly by ensuring access to basic services such as clean drinking water, by creating employment in fragile regions and for internally displaced people, and by strengthening human rights and democracy through our

In many places around the world, children do not have access to schools and quality education. Pictured are school children in South Sudan.

Photo: Ritzau Scanpix



development programmes, region of origin initiatives and humanitarian support. We also contribute to preventing conflict, strengthening legal systems as well as defence and security forces, and stabilising the regions through the Peace and Stabilisation Fund.

**Denmark works to promote the integrated approach in the international cooperation across regions.** This is done through the EU, the UN and the World Bank and in cooperation with close allies such as France and the USA. In the Sahel, where an integrated approach across the region is particularly important, Denmark participates in the Coalition for the Sahel, which pools Sahel initiatives within the security and development field, and in the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel, which coordinates and mobilises resources to bring greater stability to the region. In Afghanistan, Denmark works closely with both the government and like-minded countries through the national cooperation mechanisms.

### EDUCATION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN CRISIS AND FRAGILE SOCIETIES

Education is a fundamental building block for developing democratic societies and is crucial for ensuring children equal opportunities in the future. For each year a girl attends school, her expected income increases by 10-20 per cent. Nevertheless, far too many children do not have access to schooling and quality education. For example, half of the world's refugee children do not go to school. In addition, the lack of schooling puts young girls in particular at higher risk of sexual and gender-based violence, teenage pregnancies and child marriages. In some crisis contexts, more than 70 per cent of women are subject to gender-based violence.

## OBJECTIVE 1

### DENMARK MUST

**Prevent poverty, fragility, conflicts and violence and create sustainable alternatives to irregular migration and displacement.**

### DENMARK WILL

- Create hope and opportunities for people by promoting economic and social protection and development in fragile countries, regions and regions of origin impacted by conflict and disaster. This involves partly strengthening the state capacity to deliver security, equality and participation in decision-making, i.e. better conditions enabling people to live free and good lives.
- Ensure access to healthcare services and quality education in fragile countries and regions of origin, with particular focus on marginalised groups and women, children and young people.
- Protect the weakest and most vulnerable people, including refugees and displaced people partly through supporting the establishment of a social safety net, also in urban areas.
- Work for greater food security and access to water, which is an increasing challenge in fragile countries and regions.
- Contribute to ensuring new and more positive opportunities for the individual through job creation, upskilling, entrepreneurship and sustainable economic growth. The private sector must play an active role, and we must promote market-based development with the aim of creating jobs.
- Improve the framework conditions for the private sector in developing countries to generate economic growth, decent jobs and development. We will, for example, support the social partners (employers' organisations, trade unions and government) and promote fair and sustainable trade.
- Work for a socially fair and green transition. We will work for fairer taxation systems that can facilitate social redistribution partly through improved healthcare and education for poor and vulnerable people.
- Support pandemic preparedness and response as well as the vaccine agenda through the EU and multilateral efforts to build more resilient healthcare systems and ensure vaccine sharing.

## OBJECTIVE 2

### DENMARK MUST

**Fight irregular migration and help more people better along key migration routes.**

### DENMARK WILL

- Work for innovative approaches and for a more just and humane asylum system. We must address the weaknesses of the international asylum system in order to provide better protection to more refugees and curb irregular migration.
- Help more people better along key migration routes and thereby prevent refugees and irregular migrants from ending up in vulnerable situations and being subject to inhuman treatment and harassment.
- Strengthen cooperation with countries in, for example, North Africa and on the Western Balkans so as to enable them to handle irregular migration in accordance with human rights law.
- Strengthen the capacity of developing countries to manage their borders according to a rights-based approach, provide protection and handle irregular migration in full compliance with the international criteria for official development aid as defined by OECD.
- Strengthen cooperation regarding voluntary repatriation of rejected asylum seekers without legal residence in Denmark.

### OBJECTIVE 3

#### DENMARK MUST

**Prevent humanitarian crises and be a strong humanitarian partner during and after crises.**

#### DENMARK WILL

- Help vulnerable refugees and internally displaced people as well as local host communities when the crisis, conflict or disaster strikes. We will help ensure effective access to protection and life-saving assistance, partly in the form of food aid and healthcare services. The activities must be conducted in close collaboration with Danish civil society organisations and multilateral humanitarian and development partners, the EU and the Nordic countries.
- Continue efforts to improve protection of refugees based on international refugee law, including the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and international human rights conventions.
- Promote sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in humanitarian activities.
- Take the lead and promote activities in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence against girls and women during displacement crises, partly through providing support for survivors.
- Promote equal opportunities for girls and women during displacement crises, partly through securing access to the labour market, quality education and participation in decision-making processes.
- Integrate mental health and psychosocial well-being in the humanitarian activities.
- Work to ensure quality education for children and young people in humanitarian and development interventions. Denmark will work to ensure equal access to education, with focus on vulnerable groups, higher quality education as well as gender equality in and through education, enabling boys and girls to grow up as equal citizens.
- Ensure that conflict management, peace-building, and social and economic recovery are part of our activities from the outset. This will enable us to break down ineffective silos between urgent humanitarian assistance and long-term development programmes and support cohesion across humanitarian assistance, development and peace-building in our own activities as well as UN and EU activities.
- Continue to lead efforts to find innovative, long-term, sustainable and solidarity-based solutions for refugees and internally displaced people and their host communities in conformity with the Global Compact on Refugees.

### OBJECTIVE 4

#### DENMARK MUST

**Deliver safety and security through peace-building and stabilisation.**

#### DENMARK WILL

- Fight the fundamental causes of fragility, instability, crises and conflict through systematically integrating prevention in our activities, supporting conflict prevention, peace and stabilisation, and incorporating marginalised groups, women, children, young people, climate and human rights in everything we do. We will integrate humanitarian action with stabilisation efforts and long-term development.
- Contribute to rebuilding societies so as to enable people to create a life for themselves in their home countries. This can incorporate everything from rebuilding damaged roads, hospitals and schools to supporting democratic institutions, such as parliaments, the public sector and the justice system.
- Support UN peace and stabilisation programmes and EU civilian missions in crisis areas. We will focus on political dialogue and facilitate full, equal and meaningful participation of women and young people in conflict prevention and peace-building activities, in accordance with the peace and security agendas (UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 2250).
- Support and strengthen multilateral cooperation in relation to fragility, conflict and violence. A cornerstone is the Danish candidature to the UN Security Council in 2025-26. It will partly build on Denmark's profile as a strong supporter of the UN development and humanitarian system.
- Cooperation with local, regional and international actors, including the African Union, in the stabilisation and conflict-prevention efforts in fragile and conflict-affected areas, and in the prevention and countering of organised crime, piracy and violent extremism.

# THE FIGHT FOR CLIMATE, NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Climate change and the pressure on the world's resources are among the greatest global threats of our time. Our livelihoods are at stake. We urgently need to adapt to climate change and build resilience. We need to act to halt irreversible damage and prevent further poverty and inequality. We also need to speed up the green transition. We need to secure access to clean energy and water for the poorest people locally and ensure less CO<sub>2</sub> emission globally. Developing countries need to use natural resources in a sustainable manner and protect biodiversity.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Directly contributes to:



Also contributes to:



Climate change negatively affects the world's water resources. Without action, the number of people without access to clean water will increase. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is already an issue for approximately 300 million people.

Photo: Shutterstock



Climate change is visible all over the world. Drought, floods and storms are becoming increasingly extreme and frequent. The least developed countries are hit the hardest and are poorly equipped to withstand such events – particularly so in fragile and vulnerable countries in Africa, Asia and small island states.

The Paris Agreement's climate objectives and the UN Sustainable Development Goals are closely linked. Climate change, the biodiversity crisis and pollution of our vulnerable environment exacerbate and reinforce each other, creating poverty, hunger, food insecurity and a breeding ground for existing and new diseases.

If we fail to act, climate change and overexploitation of natural resources will force millions of people to migrate. Climate change is already one of the main drivers of displacement. Often, women, girls and marginalised groups are hit hardest. Displaced girls and women, for example, are at particular risk of violence and mistreatment or of losing access to education or employment. Climate change and degraded ecosystems trigger and intensify conflicts and fragility, which in turn exacerbates poverty and inequality. It can create a vicious circle. In particular, access to water and land are frequent causes of tension and conflict between communities – and between countries.

The least developed countries and the small developing island states are hit hardest by climate change, whilst their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are lowest. Developing countries and particularly growth economies are responsible for a substantial proportion of today's global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, primarily from coal power plants. China alone emits more greenhouse gases than the entire developed world combined.

There is a need for the major growth economies to transition from black to green solutions in parallel with a concerted effort to build climate change resilience in the poorest countries. Otherwise, rising temperatures will lead to unpredictable and extreme weather, destroying the livelihoods of herders in the Sahel or fishermen on the Horn of Africa and having devastating human impacts.

The majority of people in poor countries are engaged directly or indirectly in agriculture and food production, which are increasingly impacted by climate change. Without adaptation, climate change and the biodiversity crisis will destroy the livelihoods of many people. At the same time, the rapidly growing population in many countries puts a heavy strain on natural resources. Action needs to be taken to protect and restore nature and ecosystems such as forests, wetlands and oceans.

In combination with national reductions, adaptation is the best and cheapest way to prevent and strengthen resilience to climate change, protect biodiversity and create economic opportunities and green jobs. Environmental action and nature-based solutions can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for example through new and protected forests absorbing and storing CO<sub>2</sub>.

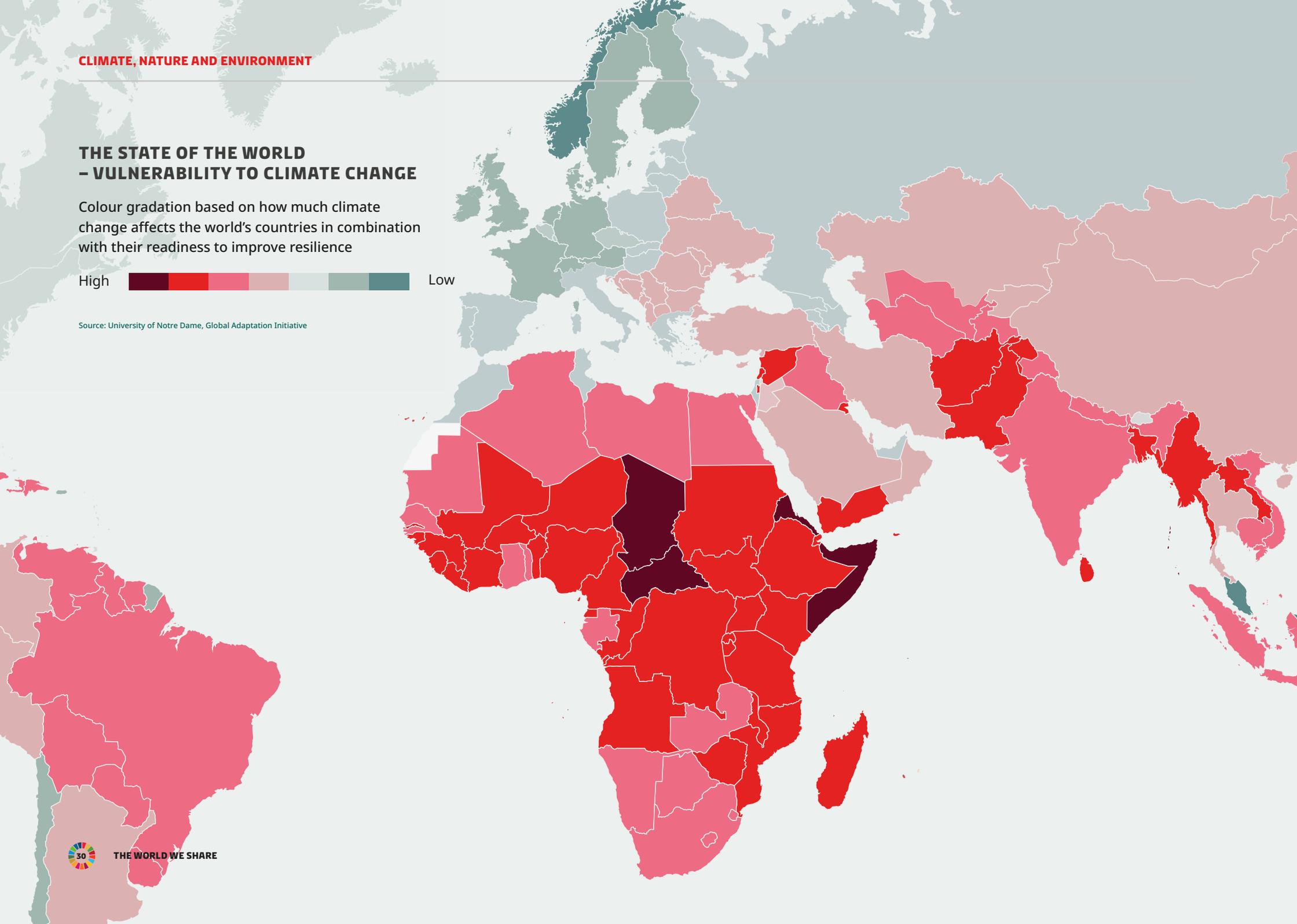
The COVID-19 crisis and the long-term economic impacts risk disrupting the green transition. The reduction in economic growth has made a huge dent in both the public finances and household budgets in developing countries. Consequently, sustainable energy solutions are deselected, despite being more economical in the long run. On the other hand, the crisis also represents new opportunities. Through development cooperation, Denmark must show how to implement a green economic recovery focused on long-term sustainable development. In particular, through the government-to-government strategic sector cooperation that draws on Danish experience with green transition and the private sector as key elements of the solution. The green recovery must also be socially just and capitalise on the many new jobs created in the green sectors.

## THE STATE OF THE WORLD – VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Colour gradation based on how much climate change affects the world's countries in combination with their readiness to improve resilience

High  Low

Source: University of Notre Dame, Global Adaptation Initiative



## DENMARK'S STRENGTHS

Denmark can assume the lead as a green frontrunner by significantly increasing climate, nature and environment-focused activities in our development cooperation and drawing on Danish solutions. Denmark is in a strong position to promote international climate action with a solid domestic foundation in the Climate Act and one of the world's most ambitious objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 70 per cent by 2030. Denmark has both a historic and moral responsibility to lead the way. Denmark has shown that economic growth and green transition can go hand in hand. We inspire and influence the rest of the world by showing that a greener society is compatible with prosperity and welfare.

The Danish climate diplomacy, the business community's green strengths, the government-to-government strategic sector cooperation, Danish innovation and research, as well as Denmark's development cooperation must be mutually supportive. This will enable us to pull our international partners in a more climate-ambitious direction. Denmark's climate, nature and environment-focused interventions in our development cooperation build on a longstanding presence. We have gained experience of strengthening our local partners in a number of the most vulnerable countries, such as the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Asia, within water management and agriculture. We must consolidate Denmark's position as a green leader by incorporating the green agenda as a key priority in all country strategies, relevant organisational strategies, and as a crosscutting consideration in Danish activities.

Denmark leads the way in establishing innovative partnerships with civil society, the business community and public authorities. We collaborate with other countries and through the EU and the UN to forge the best alliances to multiply the impact of our activities. Denmark should be the little green cogwheel that sets the larger ones in motion. This happens when we inspire major CO<sub>2</sub> emitters to take ambitious climate action, through international cooperation on renewable energy and energy efficiency, or through government-to-government strategic sector cooperation with other countries. When we support green partnerships between civil society organisations and companies. Or when we work to ensure that global climate and environment funds such as the Green Climate Fund or the Global Environment Facility secure funding for climate adaptation in the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Denmark has also been ahead of the game with the establishment of the Danish SDG Investment Fund and Denmark's Green Future Fund. Denmark must continue to lead on securing innovative finance for climate and sustainable development.

Climate change increasingly challenges people's livelihoods. Pictured are Pastoralists walking with their goats in the Ethiopian desert. Cattle herders are finding it ever more difficult to find pasture for their animals.

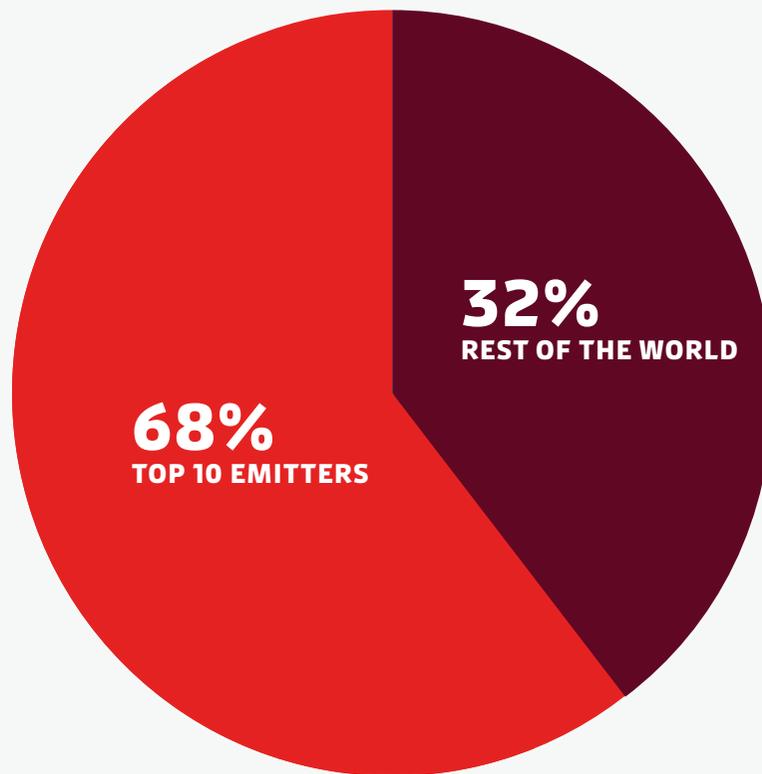
Photo: Jeppe Gudmundsen-Holmgreen



## THE MAJOR EMITTERS

The major growth economies today account for a substantial proportion of global greenhouse gas emissions

- 1.1% South Africa
- 1.4% Mexico
- 2.0% Indonesia
- 2.2% Brazil
- 2.5% Japan
- 5.4% Russia
- 7.1% India
- 7.5% EU
- 12.7% USA
- 26.1% China



Source: World Resources Institute, 2018

## THE PARIS AGREEMENT AS A COMPASS

Denmark will fulfil its commitments, including in relation to international climate finance, and show how to achieve the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. Denmark's development cooperation must contribute to achieving the Paris Agreement's three overarching goals:

1. Strive to limit the global rise in temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
2. Foster climate resilience and increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change affecting the poorest the most.
3. Redirect finance flows to support the transition to low emission and climate resilience development.

Following the Paris Agreement's three overarching goals, Denmark's development cooperation must devote particular focus to climate adaptation in the world's least developed countries and small developing island states. With significant and increasing contributions to international climate finance, Denmark is well positioned to bridge the gap between developed countries and developing countries.



Many places in the world the road to clean water is long. It is typically women and girls who have to walk many kilometres in order to reach the nearest well or water pump.

Photo: Jeppe Gudmundsen-Holmgreen

## CLIMATE CHANGE CREATES PRESSURE ON THE WORLD'S WATER RESOURCES

# 300 MIL.

**PEOPLE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA LIVE WITHOUT ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER**

The number will rise with climate change if we do not take action. Access to water is key to tackling food insecurity and preventing health crises and conflict. Improved water access also advances gender equality. Girls and women in developing countries spend many hours each week collecting water and fuel. In many places, they have to walk increasingly further from home to find water due to more extreme droughts caused by climate change. It leads to a longer working day, less time for education, and puts women and girls at greater risk of violence and abuse.

Source: WHO, Key Facts from JMP 2015 Report



Source: UNICEF/WHO, Joint Monitoring Programme on SDG 6, 2017

## CLEAN ENERGY FOR COOKING SAVES LIVES

More than 4 million people die each year prematurely from indoor air pollution arising from cooking with solid fuels. Women and children under 5 years are particularly susceptible to acute respiratory infections. In Africa alone, almost 900 million people live without access to clean energy for cooking. This figure has risen over 15 per cent since 2010. Therefore, Denmark, together with the World Bank, has taken the lead to facilitate transition to clean energy and access to improved cookstoves. This will both improve women and children's health and often contribute to easing the workload of women and children as well as reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and toxic soot particles.

## CLEAN ENERGY FOSTERS DEVELOPMENT

Over half a billion people in Sub-Saharan Africa live without access to modern energy. Access to clean energy is a precondition for poverty reduction, economic growth and employment as well as education, gender equality and health. Electricity generated from renewable energy is good for the climate and crucial for manufacturing processes, solar-driven water pumps, recharging of mobile phones, or for ensuring children and young people have adequate light to do their homework in the evening. We must help the least developed countries to leapfrog fossil-based energy systems and move directly to adopting renewable technologies.

# 548 MIL.

**PEOPLE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA LIVE WITHOUT ACCESS TO MODERN ENERGY**

Source: Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report 2020. IEA, IRENA, UNSD, World Bank, WHO

**CLIMATE ACTION ADVANCES HUMAN RIGHTS!**

Our climate and environment interventions must strengthen human rights and ensure that no one is left behind. For instance, Danish water sector interventions must advance gender equality and the rights of women and girls. It is also vital to ensure local involvement of citizens in green initiatives. This applies particularly in relation to indigenous peoples and environmental activists, who have a crucial role in protecting and strengthening biodiversity as well as preventing and addressing climate change, environmental degradation and destruction of nature caused by humans.

## NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS SOLVE SEVERAL PROBLEMS AT THE SAME TIME

Nature-based solutions focus on protecting, restoring and using natural resources sustainably to tackle challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, poverty and access to water. For example, restoration of mangrove forests contributes to capturing and storing large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub>, provides important habitats for animals, and protects coastal areas against floods. Nature-based solutions can also contribute to preventing conflict. The UN estimates that over 40 per cent of all internal conflicts over the past 60 years relate to disputes over access to natural resources. Nature-based solutions are particularly relevant to the many poor people in developing countries who are dependent on, for example, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Denmark will thus support international and Danish organisations promoting adoption of nature-based solutions.

## THE WHOLE OF DENMARK CONTRIBUTES TO GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY

Denmark's overall experience and expertise within green transition and sustainability provides a unique opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote green solutions in developing countries. Danish authorities have decades of experience in creating the framework for successful green transition, and Danish companies, knowledge institutions and other stakeholders are at the very front in developing and implementing green solutions within renewable energy, district heating, energy efficiency, clean drinking water, wastewater, efficient agricultural and food production, and biofuels.

## ACCESS TO EU MARKETS AND REGIONAL TRADE COOPERATION

Denmark works to facilitate better access for developing countries to the European market, partly through EU trade agreements and the EU schemes for market access for developing countries, particularly poor and fragile countries. These efforts must contribute to creating growth and employment and reducing poverty. They must also promote sustainable development and human rights, including labour standards. Going forward, Denmark will work to make EU's trade policy for developing countries greener and more open. In relation to the promotion of regional trade on the African continent, Denmark supports the African Union and the UN's efforts to increase sustainable regional integration and trade.

**OBJECTIVE 1****DENMARK MUST**

**Strengthen action to support climate change adaptation, nature, the environment and resilience in the poorest and most vulnerable countries.**

**DENMARK WILL**

- Increase support for adaptation to climate change and for building resilience locally before disaster strikes. The activities will be targeted at least developed and vulnerable countries and poor people.
- Assume international leadership within climate change adaptation and work to ensure that a significantly larger proportion of rich countries' climate financing is directed towards climate change adaptation in the future, with focus on least developed countries and small island developing states.
- Ensure new and improved access to water in Africa in rural and urban areas. This includes drinking water, water for production and crops, sanitation, and management and reuse of wastewater. Government-to-government strategic sector cooperation on water will be one of the key elements.
- Strengthen biodiversity and promote nature-based solutions. Partly through support to protecting, preserving and restoring natural resources, such as forests, freshwater systems, coastal and wetland areas, as well as ensuring sustainable management and use of ecosystems.
- Support climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food systems, prevent food loss and food waste, promote agro-organic cultivation methods, and strengthen green value chains. This will build resilience, improve food security and generate employment.
- Work to ensure that agricultural goods are produced in a sustainable and healthy way in developing countries. This means, for example, without causing deforestation in producer countries that damages climate, biodiversity and social conditions.
- Contribute to ensuring climate-smart infrastructure. Focus on water supply and sanitation in rapidly growing urban centres affected by climate change.
- Promote local climate change adaptation, including nature-based solutions that ensure ownership and involvement of vulnerable people and communities in project development and their access to climate finance.
- Prevent conflict and displacement by promoting interventions in the nexus between climate and security, for example through targeted water initiatives. The link between climate and conflict is clear and will be a key aspect of Denmark's candidature to the UN Security Council.
- Contribute to preventing and reducing the risk of loss and damage due to the impacts of climate change, and support recovery if climate disaster strikes.

**OBJECTIVE 2****DENMARK MUST**

**Assume international leadership within reductions, green transition, and access to clean energy.**

**DENMARK WILL**

- Ensure access to clean and renewable energy for more people in Africa to facilitate social and economic development as well as job creation. This includes clean energy sources in the home that contribute to improving health and gender equality.
- Strengthen the Danish SDG7 leadership and energy cooperation on green transition in developing countries, including promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency. This applies particularly to growth economies with high emission levels. The international cooperation on energy under the strategic sector cooperation will lie at the heart of the efforts to promote green transition and underpin Danish climate diplomacy.
- Promote ambitious national climate action plans that enable developing countries and growth economies to transition from fossil fuels to clean energy sources, particularly through coal phase-out. Civil society's important role as advocate for climate action must be strengthened.
- Integrate renewable energy and reduction activities with initiatives for climate change adaptation. An example could be solar-driven water pumps in humanitarian interventions.
- Promote reduction of greenhouse gases in developing countries partly by protecting, preserving and restoring biodiversity, forests and nature as well as ensuring deforestation-free value chains.

## OBJECTIVE 3

### DENMARK MUST

**Increase mobilisation of finance and promote green Danish solutions within climate, nature and the environment.**

### DENMARK WILL

- Implement a green reform of business and financing instruments as well as government-to-government strategic sector cooperation. This must create stronger cohesion across instruments, strengthen the partnership with the private sector, and ensure a clear green objective.
- Strengthen and focus government-to-government strategic sector cooperation within green sectors and particular Danish strengths such as energy, climate, environment, water, food, shipping and health.
- Redirect the global and national funding flows from fossil fuel investments to green transition, climate change adaptation as well as the environment and nature. Partly by ensuring that Danish state-owned funds working with development cooperation invest in accordance with the Paris Agreement and lead on phasing out fossil fuel investments.
- Promote favourable framework conditions for green investments in developing countries, for example through innovative and stronger international cooperation in strategic sector cooperation.
- Mobilise climate finance, in addition to development assistance, from private investors and pension funds, partly through the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU) and the multilateral development banks.
- Reform the IFU to ensure a greater number of economically and socially sustainable, green and responsible investments in developing countries, particularly in Africa and the poorest countries.
- Work to ensure that the multilateral development banks contribute to achieving the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. That they halt investments in fossil fuels, support countries' efforts to phase out fossil subsidies, and invest heavily in renewable energy and climate change adaptation.
- Ensure through an active Danish engagement in Brussels and via Danish missions and embassies that the EU, as the world's largest development actor, meets the ambitious goals for development cooperation in the climate and environment sector.
- Demand that our partners – from multilaterals to civil society – focus specifically on their climate and environmental footprint as well as their social responsibility, including gender equality. This must promote, for example, greener and more sustainable procurement.

## OBJECTIVE 4

### DENMARK MUST

**Create hope and prospects for the future through green and socially just economic recovery and poverty-oriented development.**

### DENMARK WILL

- Contribute to sustainable and socially just economic recovery and green transition after the COVID-19 crisis. Focus on creating hope and opportunities through decent jobs and green growth that benefits everyone and draws on the strengths of the Danish business sector and the social partner organisations.
- Ensure that the focus on clean energy and clean water contributes to improving health, creating jobs for people and fighting poverty. Education, technical training and upskilling can support green transition and job creation.
- Support the business community's involvement in the work on achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals within areas such as energy, water, environment, food and health. Ensuring decent jobs and livelihoods in developing countries are at the heart of this work.
- Zoom in on the social responsibility of companies within sustainable global value and supplier chains in developing countries, in accordance with, UN Guiding Principles on human rights and business. In this context, effort must be made to assist Danish companies in reducing their climate and environmental footprint in developing countries.
- Ensure coherence between development cooperation, economic diplomacy and active efforts in the EU and World Trade Organisation (WTO) to ensure open, fair and sustainable trade and investment policy. This applies also to promoting fair international tax regulations through the EU and OECD.
- Work to enable poor and fragile developing countries to better utilise the access to the EU market and to become gradually integrated in regional and global trade to create local economic growth and employment and a sustainable future. This also applies to promoting regional cooperation, for example in the African Union.

# DYNAMIC PARTNERSHIPS IN A CHANGING WORLD

We will focus our efforts in areas where we can do more for more people and where the needs are greatest. In areas where we can best promote justice, sustainability, safety and resilience and create equality and hope. And in areas where we have significant interests at stake.

Denmark engages in partnerships across civil society and the private sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs works together with, for example, the Lego Foundation, UNICEF, multilateral foundations and civil society organisations in promoting education in humanitarian settings and developing countries.

Photo: LEGO Foundation



When we involve ourselves, we do so with a long-term perspective from the outset. However, we will be ready to adapt and reduce or strengthen our involvement in accordance with the changing developments and needs. It means that the depth and nature of the partnerships in the individual countries are dynamic and could change over time. And it means that countries and partners might drop out and that new ones might join. We react and act in relation to our partnerships, for example if the terms and conditions are not observed, or if new opportunities and needs arise.

In countries with **expanded partnerships**, we will have a particularly close bilateral partnership, in which all our development policy instruments can be utilised. In such countries, we will implement a comprehensive development programme, engaging with a number of relevant stakeholders and actors across society. We will cooperate closely with the EU, the UN and other multilateral partners operating in the country. And we will tap into the huge pool of knowledge held by Danish authorities and utilise the particular skills and expertise within our civil society and Danish companies.

In countries with **targeted partnerships**, our involvement may be narrower and focus on specific issues of particular relevance to Danish interests and expertise. It could take the form of targeted civil society support for democracy and human rights or a partnership on innovative solutions to tackle displacement and irregular migration. Or it could involve promoting the green agenda and sustainable development in key growth economies, where Denmark is well-positioned to contribute with knowledge, expertise and experience.

A number of policy challenges are transnational in nature. Therefore, we also apply a regional perspective and bring regional instruments into play. Coherence and flexibility, for which we have received praise, will be a common thread in our activities.

## DYNAMIC COUNTRY PARTNERSHIPS

### EXPANDED PARTNERSHIPS

A particularly close bilateral partnership, where all our development policy instruments can be utilised

### TARGETED PARTNERSHIPS

Our involvement may be narrower and focus on specific issues of particular relevance to Danish interests and expertise

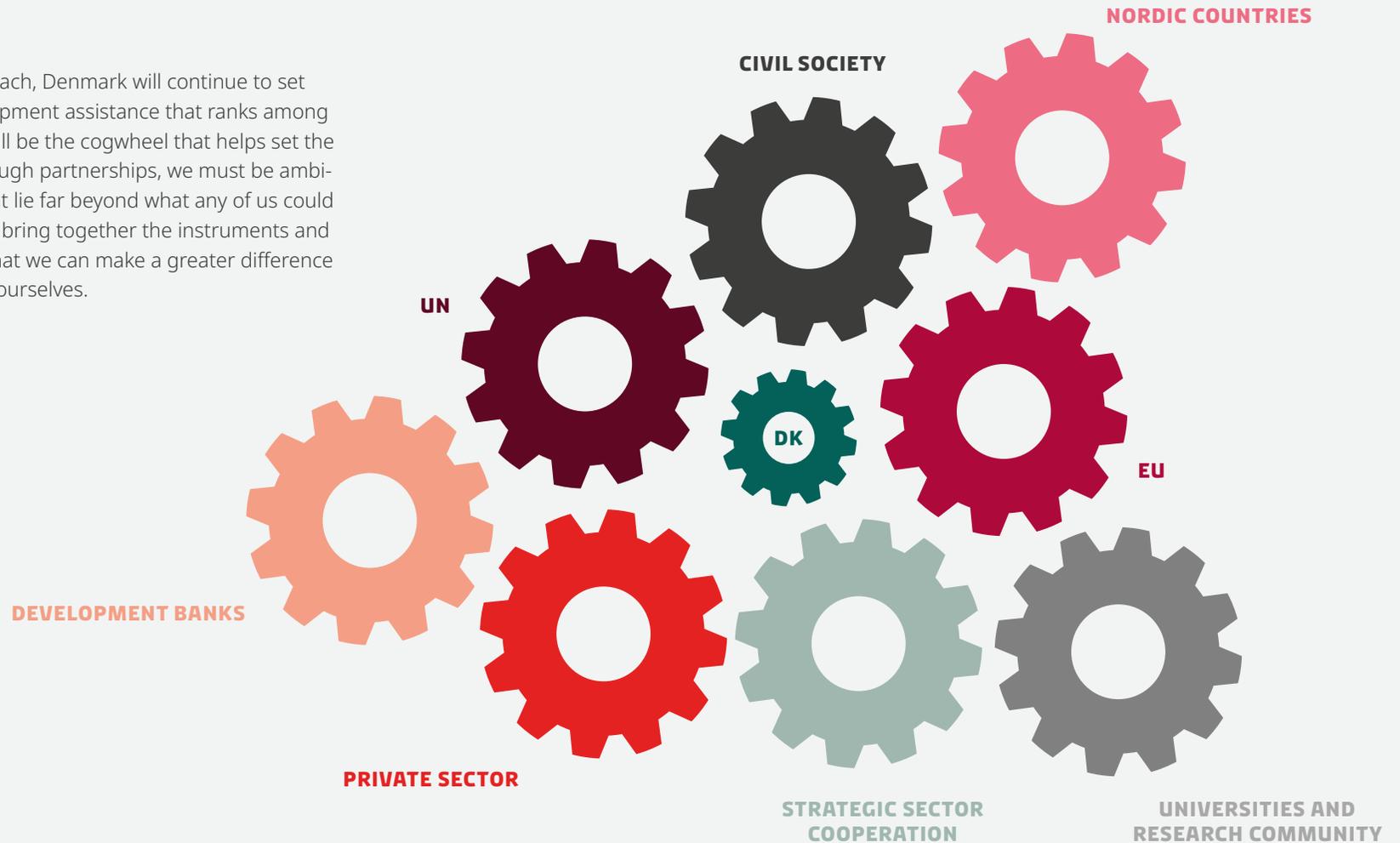
### TOOLBOX

For example:

- Country Strategic Frameworks, incl. bilateral programmes
- Multilateral efforts
- Strategic sector cooperation
- Danish Civil Society Partners
- Business instruments
- The Peace and Stabilisation Fund
- The Climate Envelope
- Danish foundations
- Funds for a more just and humane asylum system
- Humanitarian Aid
- The Danish-Arab Partnership Programme
- The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
- The Syria-Iraq Stabilisation Programme

## WE CREATE RESULTS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

With our partnership approach, Denmark will continue to set agendas and deliver development assistance that ranks among the best in the world. We will be the cogwheel that helps set the larger ones in motion. Through partnerships, we must be ambitious and deliver results that lie far beyond what any of us could do alone. We will focus and bring together the instruments and partners we work with so that we can make a greater difference in places where we involve ourselves.





## **CIVIL SOCIETY**

A strong and independent civil society is a main pillar of democratic societies and an end in itself. In Denmark, the civil society represents diverse, broad and popular involvement in Danish development cooperation, which we will support. Civil society plays a vital role in delivering knowledge and networks and promoting Danish values globally. This applies, for example, to developing sustainable, green solutions essential for reaching the goals set out in the Paris Agreement and to helping the most climate-vulnerable groups in developing countries. This is also where Denmark's particular strengths related to our cooperation with parliamentary networks and between the social partner organisations can shine.

Strong, locally based civil societies can make demands, promote change and think innovatively. They create tomorrow's leaders and develop communities of practice. Their rights-based work is crucial for promoting gender equality as well as the rights of women and girls, for ensuring inclusion of marginalised groups, and for ensuring involvement of young people. They provide a voice for vulnerable, persecuted and exposed groups and contribute to preventing conflicts and strengthening resilience in regions of origin. We will therefore work to build and strengthen locally based civil society actors – particularly through the Danish partners – and ensure a robust defence of civic space in developing countries.



## **UNITED NATIONS**

The UN plays an important role in relation to Denmark's development policy priorities. The UN is a values-based community that guards the norms and frameworks for international rules-based cooperation, including the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights. The world faces an increasing number of urgent and cross-border challenges that can only be met through closer international cooperation. Denmark is one of the UN's largest donors. We provide vital core contributions and target our support towards efforts and activities that align with our strategic priorities. We will place demands on and utilise the UN's global presence, knowledge and solutions, and actively support the UN's strategic and political work with conflict resolution, implementation of conventions, and protection of human rights. We will contribute to setting the agenda and promoting Danish values in relation to human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls, climate change adaptation and reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>, partly through Danish SDG-7 leadership, prevention of conflict and fragility, as well as forced displacement and irregular migration. Denmark is running for election to the UN Security Council for the period 2025-26. Denmark's development cooperation through the UN provides Denmark global legitimacy and supports the UN as an actor, including on agendas equally treated by the Security Council, such as conflict prevention and its impact on irregular migration, peace-building, and the link between climate change and security.



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

Through the EU and together with the EU institutions and the Member States, Denmark works to promote common humanitarian and development policy priorities and promote Danish key priorities. We work to ensure that the EU uses its leverage in relation to poverty, inequality, democracy and rights, climate, displacement, migration, growth and employment. The EU should focus particularly on Africa, where the long-term challenges are the most significant. The EU and its Member States are combined the world's largest development policy actor. The EU's extensive presence in developing countries, its financial weight and the interplay with EU's trade and foreign policy must be translated into influence on the global development agenda and into implementing the 2030 agenda. This makes the EU a vital platform for realising the Danish priorities.



## **NORDIC COUNTRIES**

The Nordic countries play an important role as a pioneer region within democracy and human rights, free and socially just societies, gender equality, climate and the green agenda, and humanitarian assistance. The Nordic cooperation and the Nordic position has the potential to achieve common agendas globally. Denmark will work closely together with Nordic and other like-minded countries to achieve shared priorities.



### STRATEGIC SECTOR COOPERATION

Government-to-government strategic sector cooperation brings the expertise of Danish public authorities into play in a wide range of countries in an effective and targeted way and has produced remarkable results on relatively little funding. One of the objectives is to significantly enhance the international cooperation and strengthen the strategic focus of the collaboration. We must take action in areas where Denmark is best positioned to contribute with Danish knowledge and technology needed by both poor developing countries and growth economies. We must focus and expand the strategic sector cooperation through comprehensive, integrated programmes where Danish strengths are greatest, such as climate and energy, environment and water, sustainable agriculture and food production as well as shipping and health. At the same time, the linkage to the responsible line ministries in Denmark, the private sector, including green investors and civil society, needs to be strengthened. The strategic sector cooperation forms part of Denmark's climate diplomacy and is tailored to match long-term needs of partners. It ranges from strategic sector cooperation on water in Ethiopia to large partnerships in growth economies such as India and Vietnam. In places where it can deliver particular value, the opportunity exists for engaging in more short-term, narrowly defined cooperation. This applies, for example, to Brazil and Pakistan. The comprehensive cooperation across Danish public authorities, combined with the local presence of Danish sector experts at local embassies, remains at the core of strategic sector cooperation.



### PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector must play a prominent role and assume responsibility for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. This applies to companies, investors, foundations, pension funds, labour market organisations and trade organisations. They must provide sustainable solutions, knowledge and finance for addressing the world's key development challenges. These resources are needed in developing countries, particularly within the green sector. Denmark can provide knowledge and technology within green transition and clean energy, environment and water, health, sanitation, and foods. Denmark will contribute to creating public-private partnerships and framework conditions that promote inclusive and sustainable development and create decent jobs in developing countries. This must strengthen developing countries' own business sector and their ability to create jobs and prosperity through sustainable growth. It is imperative to ensure focus on local involvement and ownership.



### DEVELOPMENT BANKS

The development banks are crucial for financing sustainable development as well as promoting long-term, integrated solutions, including in relation to displacement issues in fragile contexts. With their global presence and long-term commitments, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the regional banks have great influence in developing countries. The development banks' particular strength is supporting systemic reforms that strengthen public administration capacity as well as financing and promoting public-private partnerships. They are, therefore, vital in the global fight against poverty and in efforts to mitigate the impacts of crises – including the COVID-19 pandemic. They make a vital contribution to the frameworks for gender equality and girls and women's empowerment, the climate and energy agenda, and management of displacement and migration crises. Denmark will work to make the development banks greener. They must phase out support for fossil fuels and invest sustainably.



## **UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH COMMUNITY**

Partnerships between Danish universities and the research community in the Global South are important for generating knowledge and capacity to formulate good, well-considered policies and thereby sustainable outcomes. Danish research in itself also contributes to creativity and innovation within key areas such as health and climate.

The Lake Turkana Wind Farm in Kenya was partly built on the basis of Danish investments and Danish Vestas technology. It supplies approximately 16 per cent of Kenya's electricity.

Photo: IFU



## FINANCING

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement will require huge investments in developing countries. With the 2015 Addis Ababa Agreement on Financing for Development, EU Member States are collectively committed to meet the UN recommendation of allocating at least 0.7 per cent of GNI to development assistance by 2030. If all EU Member States that are also a member of OECD's cooperation on development assistance lived up to the recommendation of 0.7 per cent, it would provide over DKK 250 billion in additional development assistance to the poorest countries annually (2019-figure). In the EU and other relevant contexts, Denmark will work to ensure that the world's richest countries meet their commitment.

However, the UN Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved by development assistance alone. Denmark will mobilise more, innovative private investments to developing countries. This applies both to new growth markets and to the poorest and fragile countries in particular. Mobilising finance for climate initiatives is a top priority. In this regard, the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU) has a key role – also as a driver for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. New public-private partnerships and innovative instruments are needed.



Without huge investments, we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil the Paris Agreement. Pictured is a farmer harvesting crops as part of a desert project in Niger.

Photo: Danida



# 250 BIL.

**IN ADDITIONAL ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO THE POOREST COUNTRIES IF ALL EU MEMBER STATES LIVED UP TO THE 0.7 PER CENT RECOMMENDATION.**

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**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF DENMARK  
DANIDA**

Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation will contribute to ensuring a safer and more sustainable world. Through the strategy – The World We Share – we will work to build resilient and just societies that fight poverty and inequality. Societies that create future prospects for the individual. Societies where people want to live – and not leave. With this strategy, we lead the fight to stop climate change and restore balance to the planet. We adopt a human rights-based approach to development, and we make a particular effort to advance gender equality as well as promote and protect the rights of girls and women. And we take action to tackle the fundamental causes of hardship, conflict and fragility driving people to flee their homes and leading to irregular migration.

**Through development cooperation, through our partnerships and through the engagement of the Danish people, we will create more hope and more opportunities in the world's most fragile and poorest countries. We will help more people better. We will take responsibility for the world we share.**

The World We Share is based on a broad political agreement between the Danish Government (The Social Democratic Party) and the Liberal Party, the Socialist People's Party, the Danish People's Party, the Social Liberal Party, the Red-Green Alliance, the Conservative Party, the Alternative, and the Christian Democrats. The agreement was negotiated during spring 2021, and the strategy is in principle valid until July 2025. Prior to the political discussions, an extensive written consultation process was conducted, in which civil society, the private sector, the Danish public, special interest organisations, researchers and others submitted almost 100 responses. A number of open dialogue events were also held on Denmark's development cooperation. An agreement text describes the framework of the political agreement. It states, among other things, that a progress report will be submitted annually to the Danish Parliament (Folketing) on Denmark's development cooperation, which will be followed by a debate in parliament.

