

All We Can and the Methodist Church

Contact Name and Details	Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary, swanneyd@methodistchurch.org.uk; Maurice Adams, CEO, All We Can, m.adams@allwecan.org.uk; Simeon Mitchell, Director, Communications and Marketing, All We Can, s.mitchell@allwecan.org.uk
Status of Paper	Final
Draft Resolutions	73/1. The Council welcomes the discussions that have taken place between All We Can and the Methodist Church. 73/2. The Council endorses the principles outlined in Section 4 of the paper. 73/3. The Council authorises the Connexional Secretary to form a group to continue the discussions with All We Can, as set out in the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To seek the Council's agreement for the continuation of explorations for strengthening the connections between All We Can and the Methodist Church
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Desire to enhance and strengthen service to the Methodist Church in its concern and practical compassion for the world's poor and disadvantaged • Principles to inform closer partnership • Specific proposals
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	International Relief and Development Policy (2007)
Consultations	Working party of members of the Methodist Council and the Connexional Team.

Summary of Impact

External (eg ecumenical)	Proposals aimed to strengthen partnership in the way the Church responds to international relief and development
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All We Can and the Methodist Church in Britain

Background

1. The Methodist Church has always placed a high priority on serving the community and particularly those in need. Through statements and actions, the Methodist Church has emphasised the importance of supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor. For several decades the Methodist Church has sought to express a commitment to international relief and development, through All We Can (formerly known as MRDF) and Christian Aid, though Methodists throughout Britain also support other initiatives.

Proposal from All We Can

2. As a result of conversations with senior leaders in the Church over the previous two years, in March 2015 All We Can formally submitted a discussion paper to the General Secretary (which was referred to the Connexional Secretary) in relation to the Church's international relief and development policy, strategy and engagement. The Connexional Secretary asked the Council to form a small group to shape further development. The motivation behind the paper was to express All We Can's desire to enhance and strengthen its service to the Methodist Church in its concern and practical compassion for the world's poor and disadvantaged. The core proposal of the paper was that a comprehensive review and strengthening of the connections between All We Can and the Methodist Church should be undertaken, in order that the Church can become as effective as it can be in its response to, and engagement with, international relief and development. It set out various ways in which this might be outworked in governance, strategy and practice, as a starting-point for discussion.
3. As agreed by the Methodist Council in April 2015 a working party of members of the Methodist Council and the Connexional Team, convened by the Connexional Secretary, met with representatives of All We Can to discuss the proposals in August 2015. The spirit of the paper and many of the specific proposals were warmly welcomed by the group. It was felt that working together more closely and purposefully would be beneficial for the Methodist Church, for All We Can, and for those who we seek to serve. It was agreed that it would be fruitful to continue with more detailed work and discussions on the practical implications of this.

Principles

4. This paper seeks the Council's agreement for these explorations to continue, so that practical proposals can be developed, and sets out the following initial principles which will inform these discussions:
 - a) Because of its history, its current activities, its far reaching mission, its ecumenical position and the importance it places on supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor, the Methodist Church can, and should, justify a more active and focused response to issues of international relief and development.
 - b) Whilst recognising both the difference and the interconnectedness of 'mission' and 'development', the various connexional groupings and other Methodist bodies that have

responsibility for 'mission' and 'development' could be more effective and efficient if they worked in closer collaboration.

- c) The Church's *International Relief and Development Policy* (2007) provides a sound basis for relief and development work, however it may require some updating to recognise the considerable changes that have occurred over the past ten years in the way international relief, development and mission are thought about and conducted.
- d) There is an historic and continuing commitment that the Methodist Church has as one of Christian Aid's sponsoring churches.
- e) In affirmation of the special relationship that All We Can and its predecessor organisations have had with the Methodist Church, All We Can desires to have a closer collaboration with the Methodist Church, and seeks to consolidate and deepen that unique connection in the future.
- f) The Church and All We Can need to be in agreement about roles, responsibilities, accountability and authority in relation to the Church's response to international relief and development.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 73/1. The Council welcomes the discussions that have taken place between All We Can and the Methodist Church.**
- 73/2. The Council endorses the principles outlined in Section 4 of the paper.**
- 73/3. The Council authorises the Connexional Secretary to form a group to continue the discussions with All We Can, as set out in the report.**