

***Summary of Side Event Working successfully together, health innovative partnerships to build back better from the COVID-19. Experiences from Peru, Lebanon and DRC by Caritas Internationalis***

2 February 2022, 2:00-2:50 pm (EST)

**Background on the event**

Based on experiences from the field, Caritas Internationalis' side event presented success stories of partnerships between Caritas organizations, governments and the private sector and shed light on many health initiatives happening at local and national level.

The presentation on Peru illustrated the role of partnership in creating health innovative initiatives to respond to the pandemic crisis. Caritas Peru worked in collaboration with the private sector, the media, the church and national institutions, such as the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior, Armed Forces, Ministry of Health and the National Penitentiary Institute to put in place four health initiatives at national level reaching out to the most vulnerable populations. The former Prime Minister of the Republic of Peru, Mirtha Vasquez, confirmed the importance of Church-inspired initiatives in the fight against COVID-19: "The Peruvian Bishops' Conference initiatives have significantly helped individuals and families".

A similar experience was shared by Lebanon, a country facing "an unprecedented multifaceted economic, banking, and financial crisis" as stated by Ola Sidani, Economic Expert, Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Lebanon. By joining forces, the government, the private sector, Caritas Lebanon and CSOs were able to fight COVID and a multitude of crises. Caritas Lebanon's comprehensive response to the pandemic allowed youth to join the fight.

Lastly, Congo presented their experiences dealing with COVID-19 and building back better. With a long standing partnership between the ministry of Public Health and Caritas Congo, both organizations were able to quickly respond to the pandemic while keeping the community at the centre of their response.

The event showed that Leaving no one behind and an inclusive partnership process are vital to advance the full implementation of the 2030 agenda and to build back better.

## **Key Issues discussed**

- COVID19 is not a health crisis only but a socioeconomic and human rights crisis. It reveals the inequality and injustice that still exist in the world.
- A comprehensive approach is needed in fighting COVID 19. Countries, presenting at this side-event, established national coordination mechanisms and committees to be able to effectively respond to the pandemic, emphasizing the need to involve Youth.
- Importance of engaging with the community and communicating risks to them
- Importance of Partnership, between public and private, especially with Faith Based organizations in the fight against COVID 19.
- Incapacities of countries to keep fighting COVID and the need to do things differently.
- Psycho-social support especially to those engaged in the field, front liners and the persons who got COVID 19 was important and highlighted
- Providing care with passion and reaching out to most vulnerable: prisoners, indigenous and marginalized people was vital for a better response.

## **Key recommendations for action**

- Increase, encourage and systematize cooperation and partnership between Civil Society, with special focus on Faith Based organizations, and the governments, as an essential step for innovative public policies and actions.
- Encourage political will to strengthen national health care systems, through allocation of adequate financial resources, and by focusing on human resources, infrastructure and community approach.
- Promote community based and people orientated approaches, embedding awareness building on Integral Health and psychosocial support, as key components of health response plans.
- Governments to put in place integral health policies and emergency health response plans by promoting community oriented approaches, preventive measures and risks management
- Build awareness through communication and community engagement on the importance of vaccines.

YouTube link to the event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqcQw572TvU>

Other links: <https://www.caritas.org/2022/02/the-best-response-to-covid-19-is-to-guarantee-the-right-to-health-care/>