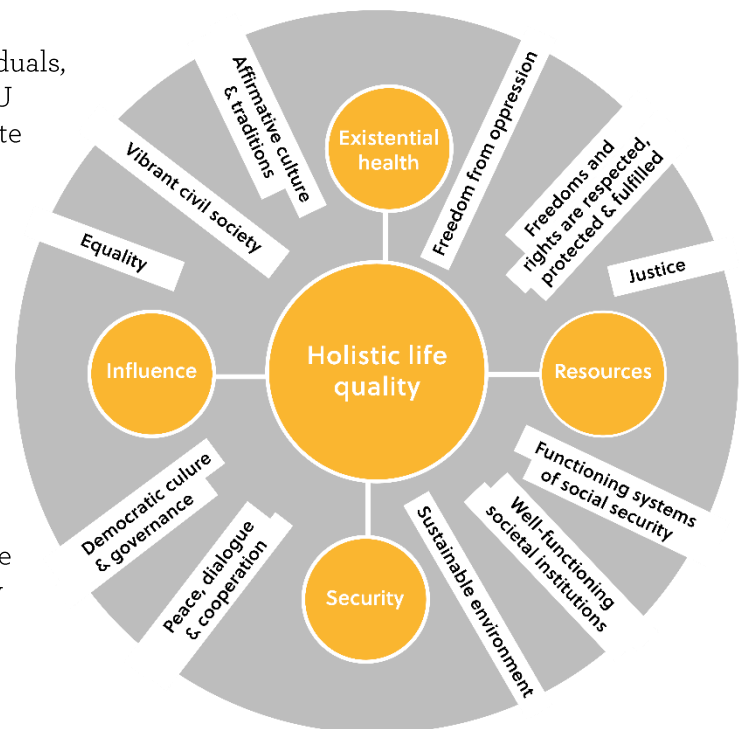


# PMU's Policy on Poverty Eradication and the Promotion of a Holistic Life Quality

Approved by PMU's management team 17/12/2020

The goal of PMU's fight against poverty is for individuals, groups and communities to have access to what PMU refers to as *holistic life quality*. In the fight to eradicate poverty, PMU focuses on five areas: access to resources, access to influence, access to human security, access to existential health, and the impact of the surrounding context. When all these areas are fulfilled to a satisfying and sustainable level, PMU believes that there is a good holistic life quality. The different areas are interdependent and influence each other, and different actors need to cooperate for a good level to be reached within all five areas. Depending on the context, the allocation of resources among the different areas may vary, but PMU strives for a balance between the five areas. The main focus should be on people living in particularly vulnerable situations.

Agenda 2030, the UN's action plan for a sustainable development, comprises seventeen global development goals. This policy links primarily to goal number one, focusing on poverty eradication, even though all the goals are interlinked.



*Different factors influence and work together to contribute to a holistic life quality. Things that affect the surrounding context are found in the outer circle of the model.*

The five areas for a holistic life quality, and PMU's prioritized focus within each area, are described below. The foundational values and the points of departure of this policy are described on pages 4-5.

## Access to resources

The goal is for people to have the highest attainable standard of health, access to quality education, an appropriate level of education and fair livelihood opportunities. To obtain this, PMU wants to support interventions creating sustainable opportunities for individuals and groups to live in dignity, meet their basic needs and make the best use of their resources. This also includes interventions allowing people living in vulnerable situations to get access to food, clean water and sanitization, education, professional skills, health care, infrastructure, energy, work, land and natural resources, tools and other things needed for people to sustain themselves. All of this shall be done in an inclusive way, with nobody being left behind.

*PMU wants to promote the access to resources through, for instance the following means:*

- Identify, include and support the most vulnerable groups, as well as identify and address the root causes of poverty. This may include influencing authorities and other duty bearers to take a larger responsibility to fulfil their obligations.
- Create conditions for people to have the highest attainable standard of health, access to quality education, an appropriate level of education and sufficient means of subsistence.
- Save lives, alleviate suffering and restore human dignity within the humanitarian field, and work according to the *Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS)*.
- Encourage and develop the large potential existing within the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements and other churches and Christian organisations to promote development and fight poverty.
- Support the mobilization of different kinds of networks in the fight for everyone's dignity and rights.
- Tap into PMU's partners' and other faith-based actors' strong driving force to fight poverty and create

cultures that favour sustainable growth.

- Encourage partners that are implementing both development and humanitarian projects to strive for good synergetic effects between these different types of interventions.

### Access to influence

A person's access to influence is affected by factors such as sex, age, caste, socioeconomic group, religion, ethnicity, disability and sexual identity. PMU wants to support interventions and methods that make it possible for people living in vulnerable situations to formulate their own problems, needs and rights and participate in decisions affecting these. For this to be possible, it is important to have knowledge and access to information.

*PMU wants to promote the access to influence through, for instance, the following means:*

- Ensure that PMU's work and interventions are characterized by a rights-based approach (RBA), as described under *Foundational Values of PMU* and in the *PMU Policy on a Rights-Based Approach*.
- Maintain an approach based on partnership, in accordance with *PMU's Policy on Partnership*. A good partnership includes cooperation in areas of common interest and for mutual development. The different parties have different roles and responsibilities, but everyone contributes with resources and competence based on their conditions.

### Access to human security

Human security includes economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. People need to feel secure to be able to develop and reach their full potential. PMU wants to support interventions that reduce violence and insecurity and increase the possibility of groups and individuals to exercise their human rights, as defined in different conventions of the UN, and find ways out of poverty.

All interventions affect the context in which they are being implemented. They can either promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion or strengthen antagonism and violent conflicts between groups. For a conflict sensitive approach, the following three areas are important: to understand the context in which the work is implemented, to understand the interaction between project activities and the context, and to act on the understanding of this interaction, in order to avoid negative effects and maximize positive effects.

*PMU wants to promote the access to human security through, for instance, the following means:*

- Strive towards maintaining a people-centered, holistic and proactive approach, adapted to each specific context.
- Contribute to strengthening resilience in the face of crisis, both in local partners and in the context where local partners work.
- Monitor that PMU-supported interventions are planned in a conflict sensitive way, something that is more closely described in PMU's publication *The Conflict Sensitivity Wheel*.

### Promotion of existential health

Research shows that inner motivation and existential health are important factors for individuals and groups to have the will and the motivation to change their own and other people's situation. Existential health is nurtured, among other things, by relational factors such as social belonging and friendship, by being able to contribute to a community, and by giving and receiving mutual respect and social support in different stages of life. Other important components of existential health are hope, self-confidence, a holistic outlook on life, rules of life and self-regulation, mental resilience (i.e., the ability to mentally and emotionally handle a crisis and/or return to the pre-crisis state), inner peace, to experience meaning and purpose in life, a positive self-image and a positive vision of the world, and a personal faith in something greater than oneself. Good existential health is an important prerequisite for people to be able to take responsibility for situations in their local communities and in society. At the same time, contextual factors such as the access to resources, influence and security can affect the existential

health. PMU's definition of existential health is a combination of areas presented by WHO (e.g., WHOQOL SRPB) and research on existential health.

*PMU wants to promote existential health through, for instance, the following means:*

- Work continuously and thoroughly, together with our partners, to address the five areas included in PMU's work for eradicating poverty, both on a theological and on an ideological level.
- Encourage churches and other faith-based actors to adopt a holistic approach to poverty eradication. This shall be done both by contributing to the existential health, identity-building and inner motivation of groups and individuals, and by taking responsibility for and contribute to a transformation of the holistic situation of poverty in these actors' communities and in society in general. This is described in more detail under *Points of departure of the policy*.
- Encourage churches and other faith-based actors to include and support the most vulnerable people in society, regardless of their backgrounds or view of life, since exclusion, marginalization and stigmatization are common experiences among those who live in extreme vulnerability.

### **Influencing the surrounding context**

The four areas above are influenced by different traditions and by the cultural context, as well as by institutions and structures in society. More information about this can be found under *Points of departure of the policy*.

*PMU wants to influence the surrounding context through, for instance, the following means:*

- Train and support local partners in opinion formation and advocacy, thus contributing to eradicating poverty and to influencing the surrounding context.
- Promote the existence of functioning social security systems in society, and strive to meet the needs of education, health, etc. This may imply both cooperating with and influencing authorities.
- Actively seek cooperation across borders, whether these borders are geographical, thematic, religious, ethnic or have arisen between civil society, state and market, for the objectives of Agenda 2030 to be achieved.
- Support and mobilize Swedish and international partners in their work to reduce all kinds of poverty and exclusion and to protect democracy and human rights.
- Promote the development of partnerships between civil society actors in Sweden and other countries and encourage global actors to cooperate around common challenges in the fight against poverty.
- Tap into and share local partners' and other religious actors' knowledge about local religious contexts in order to contribute to the understanding of religion and religious life (what PMU calls religious literacy), especially among institutional donors.
- Generate resources for PMU's operations and contribute to an increased knowledge and a stronger commitment to poverty eradication, in Sweden and Europe, through communication, formation of opinion and advocacy.

### **Scope of the policy**

The policy applies to all PMU-supported interventions and shall influence the strategies, global programs, guidelines and templates created by PMU. It shall have an impact on the learning processes and the networking of PMU, as well as our communication and fundraising. The policy applies to PMU's development activities, humanitarian activities, and communication and fundraising activities.

# Foundational values and points of departure of the policy

## Foundational values of PMU

For PMU, the key factors in bringing about change are the following:

- Taking a human rights approach in all fight against poverty.
- Acknowledging that the people and local communities are capable and have their own driving force and knowledge to be able to change their situation if conditions are favourable, even though additional knowledge and resources must sometimes be provided. The primary change actors are therefore the people who are living in poverty and our local partners.
- Understanding that the real potential for change arise when people come together as a group and act collectively.
- Having a holistic view of poverty, where access to resources, influence and security are key – as is the promotion of existential health. It is also important to bridge short-term and long-term processes (humanitarian interventions and long-term development interventions).
- Making sure that external support is always based on local ownership – building on change processes that are already under way among target groups and people concerned.

PMU is a rights-based and a faith-based organisation. A rights-based approach (RBA) has a strong focus on raising public awareness, advocacy and the autonomy of each individual, and on the responsibility of duty bearers towards rights holders. As a rights-based organisation, PMU works according to the principles of non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability. The faith-based foundation is about core values, driving forces and an approach characterized by a hope for and belief in the future, justice, righteousness, care for others, reconciliation and the conviction that all people are created in the image of God, with the same value and the same rights. Throughout the Bible, the mission to take responsibility for those who live in vulnerability and poverty, for the marginalized and the outcast, is emphasized. PMU believes that what God has entrusted to us should be made accessible to everyone. Jesus even says that he will recognize his followers based on how they cared for those on the underside of power.

## Points of departure of the policy

Multiple causes interact to push people into a situation of poverty. Besides the lack of material resources, poverty can also be characterized by a lack of education and health care, lack of influence over one's own life situation and the situation of family members, lack of security and lack of existential health. Through the concept of holistic life quality, PMU wants to draw attention to four different areas contributing, together with the influence of the surrounding context, to good life conditions. These areas are in turn affected by different traditions and the cultural context, as well as by institutions and structures in society. Traditions and cultural context refer to things such as the existence of corruption, a democratic culture, harmful traditions, different norms and power structures, equality/inequality, and the influence of clan and tribal leaders. Institutions and structures refer, among other things, to the level of personal security, law and order, whether there is peace or an ongoing conflict, the existence of good democratic governance and the level of respect, protection and promotion of the democratic rights and freedoms, including freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion and expression as well as the equal rights between men and women.

One of the foundational ideas of Agenda 2030, the UN's plan of action for a sustainable development, is that we all have a mutual responsibility towards one another. Individuals and groups may have their needs met in certain areas, while experiencing shortages in other areas, and the choices that we make affect the situation of others.

Hundreds of millions of people in the world still live in extreme economic poverty. Corruption is widespread in many places. The distribution of wealth is unequal and the power is concentrated to a few people while others live in social exclusion. War and conflicts destroy many years of development and

throw people out into situations of vulnerability and different kinds of abuse. The climate challenges that the world is facing, and already struggling with, also lead to a competition for the planet's limited resources. To find solutions to this, a long-term work with good synergy effects between humanitarian interventions and development projects is necessary. This policy is thus connected to many of PMU's other policies.

The situation varies between the different countries where PMU works, but also between different contexts within countries. Therefore, PMU's support must be adapted in order to be relevant in the context of each local partner.

#### *Religion and the role of religious actors*

In most parts of the world, the practice of religion is extremely important. The Church and other faith-based actors have an important role to play and is an influential voice in many countries, both in civil society and in society in general. Consequently, PMU believes that development actors must possess an understanding of religion, religious language and life to be able to maintain a constructive dialogue on societal development.

The cost to reach the global objectives of Agenda 2030 exceeds the total aid budget of the world. Therefore, a support from different kinds of actors is needed for the goals to be achieved and for every person everywhere to be included and involved in the development. Here, churches and other faith-based actors have a large potential to contribute to societal development through an efficient use of development funding and through their own contributions to societal development without the use of external funds.

PMU's local partners have established networks both with people that live in poverty or that live close to these, and with authorities and other local actors. This is important in order to be able to play a role as bridge builders between decision makers and people living in vulnerable situations, and to get a good effect from implemented interventions.