

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA



DIACONICAL POLICY

Department
May, 2016

FOREWORD

Diaconia believes in people's equal value and the right of all people to live a dignified life. In ELCT, these are the driving forces behind our work, In addition to that, we also know that far too many people today live in extreme poverty and vulnerability and hence the reason it is important to come together as a church and other stakeholders to make the World a better place for all of us irrespective of our differences, challenges and backgrounds.

Diaconia policy stems from people's convictions, faith, commitment and their ability to exercise these. This document is based on the firm belief in people's equal value and the right of all people to live a dignified life.

The policy captures the context within which the Diaconal work in ELCT is functioning with the emphasis put on core values of the Church such as compassion, love and the church's commitment to serve the underserved, disadvantage and vulnerable groups including the poor, widows, orphans, Elderly and the sick especially those in need of Hospice and Palliative care support and their families.

ELCT as a Faith based organization recognize our unique role to serve others which remains crucial for our faith and in Biblical context. However; on the other hand, Diaconal work can also play a huge role in complementing the Government of Tanzania's efforts in all matters related to human right, gender equality, democratization, conflict resolution and justice.

A policy statement is not static. Hence, the overall context and contents of this policy should be reviewed from time to time, subject to the changing environment, church policies, new challenges and overall circumstances within which we operate.

It is expected that all stakeholders will use this policy effectively. It is anticipated that the availability and subsequent use of this policy at all levels of implementation in ELCT and will provide guidance and more support to the community and people in need of our support and services.

Mr. Brighton Killewa
Secretary General
May, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The preparation and eventually print the out of this document involved discussion, consultation and documentation of ideas provided by different stakeholders for Diaconal. The Department of Health and Diaconal of ELCT on behalf of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) wishes to recognize and express our sincere appreciations to all those who were involved in the preparation of this policy. It is practically impossible to remember and mention each and every person who participated in the exercise however, I thank you all.

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Last but not least, I would like to extend appreciation to our development partners including Evangelical Lutheran in America (ELCA), Church of Sweden (CoS), FELM, DanMission and Bavarian Mission whose partnership to the ELCT Health Department has contributed hugely to the continued function and growth of the department and hence the process of preparation of this policy document.

I am also very grateful to those who are not mentioned here but have contributed in one way or the other in developing and publishing of this policy document.

On behalf of ELCT Health department, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your individual and organizational efforts, skills and support!

Dr. Zebadia Paul Mmbando
Health Director (Ag) – ELCT
May, 2016

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA DIACONICAL POLICY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. **Meaning**

Diaconia means service to all, especially those in need and unable to meet these needs due to a particular disablement. Spiritual poverty is inclusive. This service is motivated by Christ love and intends to translate Christ love and compassion in action. It is none personal oriented profit.

2. **Theological justification for the Church to involve herself in Diaconic Work.**

The central teaching of the Bible is concerned with the revelation of God's love in human history. God has revealed Himself to the people in his loving service in Jesus Christ. His love is what moved Him to send His only son into the world to be our saviour – John 3:16. Thus Jesus Christ because the Deacon of God after He had accepted His Father's call to come to the world of sinners and sufferers in order to redeem them as a good servant of God – **Mark 10:45.**

The six Christian Charitable works by Jesus in **Mathew 25:31 – 42** are to feed the hungry, to give water to the thirsty, to accept strangers, to give clothing to those without, to visit the sick, to visit those in prison, and to bury the dead (the last one was added in by the early church in the first century). These acts do not depend on wealth, ability, or intelligence. They are simple acts freely given and freely received. We have no excuse to neglect those who have deep needs. Jesus demands our personal involvement in caring for others needs. It is to be noted that, depending on how the church fulfils these charitable works, it will either be blessed or cursed. God blessed his people when they extended help to the hungry and afflicted – (**Isaiah 58:10**). He will do the same today. These works have remained a fundamental teaching of Diaconia today. God wants to receive our service through serving the needy here on earth.

As we read in the book of Acts, the number of Christian believers was increasing rapidly in the beginning of Christianity in Jerusalem – Palestine. The growth of Christian community also meant an increase in social problems in the community. We read about the complaint of Hellenists “The Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution” – **Acts 6:1 - 6**. When the Apostles learnt about the complaint they realized that there social problems to be solved. They appointed seven people who would do distribution work justly and with great love. The criterion of choosing the seven Deacons was that they be of good repute, full of spirit of love and wisdom.

The appointment of the seven Deacons in early Christian Church in Jerusalem is to be considered as the installation of diaconic ministry within the whole church ministry.

Three Church Dimensions

Always, the existence of Christian Church in any society must be recognized through her three dimensions:

- (a) Meeting together as a community of believers in Jesus Name for the purpose of teaching, fellowship, prayer, worshipping and thanksgiving – Koinonia – **Mt. 18:20**
- (b) Proclaiming the Good News to non – believers and believers in the world – Mission work – **Acts 1:8**
- (c) Doing charitable services for the needy people – Diaconal – **Mt. 25:40 – 45**

Diaconia is therefore not merely a social work like any other, it is more than that - It is an integrate part of total church ministry. There are many needy people who are waiting for someone else to extend a hand to raise her/him from suffering and bring relief.

Although the old social problems mentioned in the Bible still exist, new social problems have emerged due to rapid changes educationally, socially, economically culturally and scientifically. All these bring new problems to societies and hence wider involvement of today’s diaconal work i.e

- More political problems
- More environmental problems
- More health problems
- Population increase problems
- Diaconal work is to prevent the source of problems instead of waiting until they occur.
- Bad behavior and social problems are on the increase.
- There is a need to be more concerned in peoples' development issues.

3. Historical Development of Diaconal Services in the ELCT.

(a) Diaconal activities in the beginning of mission work in Tanzania.

Missionaries were of various professions, i.e. Pastors, Doctors, Nurses, Teachers, Craftsmen, and Agriculturists. All of them were identified as Missionaries regardless of their professional differences.

In 1963, the seven regional Lutheran Churches in Tanganyika were united and formed into one Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania – the ELCT. Then Regional Churches become the Dioceses of this one church and today there are 24 Dioceses.

Diaconal activities were mostly carried out by medical personnel especially by nurses who were deaconesses. Besides their hospital duties, they visited sick people at home, nursed them and consoled them. They gave domestic education to women especially expectant mothers so that they would know how to care for their children and their families. They took care of children who were neglected.

Other Diaconal services were to take care of slave children who were left free after slavery was barred worldwide. These children did not know where to go and were left without social welfare or security. The only hope for them was mission stations.

Diaconic activities were more prevalent in medical and education institutions. Some Missionary societies were directly diaconal oriented an

example is the Bethel Mission Society, which started working in the Usambara /Tanga Region and Bukoba. Right in the beginning they built visible diaconal institutions. These were centres for physically and mentally handicapped people. Hospitals for epileptics, schools for blind children and orphanage, just to mention a few.

(b) **Diaconic work in the ELCT today.**

As diaconal was part of mission work from the beginning, it continues to be in ELCT Dioceses even today. Some ELCT Dioceses have more diaconic institutions and centres than others. Just to mention some:-

- **The Northern Diocese** has Diaconic Training Centres ie. Usharika wa Neema for Deaconesses and Faraja Diaconic Centre at Sabuko Sanya Juu for male Deacons. The two have the task of training diaconal manpower for the church and social services. There is also a Primary School for physically handicapped children.

Besides these two institutions there are a few small centres at parish levels that offer classes and training workshops for physically and mentally handicapped young people in the villages. The Diocese has also established a Diaconic Department among other departments.

- **The North – Eastern Diocese** has continued to maintain her diaconal institutions which were started at the beginning of mission work in this area by the Bethel Missionaries i.e. Irente Children’s Home, Irente School for the Blind, Lutindi Mental Hospital and Leper’s Camps. However, funds from traditional financiers have continued to decrease and support from government has not increased significantly, hence, affecting the work.

- **The North Western Diocese** has Mtoma Diaconic Centre. Several diaconal activities are carried out. There is also a school for deaconesses, a home for aged people, an orphanage dispensary and a home craft school for school leavers from villages. Year 2000 report reveals that there are 50,410 orphans in Kagera.

- **At algabiro** there is a house for aged people and mentally sick people and those suffering from epilepsy.
- **The East And Coast Diocese** runs Mtoni Diaconic Centre. The Diocese has also established a social welfare department.
- **The Usa River Rehabilitation Centre in the Meru Diocese** is another major Diaconic Centre whose purpose is to train young physically handicapped people in hand crafts skills for self reliance.
- **In almost every ELCT Diocese** there are similar diaconal activities no matter how small, there is something being done in the diaconal aspect e.g. caring for street children, drug addicts and other similar social problems.
- **Some Dioceses** have trained and ordained Deacons/Deaconesses with a diaconic mission. Others, although they have not trained their own. Deacons/Deaconesses and have no official diaconal ministry, have missionary deacons/deaconesses working in their Dioceses.
- **At the ELCT level**, there are a few examples. Mwanga and Mbeya Deaf School are diaconic activities that are directly under the ELCT Common Work. As part of Diaconic initiatives, ELCT Health Department is also running a very active Hospice and Palliative care program in 23 ELCT hospitals countrywide with a reach out to close to 30,000 patients annually. Diaconic Desk at the ELCT Head Office at Arusha is doing coordination.

Diaconic services can be carried out at two main levels.

- (i) At congregation level
- (ii) At institution level

(i) At Congregation Level

(a) In the Biblical concept, diaconical was not the prerogative of the full time Ministry. On the contrary, every member of the congregation had to use his or her charismata in the service of others. Every member stayed in

the Ministry of Diaconia. In the New Testament, the first acts of diaconal were from a congregation and not form a special Ministry (Acts 2 & 4). Diaconical work is not optional. The congregation has to acquire diaconal life style. One of the essential pre-requisite of a successful diaconic institution is to have close relationship with congregations that are marked by diaconal life – style.

- (b) Within the congregations there may emerge some groups doing Diaconia work e.g. women, Sunday school, confirmation class youth, fellowship groups and peers. This may extend to support the sick, orphaned, widowed, elderly, disabled etc.

(ii) At Institutional Level

These can be considered as full – time Ministry with well trained Deacons with specific areas of training.

It is generally felt by the Dioceses that they need general guidance from the ELCT in order to strengthen Diaconic services in the respective Dioceses. Hence the Policy framework will cover.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Vision Diaconical life – style congregations full of Christ like love, compassion and care.

2. Mission To build and promote congregations with Diaconical life style by enhancing wholistic training at all levels of education system, training institutions and promoting sustainable institutions.

3. Objectives

- (i) To promote Christian Community that loves and cares for one another in Christian love.
- (ii) To promote Diaconia training in all levels of education.
- (iii) To maintain the existing Diaconia Institutions & if need be construct or corporate with other Dioceses.

- (iv) To ensure trained leadership at all levels.
- (v) To ensure a smooth structure that will enhance Diaconal work.
- (vi) To maintain effective network that will honor the vision and mission of the Church in Diaconia work.
- (vii) To target for sustainability in future diaconal work.
- (viii) To establish clear roles of the Church at different levels in carrying out Diaconia work.

4. Education/Training

The Church has not understood fully its responsibility to the poor and the needy. Diaconal service has its origin in the word of God and as such Diaconia teaching should be integrated in Christian life and hence Christian teachings. Many Christians do not understand that Diaconic is part of Christian life. Those with knowledge so far are few.

In order to promote Diaconal work in the church, there is need for intensive training at different levels. Every Church leader, at all levels, is supposed to have a burden for Diaconia work as Jesus had. This will come about through training and understanding in depth what diaconal entails. It is to be noted that the degree of success of diaconal work will depend on the type of leadership. Lack of full awareness and interest among leaders has resulted in lack of support of deacons and lack of encouragement to promote Diaconia work.

At present diaconal teaching is seriously lacking at different levels of education. It is to be noted that at present only a few Parishes have a nursery school. Sunday school handling at present is pathetic. Sunday school instruction is being left in the hands of untrained volunteers. The two areas above i.e. the Kindergarten and the Sunday Schools are the two key areas that should receive the most attention in molding the children, but unfortunately, these are the areas that are mostly forgotten and the church, unknowingly, has to pay a high price by having to employ people without integrity to work in church institutions. It should be noted that once these children are properly molded at a tender age, it is quite difficult to go astray. It is high time the church thinks seriously.

- (i) As to why, almost all of the church institutions/projects are not being successful regardless of the amounts of funds that have been poured in.
- (ii) As to why, it is difficult to find faithful people to work in church institutions/projects and even in dioceses and parish offices at some other places.

The Church will therefore ensure that:

1. Diaconal is taught as a subject just like other subjects. ELCT will ensure that proper training is given by providing a syllabus that will meet the needs of the present society.
2. All church leaders at all levels will be well trained in Diaconal. This will be the starting point.
3. All parishioners will receive wholistic training and build up congregations with diaconical life style. The church will lay great emphasis in teaching the word of God. New strategies of teaching the word of God will be employed. There will be counseling to various groups of people. Community will be trained on development issues.
4. The church will run Diaconal schools and Diaconal Seminaries for more concentrated trainings which are inevitable if the church is to achieve the degree of intended seriousness. These people are to be chosen by the parishes and will have to have significant sense of commitment.
5. The Church will have to exploit training at all levels available. Diaconia will consciously be built in the Education system within the Dioceses i.e. **all the way from Nursery Schools, Sunday Schools, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Junior Seminary Schools.**

Hence:

- (i) In future each parish will run exemplary nursery school. The church will ensure that these schools are registered, acknowledged and well manned to promote Diaconal training and practices.
 - (ii) The leaders will take more interest in promoting Sunday Schools. Sunday Schools will be well managed and manned with well – trained teachers.
 - (iii) So far the church does not run Primary Schools. However, as the situation is now, the church can have a lot of influence in these schools since most of the teachers. The Board members and workers are members of the respective congregations. The church should therefore consciously exploit the situation.
 - (iv) At present many Dioceses do not have Secondary Schools or Junior Seminaries. The church should try and make the best use of the allocated religion class periods in Government and other Secondary Schools since most Dioceses do not run their own Secondary Schools.
 - (v) Diaconical training will also be included in the syllabus of various theological colleges in the church so that the church has trainers at different levels.
6. Special training are to be conducted to special groups e.g. youths women, widows etc.

7. Deacons

The church will recognize and train three categories of Deacons:

- (i) People will trained in diaconia as a subject and also well trained in specific qualifications, e.g. Teachers, Doctors, and Accountants etc. These will be employed in big parishes which have a number of community activities and who can meet their remunerations. Others will be employed in Church Institutions as leaders according to respective qualifications.
- (ii) Every congregation is to have Deacons who have attended either short term or long-term training in Diaconia. Deacons in the congregations are mostly volunteers. People to be trained as parish Deacons will be appointed by the parishes. It has to be those with a calling and a sense of commitment.

- (iii) The aim will be for every member of congregation to be a deacon i.e. congregation with Diaconal life style.
- 8. There will be Voluntary Association of Deacons. This is to be organized by Diaconal institutions.

5. The Structure of Diaconal Services in the ELCT.

Structurally, at present, diaconic is in health department. It has been noted that it is overshadowed considering the importance attached to health. There is also lack of clear structure to smoothly link up decision – making organs of Diaconal work at different levels. The present reporting and decision – making between the Dioceses and Diaconic institutions also need to be improved. The following will therefore be considered concerning the structure of Diaconal work within the ELCT:

A. ELCT Headquarter Level.

There will be a trained Deacon (or Deaconess) to coordinate diaconal services in the church.

B. Diocese Level

1. There will be a Diaconal Department at Diocese level separate from the Medical Department.
2. There will be a trained coordinator of Diaconal work.
3. In places where Diaconal Desk exists within a department, there should be a Deacon among its committee members.
4. The head of the Diocese will be advisor of the Diaconal Department Board and not chairman.
5. The chairman will be a person with appreciable knowledge and interest in Diaconal work.
6. The Medical Department will have representation in the Diaconic Board.
7. The Board/Committee to have 6 – 10 people.

C. Deanery Level

9. There will be a Deacon to coordinate all the activities of the Diaconal Activities in the Deanery.
- (ii) There will be a committee of about 6 – 8 people.

- (iii) Deanery leader will be advisor of such committee and not chairman.
- (iii) This committee will have representatives from the parishes.

D. Parish Level

- (i) There will be Diaconal Committees at parish, sub – parish and sub- village level.
- (ii) Where possible there should be a Deacon who will coordinate Diaconal activities under the leadership of Pastor in charge.
- (iii) There will be networking in operating Diaconal services from Parish level up to ELCT.

E. Diaconic Institutions

- (i) Diaconic Institutions will have well functioning Boards of which the Dioceses will have representation.
- (ii) The Boards/ Committees of ELCT Common work Institutions will have representations from respective parishes.
- (iii) The church will employ the leaders of these institutions. They will be Deacons and have proven integrity, required academic and professional qualifications. If not yet a Deacon, should be willing to be trained. In cases of training institution, even if it is the Government to employ this leader, the church should be allowed to identify. It is to be noted that, the teaching staff cannot be better than the head. So good leadership will be sought to guide the rest of the staff.
- (iv) Diaconic Institutions will be internally audited.
- (v) Diaconic Institutions will be served with staff with some basic training in Diaconia.
- (vi) All diaconic institutions will be internally audited.
- (vii) External auditors shall audit all institutions each year to ensure compliance with financial regulations.
- (viii) The church shall require and ensure that all diaconic institutions prepare quarterly, half yearly and yearly financial reports.
- (ix) Diaconic Institutions will have full autonomy and relate to the respective Dioceses as follows:-
 - Share the same policies but allow for adoption.
 - Core values will be the same.

- The Diocese will assist on sourcing for funds for Diaconal work whenever possible since the Diocese is more exposed.
 - The Diocese will be advisory and “for information” while the institutions are the ones to make final decisions.
 - The Directors of the Institutions will be accountable to the Board of the Institution and not to both.
 - The Directors of the Institutions to be free to source for funds and communicate to the outside networking with the approval of the Board.
 - The Institutions and the Central Diocese will have joint responsibility i.e. when the institutions run into adverse situation, the diocese will be equally concerned in bringing the situation into normal condition.
- (x) The church should set up rules and regulations to guide staff of these institutions. So far there is none.

Specifically for the Training Institutions.

Most of the Diaconal Institutions so far are engaged in trainings.

- (i) All Teaching Staff must have qualified at a proven “Special School Training of relevance”
- (ii) Teachers are expected to live according to Christian ethics, values and morals so as to provide role models.
- (iii) The performance of teachers academically, professionally and Christian life will be evaluated annually.
- (iv) Students are expected to get involved in activities set by the school in bringing about Christian ethics, morals and values.

6. Church responsibilities is Diaconic work at different levels.

At present the role of the Church concerning Diaconic work at different levels is not clearly defined. There is lack of planning, monitoring and evaluation of diaconal work. The church lacks programs and roles to be played at various levels. Seriousness to diaconic work is doubtful because this does not feature in the budgets. The roles will therefore be as follows:

(a) ELCT/Diocese Level.

- (i) To ensure that Diaconal work is being carried out successfully at different level.
- (ii) To prepare curriculum/syllabus for Diaconal training at different level.
- (iii) To ensure that there is Diaconal services policy and that it is being followed.
- (iv) Look for possibilities to build, improve, share and manage institutions.
- (v) Take inventory of the existing Institutions in the different Dioceses and encourage cooperation VS competition. This inventory should be available to all Dioceses.
- (vi) The Church will ensure that there are strategic plans to carry out diaconal work at different levels. That implementation is well monitored and evaluated.

(b) Role of the Church at all levels

- (i) Sensitize and finance Diaconic work at all levels.
- (ii) Promote a sustainable Diaconic work at all levels.
- (iii) Arrange for meetings, seminars and various trainings. Emphasis to be on integrity.
- (iv) To cooperate with people of other denominations and religion in the community to bring about development.
- (v) The Church to speak with confidence its stand regarding the various problems and evils in the society.
- (vi) Look for new and better ways to deal with new problems and challenges facing the Community.
- (vii) Visit and appreciate Diaconic work done at different places and levels.

7. Responsibility of the Church in Safeguarding the Right of the Target Group

Some members of the Community are not conscious of the existence of these handicapped people. Others are not aware of their responsibilities so as to make their stay comfortable among them. Sometimes they are harassed, and uncared for. After the target group(s) stays at the respective institutions, they find it difficult to cope with the communities. Some would rather they stay in Institutions for the rest of their lives. Hence there are several issues the church will have to take care of in order to safeguard the rights and interests of the target group (s).

- (i) The church will coordinate trainings on Human Rights so that the community is clear on its responsibilities so as to avoid mistreatments.
- (ii) To set up a Voluntary Association of the target group with the help of the Church and Institutions.
- (iii) To take into consideration needs, both at National and International level that will enhance the work of Diaconia e.g.
 - The construction of Church buildings will take care of those who have to come on wheelchairs.
 - The congregations will think on how best to take care of the different cases e.g. providing Braille Bibles and Hymnbooks for the blind.
 - Depending on the number of deaf, provide interpreters so that the deaf can also benefit from church services i.e. some people in the congregation to be trained.
- (iv) The Church to ensure that there is a clear way of safeguarding the legal rights of the different categories in the vulnerable groups e.g. the blind, the deaf, mentally disturbed, drug addicts, widows, orphans, the poor, the dying who may lack support autonomy etc.
- (v) The Church will engage her advocates who will cooperate with the Government in safeguarding the legal rights of the target group (s).
- (vi) To convince the Government on having Policies on how to take care of the vulnerable populations (eg. treat the disabled).

8. Relationship of the Church with the Government and other Institutions

In promoting Diaconic work the church will need to network with the Government, communities and other institutions. The church will need to bare the following in mind:

- (i) Should always safeguard her Vision and Mission in diaconal work i.e always be on the watch out for possible de-raidment.
- (ii) There should be a contract indicating responsibilities and limitations of each party.
- (iii) The relationship will not interfere with the training of Gods word in Diaconic.
- (iv) The church is to promote whatever worthwhile relationship there is so far with the Government and other Institutions.
- (v) The church will always have the last say in any relationship

9. Sustainability

Sustainability is the efficient and balanced use of resources so as to enjoy they benefits for a longer period of time. Sustainability does not mean ceasing cooperation with donors who have been partners in Diaconal work over many years. It does however constitutes the ability to self manage when donor assistance is likely to be reduced substantially or phased out. Diaconia Institutions have benefited support from external donors for many years partly because they were started by the early missionaries. The Government has also supported these institutions through seconding personnel and also by giving grants. As funds from external sources continue to decrease, the Diocese are finding themselves unable to deal with the financial pressure partly because support from the government has not significantly increased. This has risen a lot of questions on the sustainability of these institutions should external support diminish. It has to be pointed out form the very beginning that the long term sustainability of the Diaconic work in the Church will depend on the parishioners. This will come about when the congregations have acquired a diaconical life style. In order to attain sustainability in Diaconal work, the church will have to consider the

following:

- (i) There has to be change of attitude from Donor dependence and Social construction of mind.
- (ii) Building up positive public relations (friend-raising activity) in order to mobilize resources in the congregations, local and international communities, Government and non – Government organization.
- (iii) The Dioceses to build up Spirit of cooperation. ELCT will take an inventory of all diaconic services run by the different dioceses and ensure that information is effectively and efficiently shared around.
- (iv) Close relationship will consciously be built between Diaconic calling in the institutions and in the congregations.
- (v) There will be leaders with Diaconic calling in the institutions and in the congregations.
- (vi) The church will train the relevant people on Fund Raising Techniques.
- (vii) Parishes to build a Trust Fund to support Diaconic work in the parishes.
- (viii) To establish appropriate income generating activities at different levels. Proper feasibility studies will be carried out before starting any project. Projects will be manned with people with relevant qualifications.
- (ix) The congregations will be trained and brought to a point where each individual sees the need and duty bound to support the poor and the needy.
- (x) Building integrity in the present and future church institutions and projects.
- (xi) There will be close follow-up of Diaconal work at all levels to ensure that its active.
- (xii) The Dioceses to ensure that the Institutions and projects are internally and externally audited.
- (xiii) Diaconal work will feature in the plans and budgets of the church at different levels.
- (xiv) Planning will be carried out for consolidated financing.

- (xv) Observe cost saving measures by improvements in budgetary control, effective use of capital assets, improvement of quality of programme delivery and proper internal controls.
- (xvi) Developing a value system that inspires program actors at all levels to lead a lifestyle, which reflect good stewardship in the use of resources by establishing appropriate and effective management, structure and systems.

10. Diaconal Institutions Vs Open Community

The following is to be noted:

- Institutions are capital intensive. Huge amounts of capital are required for investments and for running costs, often beyond the financial capabilities of the church and its congregations.
- Resources to carry out Diaconic work are few such that they have to be concentrated to a few places.
- Diaconic awareness of the congregations is low such that it is a problem to handle even manageable cases.

The church will therefore do the following:

- (i) The Congregations will try as much as possible to take care of these people in the open community and to resort to institutions only when necessary.
- (iv) The community will be enlightened as to why the needy are to be taken care – of within the community.
- (v) The communities, with the advice and cooperation of the existing institutions, will consciously and gradually build up the necessary infrastructure to facilitate Diaconic work in the communities.
- (vi) The community should not abandon their needy in the Diaconic Institutions.
- (vii) Training received in the Institutions should also target at helping the target group to cope with the respective communities.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Development of a policy involves all stakeholders. It is therefore important to share this policy with as many actors as possible.

As much as possible, the policy will be made clear to all so as to give the correct interpretations to users. This is an on – going process whose effect is to promote understanding, acceptance and commitment to the policy. Policy is a dynamic tool which should be evolving with time.

12. Policy Review

The ELCT Diaconic Policy will be reviewed as and when it will be deemed necessary in order to cope up with situations.

13. Contact Details

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