

Principles and guidelines for the processing of projects at Adveniat

Translation of the document “Grundsätze und Richtlinien der Projektförderung von Adveniat” approved by the Commission for the Catholic Church in the World of the German Bishops' Conference on 19 May 2010

Introduction

In 1961 the German Bishops' Conference launched the Episcopal Campaign Adveniat. “With the focus on pastoral help for the local Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean Adveniat gives an independent and essential contribution to the joint work of the worldwide operating Catholic Church.”¹ In 1998 the “basic principles and directional guidelines” for the processing of projects were approved. Since then Church and society have changed.

Changes in the Catholic Church in Germany and its involvement in worldwide Church activities

Involvement in Church activities all over the world continues to play an important role in German parishes despite restructuring processes. Practising worldwide solidarity on the basis of one's faith, speaking up for justice and peace as a reality of God's Kingdom and strengthening the pastoral work of the local Churches on other continents is what motivates donors.²

Amid changes within the Church in Germany Adveniat is also preparing to tackle new challenges. The partners in Latin America and the Caribbean, the donors and other interested people in Germany expect professional skills and a clear orientation towards the poor.

On the situation of Church and society in Latin America and the Caribbean

Thanks to intensive dialogue with the partners in Latin America, experience in dealing with projects and the statement of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean in Aparecida (2007) we are able to draw up a detailed and up to date picture of Latin America and the Caribbean today:

Even if crises repeatedly lead to momentary slumps, the economy continues to grow in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. But the gap between poor and rich does not get any smaller, quite the opposite: Even in comparatively well off countries there is appalling poverty. This gap is also reflected within the Church on this continent. The Catholic Church in Latin America and the Caribbean has therefore expressed its option for the poor and emphasised this once again most impressively in the closing document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean in Aparecida.³

1 Introduction of the statute of the Episcopal Campaign Adveniat (1993).

2 See *Weltkirchliche Arbeit heute für morgen. Wissenschaftliche Studie in Gemeinden deutscher Diözesen*. Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz (edit.), 23. September 2009, Bonn, 2009, pp. 30-33 (Arbeitshilfen 235). [Involvement in worldwide Church activities today for tomorrow. A scientific study in German parish communities, organised by the Office of the German Bishops' Conference]

3 See Aparecida 2007. Concluding document of the 5th General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean. 13-31 May 2007, No. 391-398.

Above and beyond this the following insights are of importance for an understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean today:

- Latin America and the Caribbean have many faces. This diversity can be seen in the cultures of the indigenous peoples and Afro Americans, but also in the life of the various social groups. We also observe a splitting up into parallel societies which endangers solidarity in the society.
- In the meantime a large portion of the population lives in towns. This increasing urbanisation is one of the side effects of the continual migration within Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Although there are now technically democratic structures in almost all countries of the continent, large sections of the population are excluded from any real participation in political decisions.
- The natural foundations for life in Latin America and the Caribbean are increasingly threatened by human actions. The awareness that the destruction of the environment also endangers the life of the people is growing in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Catholic Church is also affected by important changes:

- Alongside grassroots Church groups, religious communities have grown in importance.
- The growth of non Catholic religious communities and movements as well as the secularisation process are leading to a situation in which it can no longer be assumed that the majority of Latin Americans and Caribbeans automatically belong to the Catholic Church. At the same time the Catholic Church is losing influence within the political structures.
- The vitality of the Catholic Church can also be seen in popular religiosity. This is becoming more highly valued in the every day practice of the Church and in the sometimes controversial theological reflections.
- In some countries there are internal Church conflicts which damage the credibility of the Church's commitment for the people.

The “signs of the time“ and the mission of Adveniat

The Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean sees these developments as “signs of the time“ and calls for a reversal “from pastoral work which maintains the status quo to a clearly missionary form of pastoral work“⁴. “Pastoral work“ here means Church involvement in the world, true to the Word of God and to the Church renewal in the Second Vatican Council. Adveniat feels obliged to this. Adveniat supports the activities of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean and thus a Church which has chosen the option for the poor and takes the needs of the people seriously. This is how Adveniat promotes the mission of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, as a liberating evangelisation, the proclamation of the message of the Kingdom of God in the discipleship of Jesus Christ.

4 Aparecida 2007, No. 370.

Principles and guidelines for the processing of projects

When dealing with projects Adveniat takes up the challenges described above and orientates itself to the following principles and guidelines:

Principle 1: Identification with the Church

Adveniat supports projects of the Catholic Church in Latin America and the Caribbean. In doing so Adveniat focusses on projects which sustain Church life in the long term.

Guidelines:

- 1.1** Project applications require a recommendation from an ecclesiastical entity, usually from the local bishop or the superior of a religious order or congregation.
- 1.2** Responsible entities which are not integrated in the structures of dioceses, parishes, religious orders, religious communities or Catholic associations can also receive financial support: They need, in addition to the recommendation, that the local bishop or superior confirms that they are involved in pastoral work. This is also the case for ecumenical projects.

Principle 2: Pastoral projects

Adveniat supports pastoral projects which are in accordance with the guidelines of the Catholic Church in Latin America and the Caribbean and in coordination with the other Church agencies in Germany.

Guidelines:

- 2.1** The office registers all pastoral project applications received by Adveniat and prepares them for decision, according to the rules of procedure.
- 2.2** Excluded from this are applications
 - which are not submitted by a Church applicant,
 - which refer to measures which have already been completed,
 - which are the responsibility of another German Catholic agency,
 - which have no connection with Latin America or the Caribbean,
 - for which decisions were already taken in previous projects,
 - for requests which cannot be supported due to a resolution of the Sub commission for Contacts with Latin America (Adveniat in particular).
- 2.3** Adveniat gives priority to applications which show planned and sustainable pastoral activity, which takes up the "signs of the time" and is in accordance with the Second Vatican Council as well as with the resolutions of the General Conferences of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Principle 3: Solidarity

Adveniat represents solidarity with the Church and the people in Latin America and the Caribbean. Accordingly Adveniat promotes the development of a Church acting in solidarity with its people.

Guidelines:

- 3.1** Adveniat shows solidarity,
- by dealing sympathetically with the applications whilst aware of its own financial and personal limits; solidarity and justice are also demonstrated in the manner in which these limits are dealt with in the processing of the projects,
 - by supporting projects which comply with the focus on the poor in terms of concept and finance,
 - through the most unbureaucratic procedure possible; in correspondence with partners, we primarily request the information necessary for the processing of the projects,
 - through a fast processing of the applications,
 - in the way we approach our partners, with openness, sympathy and hospitality,
 - by presenting individual projects to the German public, thus supporting the local partners.
- 3.2** Adveniat expects the following supportive actions from its project partners:
- transparency in project communication so that Adveniat can provide adequate reports for the donors,
 - project applications which reflect the real necessities of the project partners,
 - staffing, financial and conceptual support within and between the parishes, dioceses, bishops' conferences, lay initiatives, congregations,
 - the willingness to support Adveniat's public relations department.
- 3.3** The calculation of a grant takes the specific local situation into account.

Principle 4: Subsidiarity

Adveniat helps in places where the resources of the local Church are not enough to finance and carry out its projects.

Guidelines:

- 4.1** The condition for a support is the proof that the local Church itself is active in financing and carrying out a project, but that its resources are not sufficient to implement it. The local contribution can also be a non monetary one. Contributions promised by third parties will be taken into account.
- 4.2** Adveniat's grant must be an adequate support for the implementation of a project or at least of an essential part of it.
- 4.3** Project assistance from Adveniat serves to sustain Church life. To this end, Adveniat supports the independence and ability of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean to operate on its own in terms of material and personnel. At the same time Adveniat takes care to ensure that no extreme dependencies arise.
- 4.4** The aim is to assist a growing self sustainability of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Principle 5: Focus on the poor

The help from Adveniat serves to enable the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean to put into practice the preferential option for the poor to which it has committed itself. The poor are the subjects of their own development.

Guidelines:

- 5.1** Priority will be given to projects which benefit the poor, primarily women, young people, the indigenous or Afro American population.
- 5.2** The poor depend on the development of their spirituality and their skills. Therefore pastoral projects which serve educational processes are given priority.
- 5.3** Adveniat promotes what is necessary, not what is desirable. The appropriateness of the measure as well as the poverty of those who will eventually benefit from it must be made clear in the application.

Principle 6: Orientation towards the grassroots level

Adveniat and the project partners make sure that those who benefit from the projects – the target groups – are involved in the respective planning, implementation and evaluation. The projects in question should be their own ones.

Guidelines:

- 6.1** The target groups should be included in the planning, implementation and reporting.
- 6.2** This participation can for example be demonstrated by including accompanying letters from the parish or diocesan committees in the project applications and/or by adding statements from those who have benefited or will benefit from the projects to the accounts.

Principle 7: Application policy and dialogue with the partners

The partners decide which projects they present to Adveniat. Adveniat does not develop any projects of its own.

Guidelines:

- 7.1** Adveniat registers the partners' requests. The applications must be submitted in writing.
- 7.2** Adveniat studies the project applications, agrees in dialogue with the partners on the conditions of the grants and makes sure that these conditions are respected.
- 7.3** Adveniat advises the partners on the planning and implementation of the projects.
- 7.4** Adveniat maintains a dialogue with the partners on long term aims and criteria of the cooperation.

Principle 8: Transparency

Adveniat ensures that there is transparency in the presentation, implementation and accounting of the projects and in the use of the grants.

Guidelines:

- 8.1** The completeness of the required documents is a condition for the allocation of a grant.

- 8.2** Adveniat informs the partners early on about the necessity of transparency in the processing of the projects and insists on using the grants in a transparent way.
- 8.3** The project partners draw up a final report for each project.
- 8.4** The projects must be clearly explained and easy to verify. This and the correct use of funds in previous projects are conditional for the support of new requests from the same partners.
- 8.5** If project partners of a diocese or congregation do not provide the accounts despite repeated requests, Adveniat can suspend the funds for new projects.

Principle 9: Cooperation

The work of Adveniat is complementary to the work of the other Catholic relief agencies in Germany. Adveniat coordinates its solidarity towards the Catholic Church worldwide with these other agencies.

Guidelines:

- 9.1** Adveniat coordinates the projects with the other agencies involved in Church activities worldwide.
- 9.2** Adveniat collaborates on the implementation of the goals and recommendations resulting from the project initiated by the German Bishops' Conference: "On the future of the activities in Germany in favour of the Catholic Church worldwide".

Principle 10: Professionalism

Adveniat accompanies and studies the projects in a professional way. Professionalism includes professional skills as well as a dialogue with the partners.

Guidelines:

- 10.1** Adveniat evaluates the projects and studies the impact of the aid.
- 10.2** The professionalism in the processing of projects at Adveniat can be seen in
 - the professional skills and the knowledge of the countries in question of those who deal with the project applications,
 - its competence in a goal-oriented intercultural dialogue,
 - the efficient organisation of its work in the office.

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