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Credit: Pamela Tulizo/ActionAid

ActionAid Ireland Strategy 2022 to 2027 Summary

A just and caring world for women and children

Our Strategy

Vision

A just and caring world where women's and children's human rights are respected

Mission

To support the leadership and agency of women and children who are excluded and live in poverty

Strategic Priorities

- Address the systemic and structural causes of gender-based violence
- Promote women's leadership in humanitarian contexts
- Amplify feminist alternatives for economic and climate justice
- Pursue diverse sources of funding, inspire and engage all supporters

Strategic Enablers

- Uphold excellent standards of accountability and governance
- Commit to anti-racism, shifting power and decolonisation
- Ensure high quality programming, embed learning and evaluation
- Focus on safeguarding

Feminist leadership principles



Our Values

Mutual Respect

Requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of Diversity

Justice and equity

Requiring us to ensure the realisation of our vision for everyone, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion

Integrity and accountability

Integrity and accountability: requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources and open in our judgements and communications with others

Solidarity with people living in poverty and exclusion

Will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice, and gender inequality

Courage of conviction

Requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice, and gender inequality

Independence from any religious or party-political affiliation

From any religious or party-political affiliation

Humility

Recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice

Feminist leadership principles

- Self-awareness
- Self-care & caring for others
- Dismantling bias
- Inclusion
- Sharing power
- Responsible & transparent use of power
- Accountable collaboration
- Respectful feedback
- Courage
- Zero tolerance

Our strategic direction

The next five years will build on the foundations of ActionAid Ireland's work to date, guided by the following commitments:

Building the power of the furthest behind women

We are committed to the 'furthest behind' women and children, those who are most excluded.¹ We will learn, innovate and adapt to support their agency, empowerment and dignity. We will ground our community work in our human rights-based approach, feminist analysis and improve lives locally but also seek to change the policies and practices that make people poor.

Building on the power of the collective ActionAid federation

While we are a small organisation in Ireland, we are part of a wider federation that seeks to tackle economic and climate injustice by challenging oppressive global systems. We will work with the collective ActionAid federation to bring about the changes that are needed, to prevent increasing inequality and climate destruction. We will offer alternative feminist visions of hope, grounded in care of people and planet, to the benefit of all.

Shifting power will guide our work overall

We will commit to anti-racist communications to ensure that we never tell stereotyped stories about people or places. We will engage with the issue of decolonisation to challenge unequal power dynamics between North and South that persist today. We will partner with ActionAid affiliates in Europe to influence the European Union's development policies, as the largest aid donor globally.

2022

2027

Engage and inspire our supporters in Ireland

Many of whom have supported us and the communities we work with for decades. We will actively communicate about how their support improves women's lives and also contributes to long-term transformative change. We will also seek to diversify and grow not only our supporter base, but also explore new partnerships, funding opportunities and digital innovation.

Engage in programmatic work in Ireland where there is added value

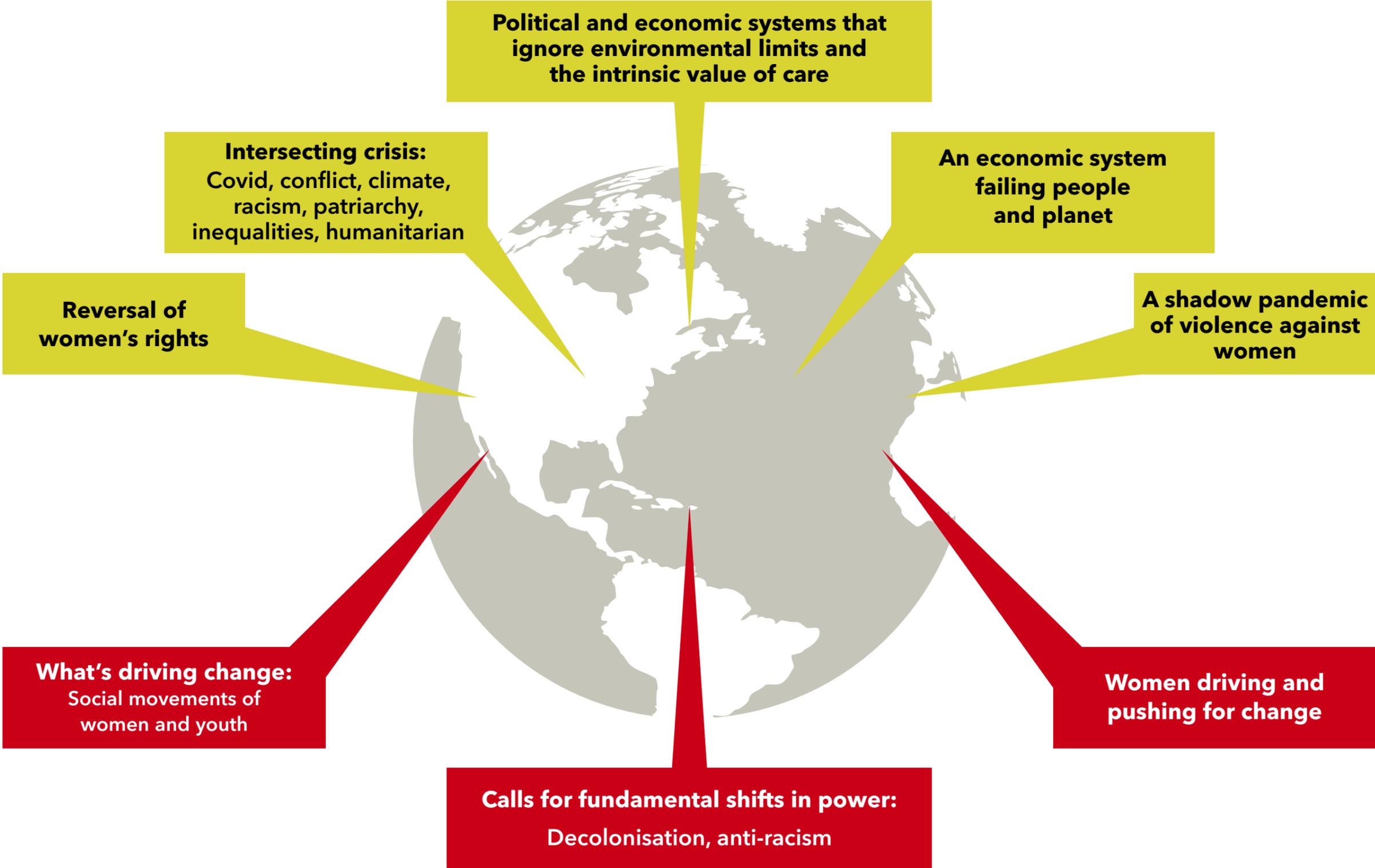
While most of our work is in the Global South, we will work in Ireland and connect learning from women in the South to the North (building on previous work to end female genital mutilation (FGM) in Ireland) as part of our ambition to decolonise aid and to shift power and privilege. We will also connect structural issues of inequality and injustice in the Global South to policy work in Ireland.

Deeply value our people and feminist practice

We will deeply value our people, Feminist Leadership culture and engage in equitable partnerships with our colleagues in other ActionAid offices around the world.

¹ This varies according to context but is understood to mean those women and children who face high degrees of poverty, exclusion, and marginalisation. This can be compounded by different identities such as class, age, faith, ethnic status, minority group, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and social status.

The world we live in



■ Key trends ■ What's driving change

Our Story

Women and children living in poverty and exclusion are central to ActionAid's work.

Our choices and actions are informed by an analysis of power and inequality; it recognises there are many inequalities at play (which include gender, and also poverty, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender identity among others).

This feminist lens drives us to better understand power and its many manifestations, enabling us to work towards more equitable redistribution of power and resources, as well as enhancing women's ability to claim and enjoy their human rights.

ActionAid was originally founded as a charity in 1972 in the UK. In 1983, a small independent group of people in Ireland who had been supporting ActionAid in the UK realised an opportunity to establish an independent Irish organisation: ActionAid Ireland.

Throughout its history ActionAid has innovated and evolved its approach to better address the structural causes of poverty and injustice. By the late 1990s ActionAid had adopted the Human Rights Based Approach (see box) as a guide to development. Rights remain central to ActionAid's approach to poverty eradication, humanitarian preparedness and response and social justice.

ActionAid brings together individuals and communities (rights holders) and duty bearers (for example local and national governments) alike, to facilitate analysis of problems, dialogue, awareness raising and lesson-sharing. Participation and empowerment lie at the heart of ActionAid's approach, and are critical to ensuring the long term sustainability of our work and its outcomes.

ActionAid Ireland was one of seven founding members of the ActionAid International Federation in 2003. The decision to internationalise was taken to enable the organisation to operate more effectively at a global level. As a direct consequence, **ActionAid was the first international NGO to shift its global headquarters to a country in the Global South and to be governed by its members.** Today the federation comprises 45 member countries across Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas and is headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa

31 The National Women's Council of Ireland (nwci.ie)

32 Direct Provision: 20 years too long - Amnesty International Ireland

33 STAD - Coalition to End Direct Provision

34 Ireland-and-the-Convention-on-the-Elimination-of-All-Forms-of-Discrimination-Against-Women.pdf (ihrec.ie)

35 Ireland ranks among worst in EU-wide racism study (irishexaminer.com)

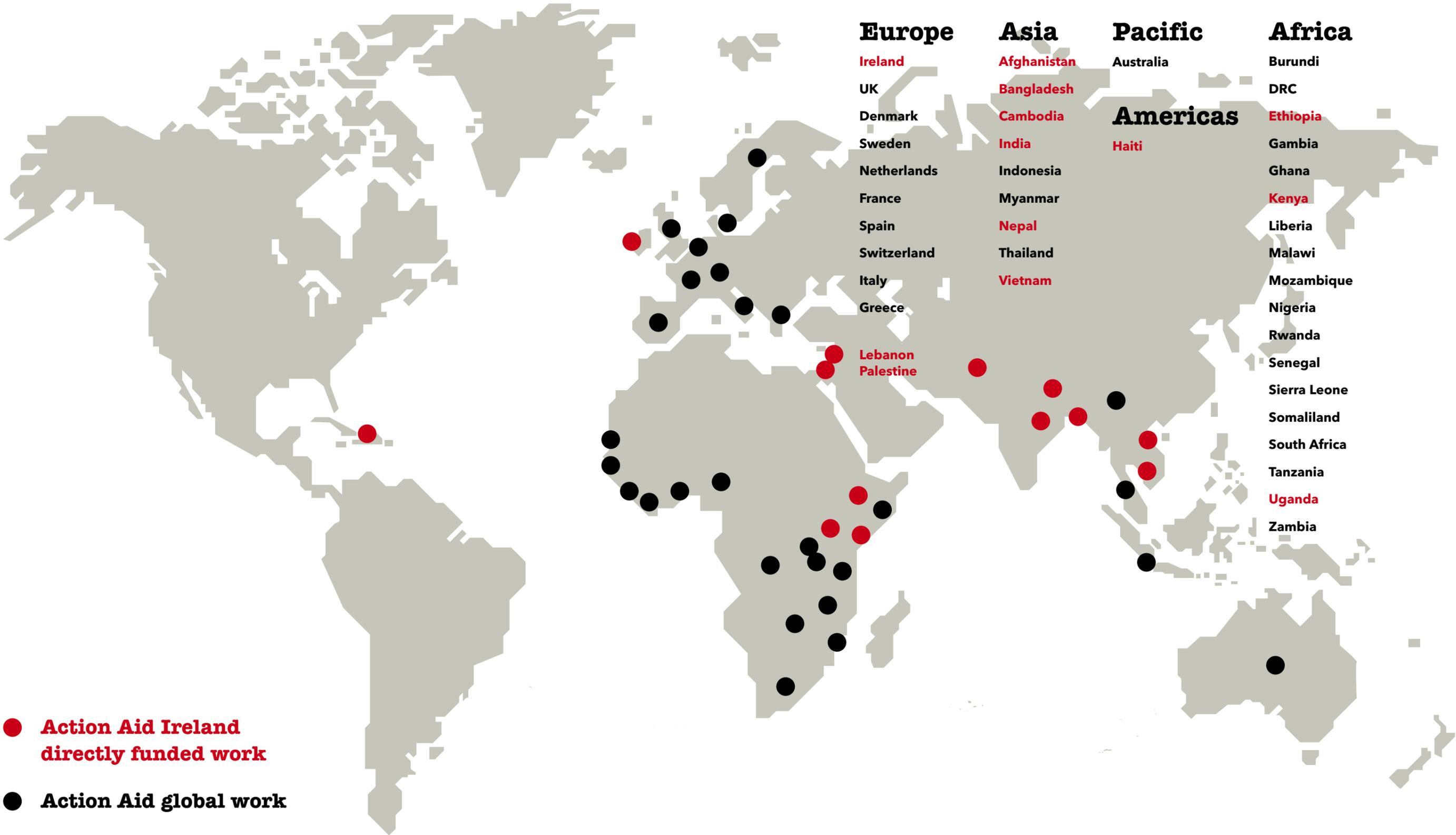
36 Say No to Racism | Social Justice Ireland

Our Human Rights Based Approach is built on international human rights law which recognises the role of the state in delivering human rights (dignity, housing, health, an adequate standard of living etc.) We also go beyond a legal or technical approach to rights.

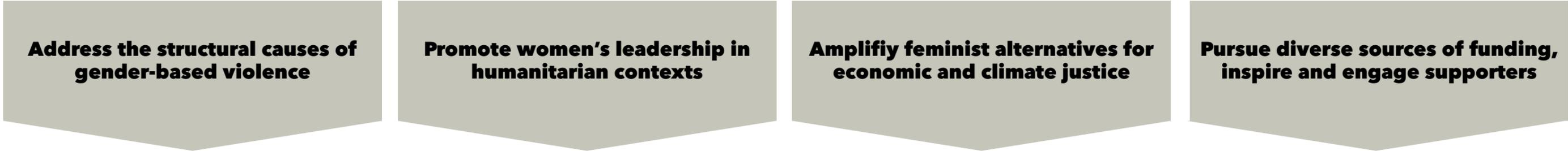
We analyse and confront power imbalances and we take sides with people living in poverty, who are placed the centre of our human rights based approach. We support people living in poverty to understand that many of their most fundamental needs are actually enshrined in specific human rights frameworks.

Taken from: <https://actionaid.org/publications/2020/action-global-justice-practice>

Who we work with and where



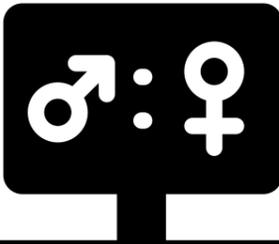
Our Theory of Change



We work for transformative and long-term change



In women's lives (and their children's) at the individual and community level



At the national and global level to change structures and systems



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