



Development
and Peace
CARITAS CANADA

Catholic Social Teaching



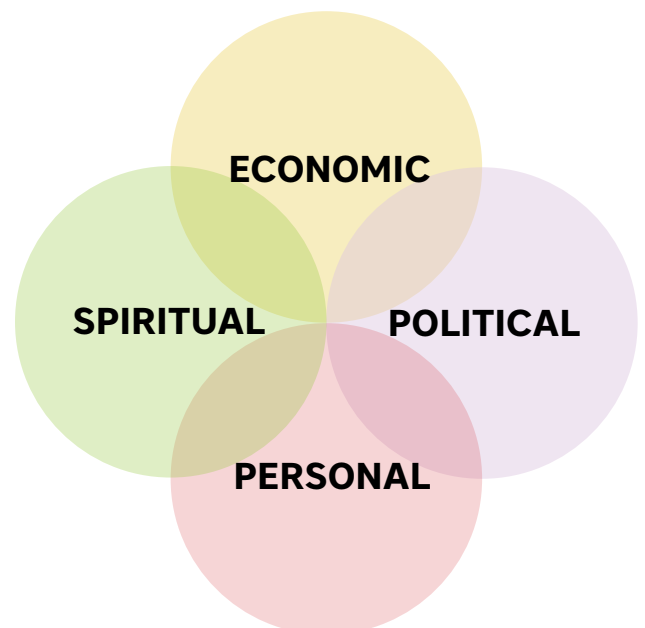
*Discover all
the principles here:*



Catholic Social Teaching, or CST, gives us a rich tradition for thinking about how our faith engages the world. With human dignity at its centre, CST is the foundation for what Pope Francis calls “integral human development,” which recognizes that everything is connected. In a message to popular movements, he explains that the “social teaching of the Church does not have all the answers, but it does have some principles that along this journey can help to concretize the answers, principles useful to Christians and non-Christians alike.”

While there are many organizations contributing to development around the world, what sets Development and Peace — Caritas Canada apart is that it is rooted in CST. In this resource, you can explore ten interrelated CST principles and how they guide our work!

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING COVERS ALL SPHERES OF LIFE :





In our actions and societies, we must consider not what is good just for us or for a few, but for all human beings and the planet. We must love our neighbour, locally and globally, above any commercial interest.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada supports organizations that seek **the good of whole communities**, rather than any individual or company. Even though God wants all people to enjoy creation equally, profit interests often carve up and privatize creation, turning the gifts of God into commodities to be bought and sold, not guaranteed to all.

Water is a good example. Since 2003, we have supported and advocated for publicly owned water sources both at home and abroad. Traditionally, water was shared between local farmers. Now, however, the World Bank and other international bodies increasingly pressurize countries to privatize the management of water and other natural resources. Our partners work for community-based water management, stronger public control of and access to clean water in rural and urban areas, and the rights of all people to enjoy water bodies like rivers and lakes.

In this country, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada has advocated for “bottled-water-free zones.” In 2003, our members presented their municipal governments a Water Declaration whose five principles include emphasizing people before profit; access to water as a basic human right; and water as a common good, not a resource to be exploited for individual or corporate gain.

Rather than giving up our individuality, working for the **common good** allows us to explore and contribute our unique abilities, creating space for others to do the same.

“The demands of the common good... concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State’s powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom. Nor must one forget the contribution that every nation is required in duty to make towards a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole of humanity and for future generations also.”

— *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 166



The foundation of all Catholic Social Teaching is the inherent dignity of the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God. The Church, therefore, calls for Integral Human Development, which concerns the wellbeing of each person in every dimension: economic, political, social, ecological, and spiritual.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Dignity cannot be earned or erased, but it is often denied. When people are excluded, marginalized or forced to live in unsafe, unhealthy conditions, they are being treated as though they have no dignity. Development and Peace — Caritas Canada and our partners work for a world that affirms the dignity of everyone, no matter who they are.

From an unequal economy to discrimination against particular groups, peoples’ dignity is denied in many deeply structural ways. Through projects focused on things like community organizing, training on housing rights and education for women, **our partners help people come together to recognize, defend and promote each other’s dignity**, transforming our world in the process.

When a disaster like an earthquake or typhoon strikes, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada works with local organizations to provide emergency supplies like bedding, food and shelter. Our partners also address affected people’s emotional needs through psychosocial and post-trauma counselling services. **Dignity-centered emergency relief also makes communities more resilient to future disasters** by addressing the root causes of poverty that make some communities so vulnerable in the first place.

We are building **a world where all people are treated with the dignity** they deserve and have the means to lead a dignified life.

“ A just society can become a reality only when it is based on the respect of the transcendent dignity of the human person. The person represents the ultimate end of society... The social order and its development must invariably work to the benefit of the human person... not the other way around. — Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 132



The Earth is sacred. All of creation has its own intrinsic value. We have a responsibility to protect and cherish the Earth’s ecological diversity, beauty and life-sustaining systems. Together, we must care for and protect our common home for future generations.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

God’s creation is given to all to be enjoyed by all. But climate change, caused by our production and consumption habits, threatens human, animal and plant life around the world.

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada supports grassroots partners working for ecological justice in a variety of ways, like promoting climate-resilient farming, defending fragile bioregions and resisting destructive extractive industries. While climate change affects us all, its worst effects are borne by those who are least responsible for it. That makes our partners’ work with the most vulnerable communities especially important.

Canada has additional responsibility because of its special relationship to industries that have a long history of human rights and environmental abuses. A majority of the world’s mining corporations are headquartered or raise capital in Canada. Communities harmed by Canadian mining in the Global South find it immensely difficult, if not impossible, to pursue justice in Canadian courts. That is why **our members have been advocating since 2008 for ways of holding Canadian corporations accountable** and giving the communities they harm abroad a way of seeking justice in Canada.

Our economic systems can no longer be considered as separate from the environment and human beings. We cannot pursue infinite economic growth on a finite planet. **We must reject solutions that leave out the poor.** To respond to the call of God to care for creation, **we must build people-led, ecologically sustainable alternatives.**

“The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.

— Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, 13



The economy must serve people, not the other way around. All people have a right to dignified work, fair wages, and safe working conditions. Work is more than a way to make a living. Work is a form of participation in God’s creation.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Our global economy is not based on equality, but rather depends on inequality. Wealth and natural resources are drained from the Global South into multinational corporations and countries in the Global North. Wages are kept low to increase profit margins, and the system is prone to cycles of booms and busts, leading to unemployment and loss for ordinary people. Power imbalances between working people and companies mean workers do not enjoy a just share of the profits they help create. Powerful banks and politicians argue that markets elevate everyone’s quality of life over time, but commodifying the natural world and privatizing services actually excludes the poor and pushes them to the margins.

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada supports partners advocating for democratic alternatives, including cooperatives, labor unions and grassroots social movements. In Canada, our staff are also part of a labor union. Our members advocate for a change in the global system, including degrowing parts of the Global North’s economies and encouraging equal, just and self-determined development in the Global South.

We need an **economic system that works for everyone** rather than a small class at the top. **Economic justice** means a world where everyone is able to enjoy God’s creation and the fruits of dignified work.

“The marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem, however much we are asked to believe this dogma of neoliberal faith. [...] There is little appreciation of the fact that the alleged ‘spillover’ does not resolve the inequality that gives rise to new forms of violence threatening the fabric of society. [...] What is needed is a model of social, political and economic participation that can include popular movements and invigorate local, national and international governing structures with that torrent of moral energy that springs from including the excluded in the building of a common destiny, while also ensuring that these experiences of solidarity which grow up from below, from the subsoil of the planet — can come together, be more coordinated, keep on meeting one another. [...] They help make possible an integral human development that goes beyond the idea of social policies being a policy for the poor, but never with the poor and never of the poor, much less part of a project that reunites peoples.”

— Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 168, 169



Human beings are social, and how we live together affects the dignity of the individual and the progress of society. All persons are entitled to participate in community and in decisions that affect their lives. Societies must encourage and enable people to be protagonists, not passive but active players in history.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada is a member-driven, democratic organization. Members across Canada form diocesan councils that elect from among themselves our governing body, the national council. Each year, we mobilize an education campaign that highlights our roles and responsibilities as global citizens and gives members an opportunity to act. **Abroad, we support grassroots organizations that work to empower communities.** Some of our partners help marginalized communities form cooperatives and unions. Others educate communities about their legal rights and defend the territorial rights of threatened peoples.

Our partners empower communities to be the protagonists of their own development. Be it in long-term social change programs or emergency and reconstruction activities, the communities we work with are active participants in identifying their needs, proposing solutions and implementing new ways of working together. This participatory approach often takes longer and sometimes even costs more, but it guarantees the ownership and sustainability of process and results.

When people can participate and feel like protagonists, they are able to help write the story of God's work for justice in our world.

It is impossible to imagine a future for society without the active participation of great majorities as protagonists, and such proactive participation overflows the logical procedures of formal democracy. Moving towards a world of lasting peace and justice calls us to go beyond paternalistic forms of assistance; it calls us to create new forms of participation that include popular movements and invigorate local, national and international governing structures with that torrent of moral energy that springs from including the excluded in the building of a common destiny. And all this with a constructive spirit, without resentment, with love.

— Pope Francis, *World Meeting of Popular Movements, 2014*



Peace is the goal of social life. Peace is being in right relationship with God and each other. Peace is the fruit of healthy communities and a sign of charity and justice in action.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Peace is the good consequence of a just society, a situation where all can let their guard down and enjoy friendly relationships with one another. Sometimes, we think of peace in a negative way, as the absence of war or violence. But peace is the positive result of social institutions and individual efforts to create and maintain just communities.

When things go badly, as in war, genocide, domestic violence or other disruptions of good relationships, the way of peace calls us to do justice, to heal what is broken and to prepare a new context for encounter. In conflict zones, **Development and Peace — Caritas Canada’s partners contribute to peacebuilding through leadership training, dialogue, and by addressing the underlying reasons for violence**, like prejudice, economic instability and scarcity. Sustainable development means ensuring people have the community supports and material security they need to live without fear or desperation.

In Canada, our members build peace by urging our government to oppose war and violence, to divest from the arms industry, and to hold Canadian companies accountable for abuses abroad.

We also believe in truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and justice for all those pushed to the margins of Canadian society.

Because we want peace, we work for justice!

Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice.

— Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 78

PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR



The moral test of any society is based on how the most vulnerable people are treated. God loves all people, but prioritizes and calls us to a unique concern for the poor.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada applies this preferential principle in its partnerships. During humanitarian emergencies and in our long-term development programs, **we work with local partners who are best placed to reach, provide aid to and accompany the poorest and most vulnerable communities.** These communities' stories and testimonies take precedence in our educational materials, providing a space in Canadian society for voices that may otherwise go unheard.

We also raise awareness about how our lives in Canada impact upon and benefit from the lives and work of others, be it through our purchases, our investments or our national policies. Some of our members pay more for fair trade coffee, knowing they will either have less money to spend or less coffee to drink. Others encourage divestment from harmful extractive companies. Members also advocate for an alternative economy, where the poor are not exploited or excluded for the comfort of others.

“ This is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church appears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logistical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods. Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope for a better future.

— *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 182



Rights arise from what everyone needs to live in dignity, as God intends. Rights are inseparable from our responsibility to care for others; to ensure their rights; and to not take more than is needed to fulfill our rights at the expense of others' rights.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

In Canada, we are used to thinking in terms of rights, like those to free speech or peaceful assembly. People also have rights to things like land, work and housing, all needed to flourish and be healthy. But rights are more than individual. **Communities, nations and peoples, too, have rights to things like self-determination and peaceful coexistence.** Wherever these rights are denied, we are called to defend them.

Cultures in the Global North are often loud about individual rights and quiet about collective rights. **An emphasis on individual rights can cause us to ignore our obligations to others.** We are called to not only assert our own rights, but also to be open and present to others, recognizing that no right can exclude or override the needs of others, in particular the poor.

Rights and responsibilities are rooted in dignity and should not be tied to access to markets or privileges. Together, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada and our partners are working to overturn systemic barriers to equal rights and responsibilities.

“ A link has often been noted between claims to a ‘right to excess’, and even to transgression and vice, within affluent societies, and the lack of food, drinkable water, basic instruction and elementary health care in areas of the underdeveloped world and on the outskirts of large metropolitan centers. The link consists in this: individual rights, when detached from a framework of duties which grants them their full meaning, can run wild, leading to an escalation of demands which is effectively unlimited and indiscriminate. An overemphasis on rights leads to a disregard for duties.

— Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 43



Each of us is part of the human community, and we are all interconnected and interdependent. When one part of the community suffers, all of us suffer. Solidarity is a recognition that we are “all in this together” and forms a commitment to strengthen community and promote a just society.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

Living out solidarity is at the heart of Development and Peace — Caritas Canada’s mission of standing against injustice with our partners as equals, and supporting their efforts through fundraising, education, mobilization and advocacy in Canada. Our international programs, based on partnerships of solidarity, are conceived and realized by local organizations that best understand their communities’ realities and how to address them.

In Canada, our members make personal commitments to advocate for change. Whether it be travelling an extra 100 kilometres to meet an MP, addressing their parish, or joining a climate justice rally, **Development and Peace — Caritas Canada members make solidarity part of their daily lives.**

While giving charitably is important, solidarity means building strong bonds of connection that can confront the root causes of injustice. To be in solidarity is to **do things *with* others**, rather than simply for others, taking on each other’s struggles and working together in mutual cooperation.

“Solidarity... means much more than an occasional gesture of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community. It means that the lives of all take priority over the appropriation of goods by a few. It also means fighting against the structural causes of poverty and inequality; of the lack of work, land and housing; and of the denial of social and labour rights. It means confronting the destructive effects of the empire of money: forced dislocation, painful emigration, human trafficking, drugs, war, violence and all those realities that many of you suffer and that we are all called upon to transform. Solidarity, understood in its deepest sense, is a way of making history, and this is what the popular movements are doing.”

— Pope Francis, *World Meeting of Popular Movements, 2014*

SUBSIDIARITY AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT



The state is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights and develop the common good. Subsidiarity says that these government functions must be performed at the lowest level possible. Higher levels of government must intervene only when a function cannot be adequately performed at a lower level.

EXAMPLE IN ACTION:

This principle goes hand-in-hand with participation, the principle that all peoples have a right to participate in the economic, political and cultural life of society, and in decisions that affect their communities.

Rather than sending “development experts” or Canadian volunteers to run projects in the Global South, **Development and Peace — Caritas Canada supports local grassroots organizations**. These partners work to promote alternatives to unjust systems and find solutions that benefit whole communities. Recognizing the expertise of local people in matters that affect them, **our partnership model empowers local people to be the agents of their own development, on their terms**.

We also encourage international cooperation and responsible governance. Too often, governments act in self-interest or in the interests of corporations and powerful people, instead of acting in the interest of local communities. This can allow conflicts to fester internally or with other states. **Subsidiarity affirms the state’s role of empowering just institutions and communities**; respond to people’s needs and aspirations; and collaborating with other states to build a more equitable world.

“The principle of subsidiarity, which was developed as part of Catholic Social Teaching, states: What individuals can accomplish by their own initiative and efforts should not be taken from them by a higher authority. A greater and higher social institution must not take over the duties of subordinate organizations and deprive it of its competence. Its purpose, rather, is to intervene in a subsidiary fashion (thus offering help) when individuals or smaller institutions find that a task is beyond them.”

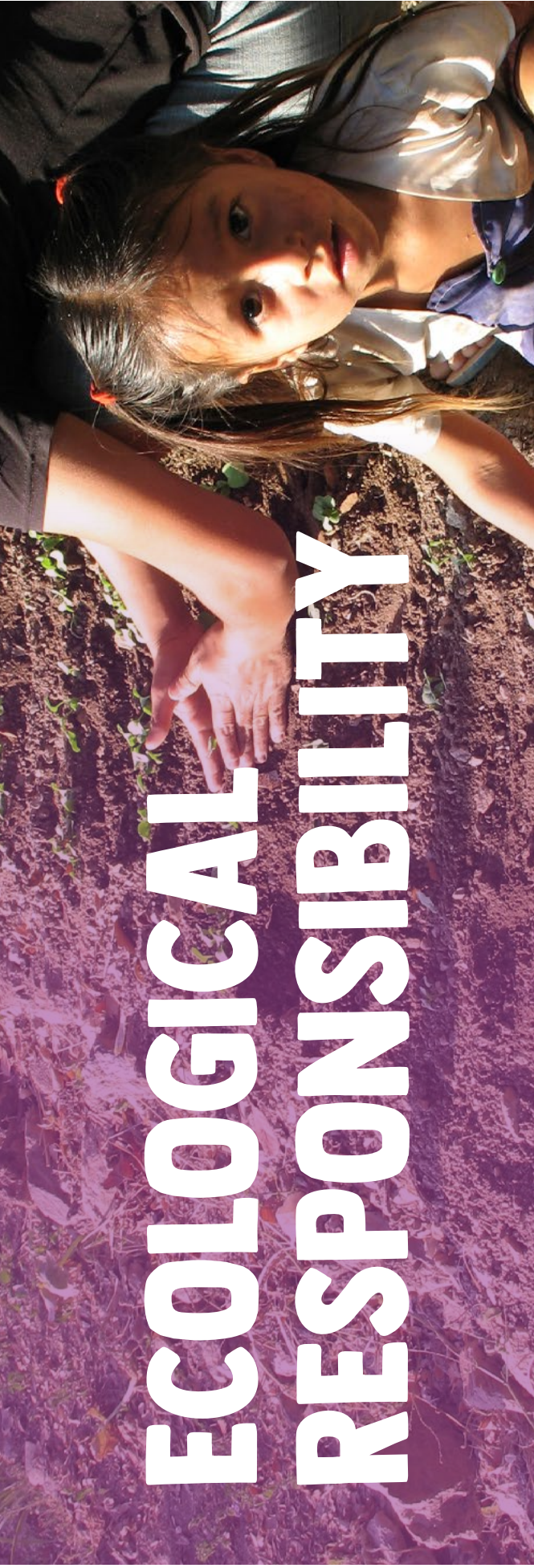
—YOUCAT, 323



**COMMON
GOOD**



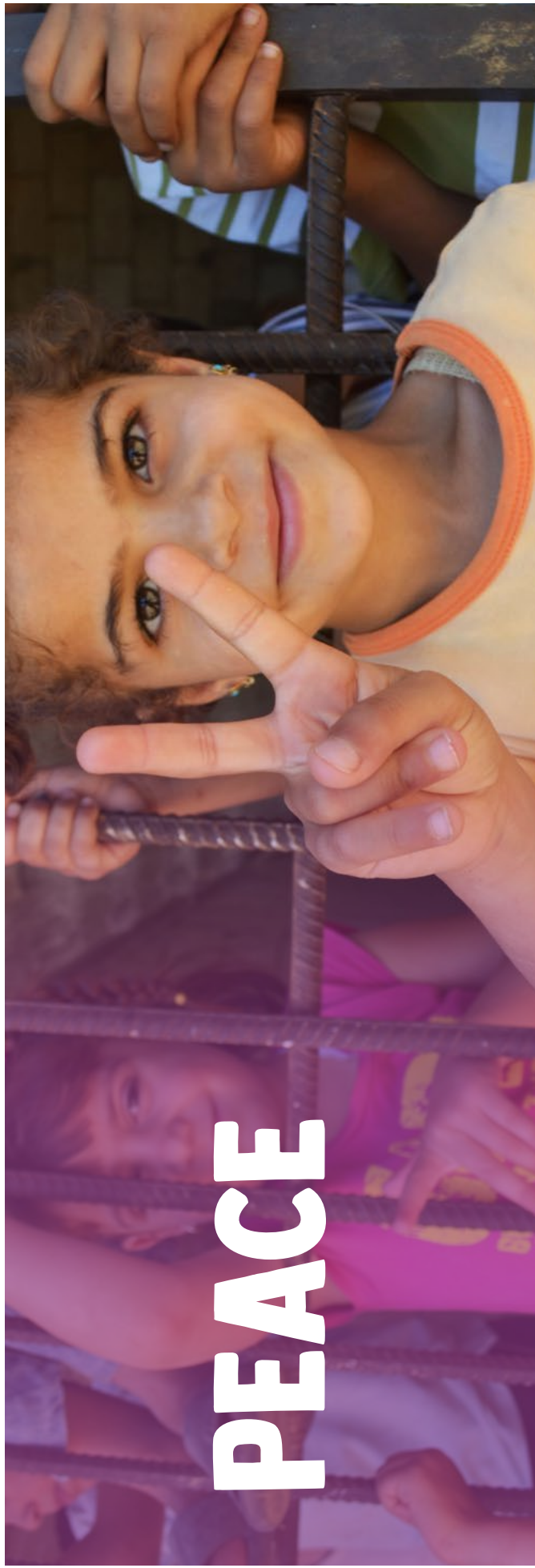
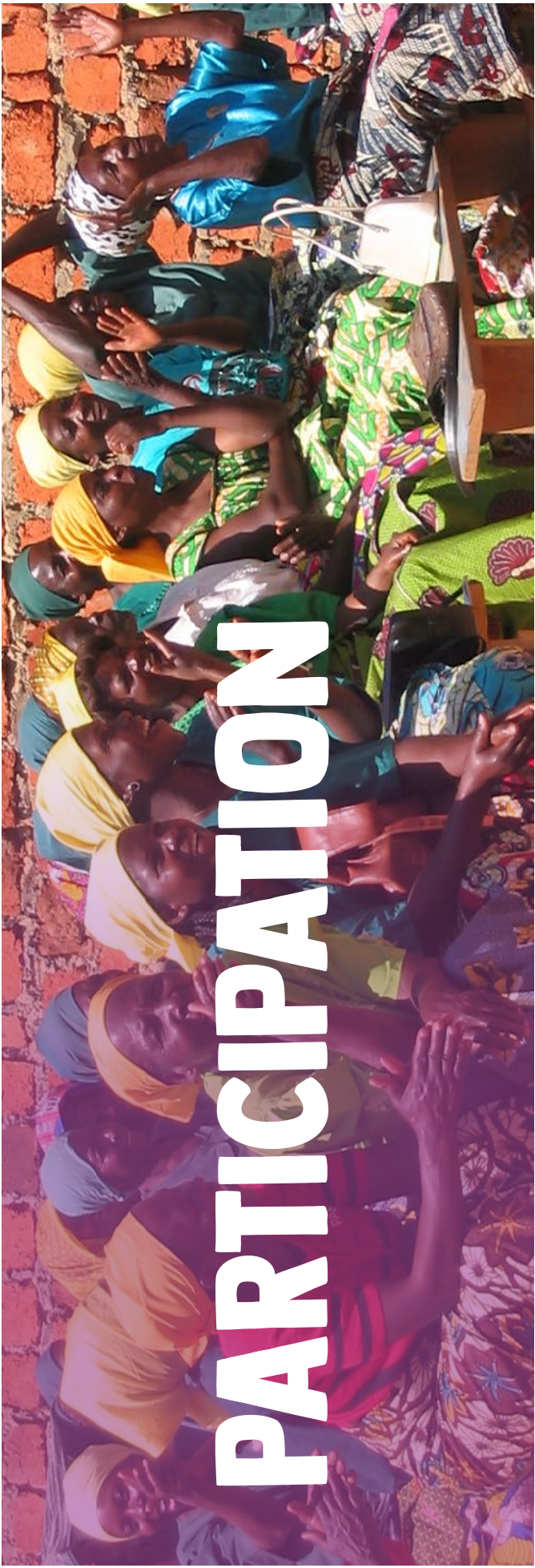
**DIGNITY OF THE
HUMAN PERSON**



ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY



ECONOMIC JUSTICE



A woman with dark hair, wearing a colorful patterned sweater, is smiling broadly. She is holding a doll that is wearing a white hat. The background shows a simple building with a tiled roof.

**PREFERENTIAL
OPTION FOR
THE POOR**

A group of people, including a woman in a blue headscarf and a man in a white shirt, are looking towards the camera. The background shows a rural setting with greenery and a car.

**RIGHTS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES**

SOLIDARITY



SUBSIDIARITY AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

