



Editorial

by Mr. Gabriel Hatti, President of Caritas MONA

Many events have marked summer 2022; this autumn brings as well new occasions for engagement and collaboration at the Confederation level, to which the Regional Secretariat and the Member Organizations of the MONA Region are pleased to contribute.

The Caritas Internationalis conference on *Fraternal Cooperation*, that will be held in Rome on November 21-22, is one of those steps that the Region awaits and prepares. Many meetings have been organized around this topic, with the Member Organizations and among them, in particular a joint meeting of partners for the Middle East area, organized in Jordan by Caritas MONA.

A similar meeting, this time for the North and Horn of Africa zones, is planned in Tunisia before the end of the year.

In this newsletter, we are glad to share with you, as usual, some news from the Region.

Through these activities, several topics have been approached: Interreligious and ecumenical diversity, but also the diversity that people with disabilities remind us of, integral ecology, climate change, safeguarding, as well as the place of women in our institutions and in society



Fraternal Cooperation

Joint Partners' Meeting in Amman

After two years of online meetings and with the emergence of new crises, Caritas MONA proposed to its Member Organizations (MOs) that joint partners' meetings be organized by zone rather than by country, for greater efficiency and coordination. The suggestion was welcomed and the first joint meeting was held in Amman (Jordan), from the 12th to the 14th of July 2002, for the Middle East MOs and partners from the Caritas Network.

The discussions mainly revolved around the persistent socio-political and economic crises affecting the populations of the Region, and the impact of the war in Eastern Europe on the Middle East countries. Exchanges were particularly focused on humanitarian issues, and on the means to coordinate aid in order to mitigate as much as possible the damages on the beneficiaries of Caritas assistance.

In reality, the Caritas in each of these countries are struggling to keep supporting their beneficiaries despite the decreasing amount of funds they receive and their own vulnerability in this socio-economic situation which affects them as much.

Fraternal cooperation, its foundations, and the mechanisms that make its adoption and implementation possible, were another essential axis, as well as the localization question.

Recommendations were duly noted by Caritas MONA, which ensures the follow up individually and during partners' meetings of each Organization.

The upcoming CI Conference on Fraternal Cooperation, to be held in November 2022 in Rome, will also mark an important milestone for the Confederation.

In December, a joint partners' meeting is also planned for the North Africa and Horn of Africa zones.

We warmly thank our Caritas Jordan colleagues for their assistance in organizing the first meeting, as well as Caritas Tunisia for the preparations that are already underway for the second meeting.

Photo @Caritas Jordan

Women's Leadership Conference at the UNESCO



Caritas MONA was pleased to participate in the conference on Women's leadership, organized by Caritas Internationalis and the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to UNESCO on October 27 and 28, 2022, under the patronage of UNESCO and at its premises in Paris.

This conference focused on the many obstacles that women face in society, on the concrete ways of action and on the need for synergy between local and international actors. The experiences from all corners of the world and from all sectors were impressive: the names and faces of many of these women, their strength and their commitment made a significant impact.

Promoting the role of women is one of the strategic orientations of Caritas MONA. In his speech, the Regional Coordinator Karam Abi Yazbeck illustrated this orientation with examples from the Region. He also insisted on the role of men in the promotion of women's leadership, in the sense that this is not a fight of women against men but of women and men together for a more just society.

The conference was broadcasted live on the Vatican Youtube channel ([click here](#))

Photo @Caritas Internationalis

CSP Regional Project Conclusion of the first phase

The first phase of the Regional Capacity Building Project (CSP) on Ecumenism, Interreligious and Peacebuilding was completed in June 2022.

To celebrate each of the initiatives implemented by the national Caritas organizations participating in the project, Caritas MONA produced a series of videos, which you can find on our Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/caritasmona> and Twitter https://twitter.com/Caritas_Mona pages.

The links below will take you directly to the mentioned videos:

Caritas Djibouti and Caritas Somalia : <https://fb.watch/gxWsw1buAA/>

Caritas Egypt : <https://fb.watch/gxWwvD-WcM/>

Caritas Iraq : <https://fb.watch/gxWW1EP1rN/>

Caritas Jordan : <https://fb.watch/gxWuDE3Ap4/>

Caritas Lebanon : <https://fb.watch/gxWxKF4TMv/>

Caritas Mauritania : <https://fb.watch/gxYCnXTVqK/>

Caritas Syria : https://fb.watch/gxY_qBPZOb/

Caritas Tunisia: <https://fb.watch/gxWFZggLoe/>



IDCS Regional Committee meeting

Members of the MONA IDCS (Institutional Development & Capacity Strengthening) Regional Committee met in-person, in Amman (Jordan) from the 26th to the 28th of July 2022.

They were joined by a member of the Caritas Internationalis (CI) IDCS Committee and by a member of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) seconded to the Regional Secretariat.

These 3 days were an opportunity for the 9 participants to review the Regional Committee's Terms of Reference (ToR) and its mandate, to take stock of the situation of our MOs in the Implementation of CI Management Standards (CI MS), and to be updated on what's being done in the Confederation and the MONA region with the Organizational Development Solidarity Fund (ODSF).

The CI MS coordinators and assessors presented their external assessment experiences, lessons learned and proposed changes. Afterwards, the participants discussed the role of the IDCS Regional Committee in supporting the MOs to develop their improvement plans, and identified the capacity strengthening needs of the Committee members.

The members discussed priorities and related activities for 2022; they accordingly reviewed the draft of 2022/2023 Action Plan and set a relevant timeline for the second half of 2022. The last day of this meeting was devoted to team building.

Institutional Development, Capacity Strengthening and Safeguarding

Safeguarding

The past six months have been rich in action in the field of Safeguarding: as most MOs in the region have already submitted their self-assessments against this Management Standard, the effort is currently focused on the development and implementation of improvement plans.

Caritas MONA participated in the Safeguarding Learning Path organized by Caritas Europa in Bratislava (Slovakia) in June 2022. The workshops were mainly centered on complaints management mechanisms and safe recruitment procedures.

The involvement of children in Safeguarding is also a key point that we invite our MOs to work on: consulting youth and involving them in every phase of the projects' evaluation strengthens the effectiveness of our systems and ensures awareness about children's rights.

Webinars on the use of the data collection tool developed by Caritas Internationalis were launched as well in October: this tool will be used to collect the required information for the treatment of any potential case of sexual abuse and exploitation faced by beneficiaries of the Caritas services.

Photo @Caritas MONA

Drought and hunger emergency in Somalia

The Horn of Africa is now facing its worst drought in 40 years, after a fifth failed rainfall season, according to the World Meteorological Organization. In Somalia, nearly half of the population is affected by lack of water and food insecurity: more than 1.1 million people are displaced and nearly 6.4 million do not have access to safe water.

Famine is expected to be officially declared soon; Not to mention the inflation and poor health system, as well as the security and political situation of the country.

In close cooperation with local authorities and NGOs, and with the support of partners, **Caritas Somalia** is working hard to aid the affected population. Hundreds of families displaced to the Lower Shabelle region (Southwest) and to the capital, particularly in Daynile and Kahda, were provided with emergency shelters.



Thousands of people received food and health assistance. **Caritas Somalia** also carries out local development projects in all the regions of the country, in partnership with the Italian Civic-Military Cooperation and local NGOs, especially in the fields of education, sports and health.

However, the needs far exceed the available funds and capacities. An emergency appeal has therefore been launched within the Caritas Confederation, with the hope that it will be fully funded, but also that other actors will address the humanitarian situation in Somalia, and the global climate emergency, in a structural and sustainable way.

Caritas Morocco – Serving people with disabilities

Many of us are aware of what **Caritas Morocco** does in terms of humanitarian assistance and accompaniment of migrants, since Morocco is one of the major migratory crossroads in the Mediterranean.

We are perhaps less familiar with the other activities that Caritas in Morocco undertakes to serve the population in the various localities of the country, particularly in the field of disability.

With the Moroccan Church to which it is affiliated and in partnership with other Moroccan associations, **Caritas Morocco** has been working for more than 15 years with families to support the integration of children with disabilities into the school system and to facilitate access to the job market for youth and adults.

Caritas particularly provides support to associations that are already working in this sector, in close proximity to vulnerable populations, by providing technical, material and pedagogical support, in addition to a qualitative presence, guidance and accompaniment.

Lately, a nursery for autistic children has been created, school integration classes have been set up, various vocational training courses have been organized (sewing, carpentry, agriculture, farming, jewelry, etc.) and income-generating projects have been supported, such as a kitchen-restaurant project and an agricultural project in which youths and young adults from all over Morocco are participating, enabling both their professional integration and financial autonomy.

News from Caritas Lebanon On their integral ecology activities

“While the term **integral ecology** may be unfamiliar, it nonetheless plays an essential role in the Catholic Church’s thinking and approach to tackling the ecological crisis today. Drawing upon the wisdom of the Church, Pope Francis urges us all to view both the ecological and the human crisis through an integral approach, as a way for us all to work together to protect the earth, our common home. This integrated view reveals a deeper insight. Not only are the ecological problems interconnected, but there is also an interconnection between the ecological crisis and the human crisis.

Caritas Lebanon is present all over the Lebanese territory. Its centers are linked with the dioceses and respond to the needs of the neighboring communities. In addition, the presence of a strong solid **Youth department** in these centers creates a social & environmental engagement with these communities. Youth are empowered and capacitated through ecological awareness sessions.

As a result, they are highly active in the implementation of activities that empower other young people to support their families and communities by generating income, despite the difficult overall country situation. 300 youth were trained on several topics to start their own businesses - including good agricultural practices, irrigation, pest control, use of fertilizer, bee-keeping, food processing, digital marketing and entrepreneurship, and Catholic Social Teaching - and given land to implement these.



Installation of greenhouses



Beekeeping

The Maronite dioceses of Tripoli (North Lebanon) and Zahle (Bekaa Area) provided each 10,000 square meters of land. This project not only creates **job opportunities**, provides low cost and affordable agricultural products for the community and for the Caritas institutions of Lebanon; it also helps preserve nature and orient youth to investing their lands in the spirit of protecting our common home.

On the other hand, and at a global level, Caritas Lebanon has integrated the preservation of the environment in its **General Strategy**. Integral Ecology is one of its main goals, currently being implemented throughout its centers & premises by opting for more eco-friendly green options like the installation of Solar PV panels or the Waste Policy. Caritas Lebanon believes in “leading by example” to protect the “Human Being” and its existence by taking care of our common home, responding to Pope Francis’ call for ecological conversion and social justice, inspired by **Laudato Si’** and **Fratelli Tutti**.”

Photos @Caritas Lebanon



Environmental Open Day Event

Appointment of the new Secretary General of Caritas Jerusalem



It is with deep gratitude for all that she has done and sowed in this Land, that we inform you that **Sister Bridget Tighe** has completed her mandate as Secretary General of Caritas Jerusalem on August 31, 2022.

It is also with joy and confidence that we welcome the new Secretary General, **Mr. Anton Asfar**, who took office on September 1st.

You are in our prayers!

Closure of Caritas Algeria

We regret to announce the closure of Caritas Algeria since the end of September 2022, along with other international organizations, upon request of the local authorities.

The Church of Algeria, which Caritas was part of, naturally continues its mission of service to fraternity and to the most vulnerable of the Algerian people.



P.O.Box: 60-317 Zalka - Lebanon

 +961 1 893 599

 caritas@caritasmona.org

 Caritas MONA

 @Caritas_Mona