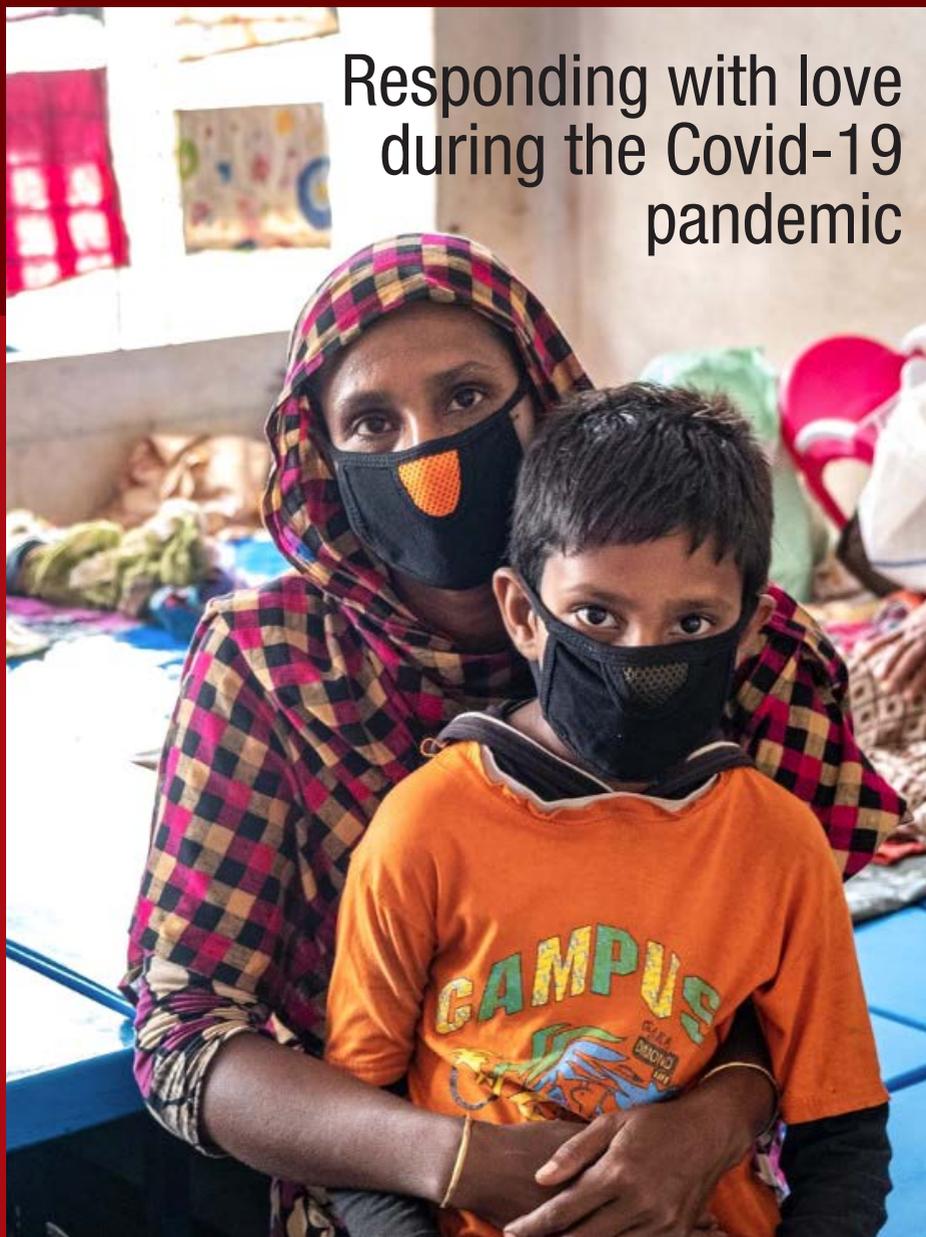


Responding with love during the Covid-19 pandemic



Caritas Internationalis COVID-19 Response Fund

On March 27, 2020, when the whole world was gripped with fear and uncertainty, when COVID-19 was spreading like wildfire across the world, Pope Francis received members of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and Caritas Internationalis to reflect on how the Church could bear witness at this moment of dire global crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Pope Francis said, “In the face of this global pandemic, the Church cannot solve all the problems. But we can show gestures of solidarity and this will be followed by others.”

He wanted the Church to be present to serve, accompany, defend and empower the poorest. He said, the care for the poorest and their protection must be a priority. We need to support them, to protect them and accompanying them. Pope Francis created the COVID-19 taskforce, which has four different groups focused on emergency response, research and reflection, communication and advocacy.

Caritas Internationalis and the department of health care of the Dicastery were entrusted of organizing the first group.

The Holy Father asked Caritas Internationalis with a mission and in April, Caritas Internationalis answered

this call by creating a COVID-19 Response Fund so Caritas organisations could help the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world survive the pandemic.

Supported by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the fund has so far helped almost 9 million people around the world. Over 29 national Caritas organisations have been able to respond more quickly and effectively and in greater solidarity to this unprecedented global crisis.

The Caritas confederation translated the prophetic message of the Holy Father into concrete action to globalise solidarity both at the local and international level.

Through photos and words we show the impact of our action on the poorest communities to prevent them from becoming victims of the pandemic.

“As we live in isolation and we all become marginalised and vulnerable, the global suffering we are seeing has made it startlingly apparent to us that we need other people and other people need us too”, says *Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle*

Small actions performed with care and love are essential to Caritas's COVID-19 response to help the most vulnerable who are in isolation.



Caritas Ecuador distributing food packages to the most vulnerable.



Food distribution in Tanzania

COVID-19 Response Fund

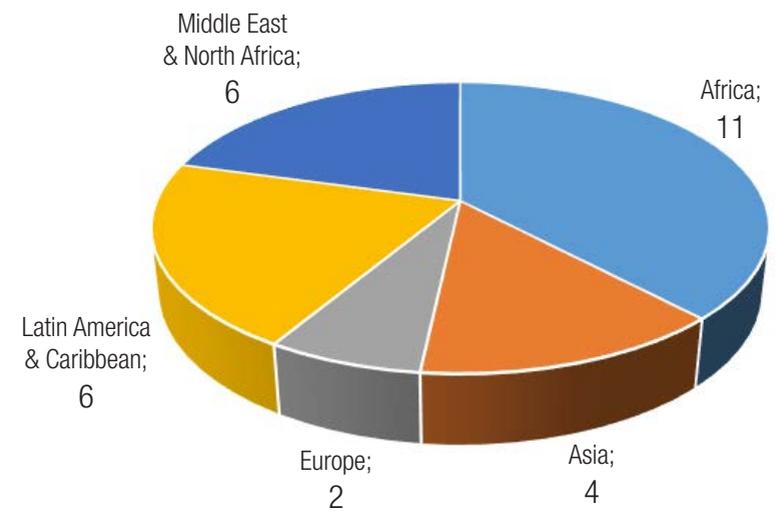
Caritas Internationalis COVID-19 Response Fund for COVID-19 provides immediate and effective responses. Designed to be a visible sign of the solidarity of the universal Church, this global fund has allowed Caritas organisations to continue their work and promote preventive measures aimed at limiting the infection of the virus. The fund focuses on countries where the spread of the epidemic would have far more devastating consequences than those witnessed in Europe.

N. of projects:
29

Funds raised:
€ 2,738,990.55

Beneficiaries:
9 million people

Number of projects per region



“COVID-19 is not a parenthesis, but a new beginning.”

Pope Francis

ACCOMPANYING



India: bishop distributes help to the most vulnerable

BANGLADESH



Caritas is accompanying people from many different countries and of many different faiths and ethnicities through the pandemic.

Caritas Bangladesh has provided lifesaving support and awareness messages to well over 1 million people across the country. Desperately poor families have been receiving direct cash for food, hygiene kits, food supplies.

THE HOLY LAND



In a devastating blow, cases of COVID_19 were identified in the community in Gaza in late August and the territory was put under lockdown. With almost 2 million people crammed into a small strip of land, the lives of Gazans are at massive risk from the spread of COVID-19. Caritas Jerusalem's medical teams have been visiting homes to provide health care and ensure people stay at inside.

The COVID Response Fund aims to enable Caritas organisations to react quickly and efficiently to the challenges of the pandemic.

BOLIVIA



Caritas Bolivia's work through the COVID-19 Response Fund has focused on the assisting the elderly, who might not receive the care and attention they need during the pandemic. Caritas has focused on providing food and medicines, but also mental health support to this vulnerable section of society during the pandemic. A particular focus has been paid to prisoners, people who often find themselves forgotten by society.

UKRAINE



Ukraine is one of a number of countries in the world facing internal conflict as well as the pandemic.

Caritas Ukraine is focusing on reducing the impact of COVID-19 on the people of Ukraine, particularly the seriously ill, disabled people and women. Awareness, hygiene and community empowerment are some of the focuses of Caritas Ukraine's work on COVID-19

“Caritas
Internationalis strives
to make people
autonomous”
Pope Francis

EMPOWERMENT



India: women sewing face masks

Women are empowered
to spread awareness
among the population
regarding the importance
of masks as a necessary
means of protection.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



Empowering communities with information about the risks of COVID-19 and ways to avoid contracting it is key to the Caritas response to the coronavirus. Part of the Caritas COVID-19 response in the Democratic Republic of Congo is to combat misinformation and ensure over 3 million people in Kinshasa, the Congolese capital, have the correct information to protect against COVID-19.

ARGENTINA



Caritas gives communities the skills and knowledge to face this global challenge as one, leaving no one behind. Caritas Argentina is focusing on creating a care network in communities to help the most vulnerable stay at home and protect themselves. They are also creating spaces where people with COVID-19, or suspected of having it, can go and self-isolate.

LEBANON



Lebanon has been hit by the triple disaster of the pandemic, economic breakdown and massive explosions at the port in August, which left 300,000 people homeless. Caritas Lebanon has activated their youth group and massive volunteer base to ensure the hungry receive food and medical assistance during the pandemic.

BOLIVIA



Caritas Bolivia boosted its decades-long pastoral work in overcrowded prisons by ensuring that inmates - among the most marginalised people in society - have had food and hygiene items during the pandemic. They advocated to the government to adopt an amnesty for vulnerable prisoners. They've also focused on helping migrants and women.

“On the one hand, it is essential to find a cure for this small but terrible virus. On the other, we must also cure a larger virus, that of social injustice, inequality of opportunity, marginalisation, and the lack of protection for the weakest”.

Pope Francis

AWARENESS



Caritas out on the streets raising awareness in Cambodia.

Information is power.
Communities have the right to information that will help them protect themselves from the pandemic.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



Challenges to water, knowledge and health infrastructures in some countries makes the pandemic an even greater threat than it is in others.

Caritas Central African Republic is ensuring that 3 million people are aware of how to prevent the spread of the virus. Caritas set up hand washing stations in key places to and emphasises that hygiene is key to staying alive.

PROTECTING THE ROHINGYA



The Rohingya are at particular risk from the pandemic as many of them live in high density camps. Caritas Bangladesh is working across the country and also in Cox's Bazaar camps to provide prevention messaging to tens of thousands of people. They have been providing soap and hygiene kits to thousands of family, as well as installing handwashing stations in public places and near toilets.

NIGERIA



Caritas has strengthened and equipped four Catholic healthcare centres serving over 17,000 people annually. Six thousand people received soaps and detergent to ensure the virus didn't spread and 200 healthcare workers received COVID training.

PERÙ



Caritas Peru launched the campaign "Ayúdanos a ayudar" ("Help us to help"). They have been reaching out to indigenous communities in hard to reach places to raise awareness and take food and hygiene items to them.

“Think about the future today and act with agility to save lives”
Pope Francis
to Caritas Internationalis

SERVE



Caritas Venezuela provides food and hygiene items and promotes the message “It’s time to stay home #EsTiempodeEstarenCasa

One of the key areas of the COVID Response Fund is providing people with food. This is vital to preventing the spread of COVID-19 because if people are hungry, they’re more likely to leave their house to look for food and work.

INDIA



By mid-September 2020, India was the second most-affected country in the world by COVID_19 with almost five million cases. Caritas India is bringing hygiene awareness programmes to communities and providing food and nutrition support to the most vulnerable. They're also ensuring care workers have personal protective equipment. Caritas's programmes will have a focus on migrants as well as the elderly, the vulnerable and women-headed households.

BENIN



Caritas Benin launched a campaign to ensure behaviour change regarding communities' hygiene practices. It ensured very poor households had face masks, handwashing facilities, food and the knowledge to keep COVID-19 at bay.

GHANA



Caritas Ghana has been providing shelter, blankets and mats to displaced women and children during the pandemic. They have also been giving psychosocial counselling to people in confined facilities and affected family of COVID 19. It has been providing food and medicines and promoting community engagement.

IRAQ



Healthcare staff are on the the frontline of the COVID epidemic, Caritas Iraq healthcare staff is providing healthcare workers, patients and staff with the necessary protective equipment to stop the spread of the virus.

The Church and Caritas are working hand to hand to protect communities



Tanzania, food and non food item distribution

Offering the joy of a hot meal to those who have nothing and feel abandoned



Ukraine: food distribution



Democratic Republic of Congo: Bishop launches the awareness campaign a Luebo



Cyprus: food packages

Caritas staff and volunteers have been out on the streets and visiting people's houses during the pandemic to ensure no one is left behind.



India: food distribution

Never lose sight of the most vulnerable

In many countries around the world, Caritas has implemented specific programmes for refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) as well as homeless: among the groups most at risk of infection due to precarious living conditions.



India: Rice distribution for migrant laborers



Caritas Ukraine's volunteers offering food and hot drinks to homeless people



France: Secours Catholique-Caritas France help homeless people

Caritas is on the streets of war-torn and crisis-hit countries to provide help and comfort



Syria: Caritas staff checking on population and bringing help in Aleppo

The access to health is a prime concern the world over during the pandemic, especially for the poorest, who are marginalised and isolated



Caritas Jerusalem's mobile medical teams have been ensuring Gazans receive treatment during lockdown.

“We have realised
that we are in the
same boat, all
of us fragile and
disorientated, but
at the same time
important and
needed, all of us
called to row together,
each of us in need of
comforting the other.”

Pope Francis
Urbi et Orbi