

Caritas Internationalis Annual Report 2015

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Cover photograph: Syrian child living as refugee in Jordan. Isabel Corthier/Caritas Belgium





Caritas Internationalis works for a world where love and justice flourish and where the dignity of the human person is upheld. Caritas campaigns for a world of peace and equality, where no one is suffering, afraid or hungry and where our natural world is treated with respect.

Caritas pursues these goals with inspiration from the Gospels, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the

hopes of the world's poor. Its mission is to ensure that no one is left behind or excluded and to bring about greater solidarity and fraternity.

Pope Benedict XVI called Caritas "the heart of the Church" and Pope Francis, "the caress of the Mother Church" to those suffering.

Caritas Internationalis is an institution of the Catholic Church as well as a confederation of 165 independent national organisations. Caritas organisations promote charity and social justice, advocate for a better world and strive for integral human development.

Caritas works with mercy and compassion to uphold the dignity of people of all faiths and none.

Caritas responds to the call of Pope Francis to help make a "poor Church for the poor" as a "living witness of the love of God for all creation."



"For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love." Pope Francis, Laudato Sì (58)

In 2015, Pope Francis invited us to build a future centred on love and compassion. In his first encyclical, *Laudato Si*, the pope called on us to strengthen our relationships with humanity, the environment and God.

The pope urged world leaders to put the planet and the common good at the centre of an integral ecology. He asked us to transform our hearts and lifestyles.

At the Caritas Internationalis General Assembly, the confederation adopted the Strategic Framework One Human Family, Caring for Creation for the next four years, in harmony with the pope's vision.

Outgoing president, Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, said at the assembly, "We have a wealth of material, human and spiritual resources to fight all the global injustices and crises that the world can throw at us."

The challenges in the world in 2015 were indeed massive: there were more refugees than at any time since the Second World War, the wealthiest 1 percent of the population owned more than the rest of the world put together and climate change threatened the most vulnerable communities.

Our work on the systemic causes of poverty took us to the United Nations in New York, where we continued to ensure the voices of the poor were heard in the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Caritas was out in force at the UN climate summit in Paris in November, where key steps were taken towards the "ecological conversion" we have been called to undertake.

Caritas will continue to work with and for the very poorest people, to make the vision of one human family a reality.

H.E. Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, President Michel Roy, Secretary General



Caritas Internationalis General Assembly

Over 400 representatives of national Caritas organisations met in Rome in May for the 20th Caritas Internationalis General Assembly.

Pope Francis became the first pope to celebrate the opening assembly Mass. In his homily, he encouraged people to "set the table for all" as "Caritas sets many tables for the hungry."

The pope described a person living the mission of Caritas as "not simply a charitable worker, but a true witness of Christ".

Caritas organisations discussed how they could work together more effectively under the theme "One Human

Family, Caring For Creation." Future plans include combating rising inequality and poverty, climate change and the "globalisation of indifference."

After eight years of service, Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga received heartfelt gratitude as he stood down from the role of Caritas Internationalis president, with the message that the poor must remain at the heart of the work.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila was elected to replace him. Alexander Bodmann from Austria was chosen as treasurer and Michel Roy received a second mandate as secretary general.

"Let us together strengthen the church of the poor, so

our witness can help guide us to a world of understanding justice, true freedom and peace," said Cardinal Tagle.

Delegates heard from well-known speakers such as Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Beverley Haddad of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and the prominent Peruvian theologian Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez Merino.

They also reflected on the past four years of complex emergencies and the loss, pain and suffering they had caused. Undeterred, Caritas looked towards the next four years with a steadfast determination and faith in its service of the poor.

Emergency responders

Caritas had prayed that 2015 would be a less devastating year for those battered by conflict and natural disasters. But fighting continued in swathes of the Middle East and Africa and the crises caused by extreme weather and climate change remained daunting.

Caritas gave emergency relief and hope, its members working together in partnership in a shared response. As the shameful gap between rich and poor continued to grow, Caritas focused its work on the most vulnerable, who suffer the greatest in an emergency.

Caritas ran public health campaigns in Ebola-hit Liberia. Miguel Samper/Caritas



Earthquake in Nepal

The ground convulsed in the densely populated Kathmandu Valley and in remote parts of Nepal on 25 April. By the time a second earthquake and hundreds of strong aftershocks had taken their toll, nearly 9 000 Nepalese were dead and 8 million had been seriously affected.

Caritas Nepal immediately began providing shelter and food to terrified people who were forced to camp out in the open in awful conditions. Scaling up its response, Caritas had reached more than 70 000 households with emergency relief within a few months. From around the world, the Caritas network contributed funding and sent staff and supplies.

The logistical challenges were great. Truck drivers had to clear blocked roads to get Caritas supplies through to remote areas and helicopters had to be used to reach others with essentials before the monsoon rains would cut them off. It was constantly a race against time.

People in need were given tarpaulins, mats, buckets, hygiene kits as well as tents and rope. For schools and health posts, Caritas provided solar lamps and corrugated iron sheets to build temporary shelters.



Aid for Nepalese survivors in the immediate aftermath of an earthquake. Matthieu Alexandre/Caritas



Conflict in Syria and Iraq

A woman who sold her daughter's hair to buy food for her family. A man who kept his children warm by burning his clothes. Caritas staff in Damascus heard these people's stories and those of many others in Syria's fifth year of war.

Caritas remained in solidarity with Syrians as one of the few international humanitarian agencies still operating in the country. Caritas centres have stayed open despite the dangers to serve victims of the conflict. Staff and volunteers distributed aid to people forced to live in parks and abandoned buildings.

Caritas staff in Homs helped people escaping extremist militias, while in Hassakeh they provided free medical care until bombing forced them to temporarily relocate. In Aleppo, Caritas provides medical support and assistance to the elderly, who are often overlooked but in desperate need.

In Syria's neighbours, Caritas Jordan, Caritas Lebanon

and Caritas Turkey continued to support refugees. They now number nearly 5 million people.

Caritas provided fuel, stoves, cash assistance, bedding, vouchers for food and other aid items, warm clothing for winter, free medical treatment, legal advice, protection and counselling, Caritas also prioritised support to education as an entire generation of Syrian children risks losing its schooling.

In Iraq, Caritas continued helping people who had fled from persecution. They arrived in the Kurdish part of Iraq often with nothing. Everything they managed to carry with them on their escape had been stolen at checkpoints. Caritas organisations worked through Caritas Iraq and local parishes in Erbil, Dohuk and Zakho, providing food, water, shelter, bedding and cash support as well as trauma counselling. Caritas Jordan and Caritas Lebanon also served Iraqi refugees in their projects.

European refugee crisis

Caritas took the call by Pope Francis to heart: every parish in Europe should welcome a family. Caritas organisations responded with speed, determination and love to the greatest mass movement of people in Europe since the Second World War.

On its border with Greece, Caritas Macedonia's field kitchens gave hundreds of cold and tired people hot soup, bread and tea. Volunteers provided winter jackets, boots and hats as well as information about the dangers of human trafficking and exploitation.

Caritas Serbia teams reached over 110 000 of the most vulnerable refugees crossing the country. Working on the southern border with Macedonia, the borders with Hungary and Croatia and in the capital Belgrade, they provided protective weather clothing, laundry services, warm soup

and hot tea, hygiene kits, information sharing, a free shower and even a Christmas lunch. Catholic Relief Services is supporting the efforts along the route with medical services and access to washing facilities.

When Hungary closed off its border and migrants diverted their journeys, Caritas Croatia responded with food, camp beds and blankets for the unexpected arrivals. One was an Afghan woman aged 105 who had been walking for weeks.

Caritas Slovenia provided emergency food, water and Internet hot spots. It received help from Caritas Hungary, which dispatched a team of doctors to set up medical tents in a transit camp intended for 2 000 people, but which was accommodating 20 000 at the peak of the crisis.

With the help of more than 15 000 volunteers, Caritas Austria has been providing food, water, hygiene packages, clothing, shelter and information. Caritas is playing an important role in linking communities with refugees by providing information to both sides and encouraging direct interaction between refugees and the host community.

On the other side of Europe, the French Caritas, Secours Catholique, continued its committed work on behalf of people camped on an old landfill site near the port of Calais. Realising how desperate their isolation was, it distributed materials and tools so that refugees and migrants could build places to interact. Secours Catholique staff provided legal advice, hot drinks, language lessons and phone recharging. They advocated strongly with the French government for a just and humane response to the crisis.





Mobile teams reached Ukraine's frontline. Matthieu Alexandre/Caritas

War in Ukraine

The suffering and trauma of Ukrainians caught in the conflict in their country runs very deep. Fighting between pro-Russian separatists and government forces has forced over 2.3 million people from their homes, 1.5 million of whom remain inside Ukraine. But it's an emergency about which little is heard.

Mobile teams from Caritas Ukraine delivered essential aid to victims on both sides and into what's known as the "Buffer Zone" between them. They also carried out a survey of family expenses, finding them four times higher than income for basic necessities.

Caritas stepped in to provide cash-for-work programmes to repair homes and delivered fuel and stoves. It helped people prepare for harsh weather and with access to healthcare – both physical and mental – by bringing in specialists and paying people's medical bills. Caritas Ukraine opened six child-friendly centres to support therapy for 500 children.





Unrest in Burundi

Caritas Burundi gave the injured survivors of political violence medical help while its neighbouring Caritas organisations provided emergency relief to refugees. Caritas Rwanda distributed food to vulnerable children, pregnant women and people living with HIV.

Local Caritas staff in Uvira in the Democratic Republic of Congo were supported by Caritas Spain and Cordaid (Caritas Netherlands) with essential supplies, while in Tanzania, Catholic Relief Services helped Caritas staff in Kigoma provide transport for new arrivals.

Patrick Nicholson/Caritas



Ebola recovery

By the end of 2015, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone seemed to have won the fight against the Ebola virus. People celebrated in the streets. But serious steps are needed to banish it forever, so Caritas is helping strengthen local healthcare systems following on from its work on social mobilisation and hygiene protection during the peak of the pandemic.

Ebola left behind many living victims in addition to the more than 12 000 people it killed. More than 16 000 children lost one or more parents, as well as a year of education when schools had to be closed. Caritas provided education packs, fees and reunification packages and supported children in the face of malnutrition and stigma.

To farmers who had not been able to work their fields because of quarantines, Caritas distributed cash grants and the seeds and tools needed to get working again. Caritas organised safe but dignified burial teams and succeeded in changing international guidelines to reflect the balance between respecting local customs and preventing new infections.

Floods in Myanmar

Despite their resilience, the worst flooding in decades in July pushed people in north and west Myanmar to the edge. Over 1 million people were seriously affected when the waters of the Irrawaddy Delta inundated homes and fields. Cyclone Komen followed in August.

Karuna Myanmar Social Services, the local Caritas

organisation, sprang into action, using its network of 17 offices around the country to rapidly deploy emergency response teams, helping 57 000 people with food and 34 000 to gain access to clean water. Caritas had solid plans in place, having learned a lot from the devastation wrought by Cyclone Nargis in 2008.





Voices for change

Advocating for a world where every person enjoys their basic human rights and benefits from development, education and healthcare, is at the centre of Caritas' work. We use the strong and united voices of Caritas members to persuade both world leaders and ordinary people that they can change things for the better.

Caritas works patiently and determinedly to forge agreements which protect the earth from further damage and people from the abuses of trafficking and unfair working conditions.

Caritas brought irrigation to this village near Juigalpa in Nicaragua. Laura Sheahen/Caritas

Women Sowers of Development Award

Caritas Internationalis and its partner the Fidel Götz Foundation named farmers in Nicaragua and refugees in Lebanon as the winners of the first "Women, Sowers of Development" awards. The awards were announced on International Women's Day in March 2015.

The "Women Sowers of Development" prize for a Caritas project went to a Caritas Nicaragua programme, which

gives farmers seeds, training and simple irrigation systems to diversify their crops for the health of their families and to allow them to sell products on the markets.

The prize for a non-Caritas project went to Basmeh and Zeitooneh, an association set up to help refugees of all nationalities in Lebanon. It teaches women handicrafts and English to help them generate an independent income.



Syrian refugees embroider at the Basmeh and Zeitooneh centre in Lebanon. Dalia Khamissy/Caritas



In Madhya Pradesh in India, Caritas programmes help families grow more food. Laura Sheahen/Caritas

Food for All

Vigils around the world marked the closure of Caritas' One Human Family, Food for All campaign in December 2015. Caritas members advocated at all levels for access to food to be guaranteed as a basic human right and held countless events to raise awareness about the hunger crisis.

Caritas conducted a major survey and produced a report on food insecurity, which highlighted the necessity of supporting small-scale farmers, especially in the face of climate change.

On World Food Day – 16 October – cards signed by Caritas members were given to the UN's Special Representative on Food Security to back up this request.

Sustainable Development Goals

Caritas Internationalis advocated for a new development agenda to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after their expiry in 2015. The new targets – the Sustainable Development Goals – address the root causes of poverty through an integrated approach and apply to every single country. Caritas was pleased by the inclusive and participatory way in which they were created.

A Caritas delegation travelled to the United Nations in New York in September to witness the adoption of the SDGs which included an address by Pope Francis. The 17 goals with 169 targets set out a blueprint for sustainable development, which will influence government planning and donor funding until 2030.

Caritas will hold world leaders to account to ensure the unfinished work of ending the scandal of global poverty is completed.



A prayer service in New York ahead of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ryan Worms/Caritas



Supporters at a climate justice rally in Ireland. Emmet Sheerin/Trocaire

Climate Change summit

Caritas threw its heart into the battle for a just agreement on climate change, which would give more protection to the world's poorest people.

The agreement, which came out of a UN meeting in Paris in November, was a step in the right direction. Caritas wants stronger action to help the most vulnerable people, who pay the highest price. It wants climate justice to be realised by transforming our economies, in particular by abandoning fossil fuels, while fighting poverty.

Listening to Pope Francis' call for the "care of our common home," Caritas organised a side event to focus attention on the impact of climate change in Oceania

and the Amazon and took part in climate marches around the world.

Prior to Paris, Caritas Internationalis helped organise a high-level dialogue at the United Nations to ensure that the voice of Catholic organisations rang out strong and clear.

In July in Addis Ababa, Caritas advocated at the Conference on Financing for Development. It questioned if the world's nations want to allow the full development of every human being and the conservation of our natural resources or if they want large companies to continue to dominate the lives of the poor.

Papal encyclical Laudato Si'

Until Pope Francis published *Laudato Si'* in May, no pope had ever before devoted an entire encyclical to the environment. In "On Care for our Common Home", the pope spoke to "every person living on this planet", calling for an inclusive dialogue about how we shape the future of the world we share. Caritas will use *Laudato Si'* to guide its work.

"Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years,"

Pope Francis wrote. "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?"

Pope Francis' wisdom also looks beyond the physical state of our natural world and at what he called "the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet" – social inequality and labour exploitation. These are key concerns for Caritas Internationalis too.

Laudato Si' came at a key time for campaigners for a better world, ahead of the adoption of new global development targets at the United Nations and negotiations for a new agreement to combat climate change.

The encyclical has had a wide and deep impact beyond faith communities in its setting out of a vision for rebalancing inequalities and its calls for more frugal lifestyles.



Caritas Peru promotes sustainable farming and livelihoods for poor mountain communities. Mercy Huaroto/Caritas Peru



Faith organisations key HIV carers

The report "Ending AIDS as a Public Health Threat: Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) as Key Stakeholders" was published in November by Caritas Internationalis and CHAN (Catholic HIV and AIDS Network).

The contribution of FBOs to healthcare, and particularly to HIV care, has not always received the recognition it deserves. However, the report offers compelling evidence

that, in many parts of the world, FBOs are key stakeholders in the HIV field.

Mgr. Robert J Vitillo, Caritas Internationalis' special advisor on HIV and Health, said, "The data contained in our report points to significant numbers of people served, excellent rates of retention in treatment and substantial reduction of viral load among those being served in faith-based programmes."

Strengthening Caritas



Caritas works as efficiently and accountably as possible on behalf of both the world's poorest people and the donors who support its mission.

Financial management training for religious workers from the Central African Republic. Elodie Perriot/Secours Catholique

Institutional development

In 2015, several important policies to further strengthen the confederation came into effect. These were the Code of Ethics, the Code of Conduct for Staff and the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards. It has been an important journey for Caritas to examine its practices and to safeguard its professional competence.

Pope Francis lent his strong support, saying, "Let us remember that we are accountable to God, to the Church,

to the donors and in particular, to the poor with whom the Lord identifies Himself."

Of Caritas members, 65 percent are applying the Management Standards already and will put themselves forward for assessment. In Africa, the first group of assessors has been trained. Caritas' newest member, Caritas South Sudan, was accompanied on a learning exchange tour to Kenya.

Emergency coordination

Caritas Internationalis launched 39 Emergency Appeals and Rapid Responses in 2015, raising €45 million. In response particularly to the European refugee and migrant crisis, Caritas members worked together with an unprecedented level of coordination.

In 2015, the new Caritas Internationalis Emergency
Toolkit was completed and a Rapid Response application
introduced. This allows Caritas members to raise funds
quickly to respond to very urgent needs. Funding is flexible
up to €250 000 for three months while an in-depth
assessment is done for a full Emergency Appeal.

Training on how to use the Toolkit was carried out for more than 250 people in most regions and a user's manual was published.

Communications

Over 60 Caritas member organisations contributed to articles, films, photo reports and social media initiatives in support of the confederation.

Regional workshops on communications were held in the Middle East and North Africa, with capacity building also taking place specifically for national members in Greece, Ukraine and Syria.

By the end of 2015, Caritas social media platforms had rapidly expanded, attracting 5 million unique visits to its photo sharing site and doubling its followers on its other social media outlets to 165 000.

Caritas in the Church and the World

Other highlights from 2015

January

 In a message to the European Union, Andrij Waskowycz, the president of Caritas Ukraine, appealed for help to end the suffering in his country.

February

- Caritas marked the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, declared by the Vatican. It fell on 8 February, the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, a nun who was sold into childhood slavery in the 1800s.
- Caritas Europa presented its third Crisis Monitoring Report, "Poverty and inequalities on the rise – Just social models needed as the solution."
- Caritas North America and Caritas Latin America and the Caribbean leadership met with migrants, refugees and border officials on the Texan border with Mexico.
- Caritas Oceania held a workshop for bishops in Fiji to explore ways of organising Caritas and of most effectively addressing the growing inequality gap in the region.

March

 After three decades without rain, the Atacama Desert in Chile was hit by freak downpours. Caritas provided 1000 flooded families with aid to help them get through the worst natural disaster in the area in 80 years. Bishops and Caritas organisations from the Pan-Amazon Ecclesial Network (REPAM) met at the Vatican to discuss the threats that multinational companies and climate change pose to the Amazon.

April

 Caritas Syria mourned staff member Safouh Al-Mosleh, who was killed by shellfire in his house in Aleppo.

- A team from Caritas Oceania visited Vanuatu to provide support following Cyclone Pam.
- Caritas Asia held its annual Asia Farmers' Conference in Nepal.

May

 In Milan, a special Caritas day and rally celebrated the One Human Family, Food for All Campaign.



- Caritas supporters joined thousands of people at the beatification mass in El Salvador for Archbishop Oscar Romero. Archbishop Romero was assassinated in 1980 after speaking out about violence in the country. He was also made one of the patrons of Caritas Internationalis.
- Caritas South Sudan became the newest member of the confederation.

June

- Caritas Internationalis and the Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone hosted an event at the Human Rights Council.
 Discussions focused on the psychological needs of children orphaned by the Ebola outbreak.
- Caritas Europa organised a workshop on small-scale farming and sustainable food systems during the European Development Days.
- Caritas Italy investigated the forces that compel people to migrate in its report, "Seas and Walls."

July

 Caritas marked the second UN World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

August

- Youth volunteers from six Middle East Caritas organisations came together in Lebanon for 12 days to strengthen their role working for the common good.
- Caritas Central African Republic President and Archbishop of Bangui, Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, was one of three religious leaders who received international recognition for work promoting peace. The Interfaith Peace Platform they established won the 2015 Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize, named after a UN official killed in Iraq.



Caritas Central African Republic president and archbishop of Bangui, Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga. Matthieu Alexandre/Caritas



 The newly-formed Caritas Central Asia Sub-Region held its first workshop in the Mongolian capital, Ulaanbaatar.
 The sub-region was formed to bring together Caritas organisations from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia.

September

- During a visit to the United States, Pope Francis addressed both Congress and the UN's General Assembly.
- The World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation was marked on 1 September.
- Caritas Europa convened an emergency meeting of European confederation members to discuss coordination in response to the migrant and refugee crisis.
- Caritas Oceania held a forum in Papua New Guinea on the themes raised for the region in *Laudato Si'*.

October

- Caritas hosted an event at the UN in Geneva on the role of faith-based organisations in emergencies in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016.
- Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand released its first
 "Caritas State of the Environment in Oceania" report.
- At a meeting in Kinshasa, Caritas Africa, the Jesuits and The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) launched a network of Church organisations on the protection of the Congo Rainforest and Basin.

November

- The 33 members of the Network of Christian
 Organisations Against Trafficking in Humans
 (COATNET) met in Paris. Caritas presented research
 showing the increased vulnerability of women and
 children in conflicts.
- Caritas Pakistan provided immediate shelter and warm bedding to 1200 families in Pakistan who survived a deadly earthquake in the Hindu Kush region.

December

- Caritas celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Convention to Protect Migrant Workers.
- Pope Francis launched the jubilee Holy Year of Mercy by opening the Holy Door of Mercy at St Peter's Basilica and the Holy Door of Charity at a Caritas Rome hostel.

Finances

Every year an international external auditing firm reviews the accounts of Caritas Internationalis. Financial information on individual Caritas national organisations can be found on their websites. Links to these are at www.caritas.org

| Expenditure | 2015 | 2014 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Administration of confederation and General Secretariat | 511 016 | 470 653 |
| Humanitarian coordination | 916 984 | 799 620 |
| Advocacy | 826 068 | 834 833 |
| HIV/AIDS and human trafficking network programmes | 403 312 | 416 963 |
| Cooperation and capacity building | 555 203 | 407 132 |
| Communications | 695 836 | 654 551 |
| Support to regional coordination | 300 211 | 395 276 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 410 | 3 481 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 4 211 039 | 3 982 509 |

Clean water for survivors of conflict in South Sudan. Paul Jeffrey/Caritas



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