Kom over en help

Development towards self-reliance

Policy plan 2026-2030

Called to serve

Preface

“For more than fifty years, the call has been heard: “Come over and help us.” That call is still relevant today. The context has changed, the countries in which we work have changed, and the questions have changed. Yet the need remains. Especially during the 2020–2025 policy period, we have once again seen how relevant and necessary our work is.

The war in Ukraine has left deep scars. Millions of people have been affected by violence, loss and uncertainty. In other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, lives are also under pressure due to poverty, political tensions and societal change. At the same time, we see movement: countries becoming candidates for membership of the European Union, societies in transition. But it is precisely during these processes that the most people in vulnerable circumstances are easily left behind.

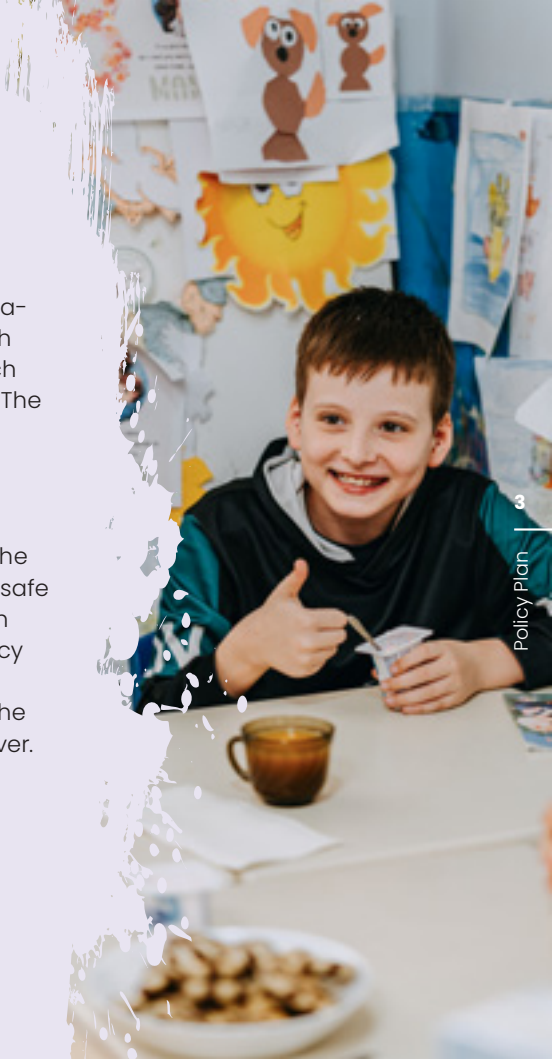
That is why, together with our partners, we continue to work on Development Towards Self-Reliance. It is the path we embarked upon earlier and remains no less relevant today. We believe that genuine change can only be sustained when people, families, communities, regions and countries are able to take responsibility for their own lives. In this context, resilience is an essential component of development: the ability of people and communities not only to grow, but also to endure in times of pressure and uncertainty.

The past period has shown how valuable and powerful cooperation is, both with partners in the countries in which we work and with our donors here in The Netherlands.

We are grateful for the road we have travelled so far. We are aware of the major challenges that lie ahead. At the same time, we know ourselves to be safe in the Lord, who calls us to serve. With that confidence, we present this policy plan for 2026–2030, trusting that He Himself will bless our work. For He is the same yesterday and today and forever.

On behalf of staff and board,

Gerben Heldoorn MA
Director



Chapter 1

Called to serve

Acts 16: 9-10 Paul's Vision of the man of Macedonia

9. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
10. After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the Gospel to them.

Vision

The Bible calls us to serve in this broken world.
God want us to care for our neighbours who live in vulnerable circumstances.

Mission

Together with local partner organisations,
we help our neighbours live in poverty, in order to enable them to develop and live a worthy life.
In doing so, we pay attention to all aspects related to human existence.

Core message

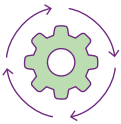
Building resilience together.

Core values

Based on our vision and mission, we work from the following core values: Commitment, Entrepreneurship and Relationship.

Commitment

We work in God's Kingdom in an attentive, caring and loving manner. We work from an awareness of responsibility and passionate involvement with each other, our partners and our volunteers. We have a focus on people and are committed to achieve the results agreed upon.



Entrepreneurship

Our entrepreneurial attitude is characterised by a hands-on approach of projects and constant improvement. We continually take initiatives, evaluating what and how things can be improved. We see opportunities for working more efficiently and turn these opportunities into actions. In addition, we stimulate our partners to see opportunities for organisational development, so that the impact of aid may be expanded. During the projects, we encourage ownership by working on entrepreneurship.

Relationship

Historically, we feel a strong spiritual band with Christians and churches that have suffered and still suffer from the harsh consequences of communism. We aim to establish personal relationships with individuals, our partners, generations, churches, Christian organisations and companies, both at home and abroad. Cooperation with Christian organisations in the Netherlands is important for an increasing impact of the aid we provide.

Chapter 2

Strategy

Kom over en help aims to achieve its mission by supporting people in vulnerable circumstances to improve their degree of self-reliance. The relevant means are education, income generating activities and social care.
For these we cooperate closely with local authorities, Christian organisations (NGO's), churches, and companies, both in the Netherlands and in the countries in which we work.

Our target areas are located in the formerly communist countries of Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Defining our 'people in vulnerable circumstances'

Vulnerability implies that an individual, a community, or an organisation is unable to cope with or to recover from a traumatic event or prolonged situation, such as neglect, discrimination, economic decline, a natural disaster, or an armed conflict, because they lack sufficient means. Therefore, they have an increased risk of poverty. Among those who are most vulnerable are children, elderly people, (pregnant) women, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities.

Defining 'development'

Development is a process of integral improvement, which may occur at various levels, from the individual to the nation. Development may be the consequence of all kinds of economic and social changes, but it may also be consciously stimulated, in the sense that efforts are made to improve an actual situation, to stimulate improvement, and decrease poverty. Kom over en help wants to contribute to targeted development of vulnerable neighbours towards self-reliance. In this process we view a person's well-being from a holistic perspective; we pay attention to all aspects of being human; the person in harmony with God, his neighbour, creation, and himself. This harmony has been broken and deranged. Kom over en help believes in and wants to contribute to change and improvement of personal well-being in all its aspects.

Defining 'self-reliance'

Self-reliance is the capacity to

provide life with meaning and fulfilment, aided by a social network. This requires making one's own choices, taking responsibility and solving problems. Resilience, the ability to protect oneself and to cope with adversity is essential in this context. Self-reliance can be achieved at individual, local, regional and national levels.

Development towards self-reliance

In order to help vulnerable neighbours to develop and attain self-reliance, Kom over en help makes use of three intervention strategies: education, income generating activities and social care. Integral parts of these intervention strategies are lobbying, advocacy, development of civil society and organisational development.

Education

Income generating activities

Social care

Education

Education is an umbrella term consisting of schooling, formation and child-raising. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights officially states that education is a human right. This entails that education has to be geared towards the full development of the human personality. Therefore, education comprises a diverse range of activities focused on emotional, spiritual, cognitive and psychological development of people.

Education is a powerful engine for development and one of the strongest instruments in the battle against poverty and inequality. At an individual level, education promotes the development of knowledge and skills, which creates better opportunities for a job, as well as for income. Moreover, education does not only help the person that received education, but also their family and their community. In doing so, education lays the foundation for the socio-economic development of society. Thus, education strengthens the capacity for development of individuals, families, communities, organisations, and countries.

This is why Kom over en help focuses on supporting and promoting education, both in schools (i.e. formal education) and for

extramural activities (i.e. informal education). Formally it aims at providing access to education and enabling pupils, students, and adults to complete their programmes at regular institutions. Informally, it aims at further developing and improving social skills, social interaction, attitude, and behaviour. Inclusion is important for both forms of education. As Kom over en help also pays attention to the spiritual well-being of people, Bible education and spiritual training are essential parts of education.

Income generating activities

Income generating activities are all activities that are done by individuals or organisations with the objective of generating income, so that they can provide for their own livelihood. Possible activities are donating money, giving loans or micro-credits, providing courses on business plans or financial management, and offering vocational training. These enable individuals to start a company or find a job. The income generated by those activities can be re-invested or used to improve individual or family living conditions and so enhance their self-reliance.

Apart from the individual or the family, society at large also benefits from these activities, for when more people become productive and contribute to the economic growth of their region or country, employment usually increases with the growth of the production.

Income generating activities may have an enormous impact on the life of people in vulnerable circumstances, such as an increase in income, improvement of the quality of life and of self-esteem, and an increase in socio-economic status. As such, income generating activities are driving forces of development. Research has shown that income generating activities reduce vulnerability, because they provide access to (financial) means and social networks.

Thus, income generating activities may be seen as key elements in the battle against poverty. Therefore, Kom over en help focuses on organising income generating activities in order to help the people in vulnerable circumstances to develop towards self-reliance.

Social care

Social care comprises all sorts of care and practical help for children, young people, and adults who need additional support because of their age, disability, or other circumstances. Social care comes in different forms, such as physical, emotional, or social support; and it may be temporarily or long term. Thus, it may vary from distributing medicines and providing shelter to offering a listening ear and creating a network.

Many (formerly) communist countries hardly have any social policy and social safety nets are lacking. Some countries have improved in this respect over the last couple of years. For instance, in Ukraine a law

has been implemented to improve psycho-social care. Although the authorities are more open to the development of social programmes, they are quick to cut these programmes if an economic crisis or political instability arises. However, the demand for social care for the people in vulnerable circumstances remains unrelentingly high. It is an important determining factor for their physical, psycho-social and spiritual well-being.

Although social care is not always the solution for the complex problems of the people in vulnerable circumstances , it does make a difference. Social care breaks through isolation, social or otherwise, and through addiction; it stills hunger; and it reduces health problems. This is why social care is one of the intervention strategies of Kom over en help.

Emergency Relief

When a humanitarian disaster occurs in one of our countries in which we work, we respond with emergency relief. Emergency relief is not a separate intervention strategy but closely connected to all three intervention strategies mentioned before. Emergency relief forms the foundation upon which recovery and long-term development can be built. In this way, emergency relief is focused on both recovery and long-term development.

Chapter 3

Directive statements

The course for the future has been elaborated in four guiding statements that will be worked out in concrete terms.

1.

Development towards self-reliance is the focus of Kom over en help in projects, partnerships and budgets.

This means among other things:

- All projects will be assessed for alignment with the intervention strategies and their contribution to development towards self-reliance. For projects in which these aspects are not sufficiently addressed, a plan for further development will be drawn up, or the assistance will be phased out.
- For each partner organization, an organizational development plan has been drawn up. Communication on this between the organizations involved is being structurally strengthened, while also working towards a more differentiated partnership policy.
- At least 80% of project expenditure is related to education and/or income generating activities, of which social care may be a part. A maximum of 20% of project expenditure is allocated to social care only, acknowledging that there will always be people who remain dependent on such support.

2.

Kom over en help continues to cooperate with local partners in the countries where we work to date, but any expansions to other areas are not excluded. Kom over en help works in (formerly) communist countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia as well as with Christian partners (churches, non-governmental organisations, companies) that adhere to Biblical norms and values.

This means among other things:

- Analysis of trends and developments per country, leading to strategic choices and priorities that will be implemented during this policy period.
- We actively pursue the establishment of new partnerships in the countries in which we work. In particular, expanding the partner network in Georgia and Uzbekistan is a key area of focus.

3.

Cooperation with other organisations in The Netherlands will be intensified in order to realise the long term mission.

This means among other things:

- We join forces within CPOE (Christian Platform Eastern Europe) and Prisma to achieve capacity development, both within our own organization and among partner organizations.
- Together with Dorcas we will continue to develop SharInvest. Investments in SharInvest and SIED Management BV are considered public benefit investments. SharInvest supports local small and medium-sized enterprises in emerging economies in Eastern Europe. By investing in access to finance, knowledge, markets, and relevant networks, we stimulate entrepreneurship, growth, and sustainability. In this way, we jointly achieve tangible and lasting impact in Eastern Europe.
- We explore collaborations with other organizations in order to generate higher income and reduce our own costs through joint efforts and greater operational efficiency, so that a larger share of income benefits the projects.

4.

Kom over en help strengthens relationships with all target groups through targeted, segmented and impact-driven communication, thereby enabling sustainable engagement and growth in income.

This means among other things:

- Personalised and targeted communication.
- Exploration of growth opportunities with foundations and funds.
- Orientation towards additional subsidy opportunities beyond current RFO subsidies.

The strategic statements have been translated into concrete practices and projects for the current policy period.

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