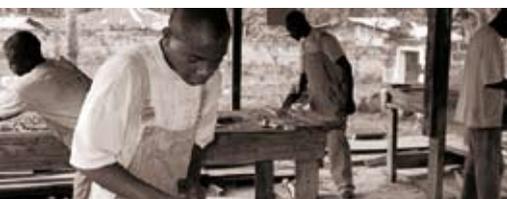


# ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

EDITION 2007



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## MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

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The wisdom and guidance contained in the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical "Deus Caritas Est" is a continuous source of motivation and guidance for Caritas Europa and its member organisations in their endeavours to meet the needs of the people (in ways that demonstrate effectiveness, speed, accountability, and endurance) through dedication to others with heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity.

In the same encyclical, the Holy Father reminds us that love needs to be organised if it is to be an ordered service to the community. This guidance clearly describes the goals of Caritas Europa working within its network of member organisations and within the wider Caritas Internationalis Confederation. Using a diversity of activities, aimed at connecting the multitudes within the European network, Caritas Europa helps to create a trans-national 'organisation of love'. To foster this love into an 'ordered service to a community', Caritas Europa relies on alliances within the Church and civil society, and respectfully engages with political decision makers on behalf of the poor and the marginalised.

Looking back at the period May 2006 to December 2007, covered by this report, I believe that the relationship and cooperation between Caritas Europa and its member organisations has been strengthened. More member organisations are now actively engaged in the various Caritas Europa working structures than ever before, thus firmly ensuring that our work not only responds to the needs of the member organisations, but also reflects their diversity of realities and their incredible wealth of experience and expertise. At the same time, Caritas Europa and its members have made important and sometimes decisive contributions to the work of the global Caritas Internationalis Confederation, in our joint mission to make a difference in the life of the poor and to challenge societal conditions and systems that are unjust.

This report is a valuable tool to record to what extent during the report period we have indeed achieved the endeavour to 'organise love' across Europe, within the boundaries of our mandate and with proper stewardship of the resources spout at our disposal. The report is divided into six priorities following the Caritas Europa Strategy 2005-2010 and presents highlights of the activities that are especially noteworthy for each of these strategic priorities.

This publication was compiled by the responsible thematic departments of Caritas Europa under the coordination of the Advocacy and Communication department. To all the Caritas Europa team, I express my appreciation for this piece of work and look forward to another year of fruitful collaboration, as always, with all our enthusiasm and dedication.

Brussels, January 2008

Marius Wanders



Secretary General



**C**aritas strives to stand for social justice, social welfare and social services. Caritas Europa works towards poverty eradication and social inclusion through the development and implementation of a comprehensive social policy framework and through fostering the principles of participatory democracy and civil dialogue.

## CONCEPT programme

Member States of the European Union (EU) have an obligation to submit every three years to the European Commission their National Reports on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (NSR/spsi). To Caritas Europa, this is a process of great value allowing enhanced monitoring of governments' actions against poverty and exclusion. Thanks to the "Caritas Organisations Network to Challenge the Exclusion and Poverty Trap" (CONCEPT) programme, the network not only took note of these reports, but also attempted to influence them while they were being created, and subsequently monitored their implementation.

Co-financed by the European Commission, the CONCEPT programme initially enjoyed a one-year grant agreement, which was subsequently succeeded by a grant agreement for an additional year until 30 November 2007. Through this programme, Caritas Europa established a 'network within the network' of 24 national experts on the topic of social inclusion who represent Caritas or the Church in the Member States of the EU. These experts strived to actively engage in shaping the NSR/spsi during the first year, and subsequently involved themselves in the process of monitoring the implementation of the strategies.

As an outcome of the project's first year, in February 2007, Caritas Europa – in collaboration with the Von Hügel Institute – issued a report on the analysis of the quality, coherence and potential effectiveness of the NSR/spsi 2006 – 2008 under the title "European Public Value and the Caritas Social Vision – An Interim Assessment of Europe's National Social Inclusion Strategies".

CONCEPT's second year was devoted to the implementation of the National Reports in the Member States. Main themes for activities and research within the project included: Integration, social inclusion, and participation in public life of migrant and ethnic minorities; Health and health related social services; A learning and working Europe; and Child poverty. The overall closing conference was held in Brussels in early November 2007. The conference

clearly distinguished the CONCEPT network as a group of qualified experts on the Social Inclusion process. It is the sincere intention of Caritas Europa to continue its advocacy work drawing upon the extensive knowledge provided within the CONCEPT network.

## Poverty Report

One of the several means that Caritas Europa uses to raise awareness about poverty in Europe is the publication of periodic Caritas Europa Poverty Reports. Firstly reporting on the overall social structure of poverty across Europe (Report on Poverty in Europe, 2001), Caritas Europa then focused specifically on the impoverished condition in which many families live in today's Europe ("Poverty has faces in Europe – the need for family-oriented policies", 2004).

In June 2006, Caritas Europa launched its 3<sup>rd</sup> Poverty Report entitled "Migration, a journey into poverty?" during a public ceremony attended by key representatives of the European Institutions, the Council of Europe, social NGOs and other stakeholders in the areas of poverty and migration.

This 3<sup>rd</sup> Caritas Europa Poverty Report examines the risks of poverty and social exclusion faced by those who have migrated within or into Europe. The report looks carefully at five key elements of social inclusion namely: dignified employment, acceptable housing, access to basic health care, access to education, and participation in public life.

Caritas Europa is currently reflecting on the next edition of the Poverty Report (thematically related to the proposed European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in 2010), which is scheduled to be published at the end of 2009.

## Home Care

Responding to the precarious health care situation of numerous elderly across Europe, several Caritas Europa member organisations have created home care services that provide efficient and affordable medical care to the sick, disabled and the elderly. Based on their experiences, these organisations have observed that home care strengthens civil society by linking family and community responsibilities with the social and health responsibilities of both local and national governments.

Caritas Europa's first Home Care Forum was held in Sofia in May 2006, gathering representatives of



political institutions from several European countries, as well as experts from the NGOs' community. The forum aimed at exploring ways to promote and integrate home care through relevant policy reforms and programmes at the national and European level.

Caritas participants issued a final Proclamation including 15 important principles to promote cooperation between Caritas Europa member organisations in this area.

The second Home Care Forum will be held in Belgrade in June 2008, and will focus on creating the elements for a comprehensive Caritas Europa position paper on home care as an effective method of fostering social inclusion.

## HIV/AIDS

The explosive growth of HIV/AIDS in Europe (notably in Central and Eastern European countries) is of particular concern to Caritas Europa; especially the 'social dimension' that accompanies this disease. Caritas Europa works tirelessly to raise awareness within the Church as well as within society and political circles about the vicious circle linking HIV/AIDS, poverty and social exclusion.

In April 2007, an international conference on HIV/AIDS entitled "Stigma or Solidarity? New challenges for the Church responses to HIV/AIDS in Europe" was held in Kiev. The conference brought together representatives of Episcopal Conferences, Caritas leaders and HIV related project practitioners. The event was organised in collaboration with Caritas Ukraine and co-sponsored by DCV-Caritas Germany, Catholic Relief Services (Europe & Middle East Regional Office) and Renovabis.

Also, the conference aimed at designing the necessary steps towards a pan-European Caritas strategy of cooperation in the areas of mutual learning and advocacy work. This includes efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation of persons affected by HIV.

Keynote speeches were delivered by Dr Emelia Timpo (Associate Director of UNAIDS), Msgr Robert J. Vitillo (Special Advisor to Caritas Internationalis on HIV/AIDS) and the Most Rev. Mario Joseph Conti (Archbishop of Glasgow).

## The Roma

The Roma population are arguably the most discriminated against minority across Europe. Caritas is appalled by the abject poverty and social exclusion in which many of Europe's 13 million Roma live today. Roma children are especially vulnerable, lacking proper attention needed to adequately prepare them to access jobs in a challenging labour market.

As part of its advocacy work to reverse this alarming situation, Caritas Europa actively participated in the project "Studying Training and Educational Paths for the Integration of young Roma" (STEP IN), a trans-national project of two years led by Caritas Ambrosiana (Milan, Italy) alongside 14 other partners. The objectives of the project were to increase Roma teenagers' participation in their local communities and schools as well as to positively influence their approach and insertion into the labour market.

The final STEP IN conference was organised by Caritas Europa and held at the European Parliament in Brussels in October 2006. The event was hosted by Hungarian Roma MEP Livia Jaroka and gathered renowned experts in the field of exclusion and integration of Roma in Europe, including the prominent Roma anthropologist Delia Grigore. The event included the launch of the publication "Roma: A Possible Integration", which composed the outcome of the project.

As a follow up, Caritas Europa, together with the recognised European Roma Information Office (ERIO), has produced a framework advocacy document. The key position in this document urges the European Commission to establish a separate strategy to address the concerns of the young Roma and their education.

## 'Basic principles' and Social Policy Forum

Caritas Europa has developed the internally oriented document "Basic principles for a sustainable social system" intended to be a basis for a comprehensive and consistent social policy framework. The document provides member organisations with criteria against which they can benchmark social policy systems in their countries. Endeavours to comprehensively complete the overall framework of Caritas Europa social policy principles began in the autumn of 2005 and lasted until the final version was approved by the Executive Board in February 2007.

Conceived as an important opportunity for Social



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Policy Officers across the Caritas Europa network to exchange ideas and experiences in the field, the latest Social Policy Forum took place in Lourdes (France) in June 2006. This forum elaborated on the 'Basic principles' and was an occasion to launch a new Advocacy Strategy at the network level. It also highlighted conclusions and recommendations from the 2006 Poverty Report.

For the years 2008 and beyond, the Social Policy Forum will be integrated into the work programme that Caritas Europa will carry out in partnership with, and co-financed by, the European Commission.

## PRIORITY II: MIGRATION, ASYLUM, INTEGRATION AND ANTI-TRAFFICKING

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Caritas Europa promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment for migrants. The network works towards a fair, dignified and humane treatment of immigrants, undocumented migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in Europe and around the world.

Caritas Europa member organisations deal with migration related issues on a daily basis. The central undertaking of their work is to offer realistic solutions to people who, for whatever reason, need assistance because they are resident in a country other than their home country.

### **Study visits and training on migration and asylum**

Caritas Europa is always keen to give its member organisations opportunities to meet in order to exchange experiences and to further develop their competences in the areas of migration and asylum.

Migration study visits are regularly organised to give Caritas migration officers from across the network the opportunity to visit different regions in Europe and witness the work of the local Caritas organisations. During the report period two visits took place: to Greece (May 2006) and to Bulgaria (May 2007).

A training on migration and asylum was organised in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Held in Vienna in June 2006, the event included working groups on EU Directives in the areas of asylum and migration; the European Social Charter and its significance for caseworkers; the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

### **'Troika' meetings**

The Caritas Europa 'Troika' meetings are designed as one of the main tools for advocating the Caritas Europa positions on migration and asylum at European level.

A Caritas Europa delegation of migration and asylum experts meets bi-annually with representatives of new incoming EU presidencies. These meetings are organised in close cooperation with the national Caritas organisations from the corresponding EU presidencies.

In 2006, 'Troika' meetings took place with the two incoming EU presidencies: Finland (May 2006) and Germany (December 2006). On both occasions, the

Caritas Europa delegations met key government representatives with whom they engaged a discussion on migration and asylum policy issues that were relevant for the political agenda of those presidencies.

In 2007, Caritas Europa reached out to the Portuguese EU presidency, with the request of coherence between migration and relevant EU policy fields (June 2007), and the forthcoming Slovenian EU presidency to promote the further development of a just Common European Asylum System (December 2007)

### **Project INTI: "NGO Network of Integration Focal Points"**

Integration of migrants is vital to Caritas Europa. Experience from member organisations has taught that without proper integration migrants may become easy prey for exclusion, exploitation and poverty in the receiving country.

To respond to the need of monitoring the functioning of the national governments' integration focal points, Caritas Europa and ten of its member organisations participated in the project of the European Council for Refugee and Exile (ECRE): "NGO Network of Integration Focal Points" (INTI). The final conference was held in Brussels in June 2006. Entitled "Creating a welcoming society", the event gathered integration committed decision makers such as Mimout Bousakla (MP from Belgium), Stavros Lambrinidis (MEP from Greece), and Judith Kumin (UNHCR representative).

### **Fight against trafficking in human beings**

One of the most dehumanising forms of irregular migration is trafficking of human beings for exploitation purposes. In response to this phenomenon, Caritas Europa has integrated in its organisation, since 2004, COATNET (the Network of Christian Organisations against Trafficking in Human Beings).

COATNET aims to facilitate the transfer of information and operational partnership in the area of anti-trafficking across borders. The network is ecumenical and consists of organisations and persons of Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant identities. The network has known a remarkable growth to include at present over forty organisations in five continents.

In the framework of this project, Caritas Europa representatives have organised and attended several anti-trafficking related events during the report period.



Annual Meetings of COATNET users took place in Berlin (September 2006) and Beirut (October 2007). For the purpose of strengthening networking with Australian partners, a work and study visit took place in Melbourne and Sydney in February 2007. Activities included meetings with three current COATNET users, various faith based organisations (including Caritas Australia) and secular NGOs.

Representatives of Caritas Europa (in charge of COATNET) contributed to “Networking the networks”, a workshop held by the Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe in May, 2006; and “Lobbying and networking as a means to fight human trafficking”, a seminar organised by Secours Catholique-Caritas France at the World Social Forum in Nairobi in January 2007.

Advocacy related to COATNET included a trans-national campaign for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Member organisations were encouraged to advocate at national level, with many of them taking direct advocacy initiatives towards their governments. Also, Caritas Europa was represented at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, which focused on trafficking and the situation of Roma in Europe. This was held in Warsaw in October 2006.

## **Migration and Development**

Awareness of the deep relation that exists between migration and the lack of effective development policies (in the countries of origin) has been growing stronger in the international community during the last years.

Following the successful first work on the ‘nexus’ between Migration and Development, embodied in the outcomes of the 2005 Migration Forum, it has been part of the work plan of Caritas Europa to further elaborate on this important theme.

Caritas Europa took the lead in drafting the Caritas Internationalis contribution to the consultation on the UN Report on Migration and Development, submitted in June 2006.

On behalf of Caritas Internationalis and in collaboration with the International Catholic Migration Commission, the organisation also prepared a Statement on Migration and Development which was submitted to the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in February 2007.

In the report period, Caritas Europa produced comments with regard to the Communication from the European Commission on “Migration and Development: Some concrete orientations” (May 2006) and secured its presence at the Global Forum on Migration and Development, which was held in Brussels in July 2007.

Following an extensive preparation, the organisation held its 5<sup>th</sup> Migration Forum with main focus on Migration and Development in Costa de Caparica (Portugal) in September 2007. Entitled “Building bridges or barriers?”, the event explored the dynamics between Migration and Development. Over 120 participants attended the event and were divided into seven working groups debating fundamental aspects of this question.

The next step forward will be the production of the Caritas Europa policy paper on Migration and Development. A special Task Force has been charged to work on this throughout 2008 elaborating on the inputs collected during the 2007 Migration Forum.



**C**onflict and wars are emergency situations with which we continue to be confronted with, since mankind still has not found a way to settle conflicts through dialogue. Additionally, natural phenomena such as floods, earthquakes and droughts are more widely observed and more ravaging due to the effects of global warming. Hundreds of thousands of people lose their lives, are separated from their families or are stripped of their homes and livelihoods.

When emergency strikes, Caritas Europa is deeply conscious of the tragic consequences these situations have on those stricken by them and knows well that the poor and weak suffer the most. Caritas Europa collaborates with its member organisations in the European region, in order to enable Caritas Internationalis and Caritas organisations in the countries affected by the crisis to respond quickly and effectively to major emergencies while addressing both the immediate survival needs and the longer term recovery needs of those affected.

## Responding to emergencies

In the context of the many emergencies to which the Caritas Internationalis Confederation had to respond during the report period (Lebanon, Indonesia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Sudan, India, Mexico, Bangladesh and others), Caritas Europa has taken up various coordination roles in support of the overall Confederation responses led by Caritas Internationalis.

These tasks fell either under the direct mandate of Caritas Europa, such as taking charge of the necessary donor coordination prior to submission of member organisations' project proposals to ECHO (the European Commission Humanitarian Office) or they were mandated by Caritas Internationalis. As an example of the latter – and one of best practice – one can refer to making donor communication with Caritas Lebanon more efficient as queries of donors relating to the initial emergency appeal of Caritas Lebanon were all directed to Caritas Europa, and thus consolidated before relayed to the partner.

## Emergency Forum and Emergency Response Training

The 2006 Caritas Europa Emergency Forum was co-organised with Caritas Turkey and held in Istanbul in June 2006. The Forum's agenda included discussions on relevant topics such as HIV/AIDS in emergencies,

staffing the Caritas humanitarian responses and the relationship Caritas Europa and 13 of its member organisations hold with ECHO. The Forum also devoted some time to the revision of the Caritas Internationalis Emergency Guidelines (see below).

The 2007 Caritas Europa Emergency Forum was convened in Brussels in October 2007. It focused on the relationship with ECHO and the state of play in shaping a "European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid" (see below). In addition, there were sessions held on organisational learning and training on humanitarian advocacy.

Fulfilling its role of capacity building, Caritas Europa also organised an Emergency Response Training. The event was hosted by Secours Catholique-Caritas France and took place in Lourdes (France) in June 2006. Targeting newly employed staff in member organisations, the training provided a general introduction into the specifics of emergency work and Caritas working principles and structures in response to emergencies. The core part included a working approach to the Sphere Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (a collaborative effort of humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement) and an introduction to International Humanitarian Law as the law applicable to armed conflict.

## Developing a Humanitarian Strategy and revision of Emergency Guidelines for Caritas Internationalis

In November 2006, Caritas Europa held an extraordinary meeting on humanitarian issues entitled "Achieving our potential" in view of the forthcoming Caritas Internationalis General Assembly of June 2007. This extraordinary meeting was attended by Chief Executives, International Directors and Heads of Emergencies of 21 member organisations and set in motion an international process leading to the development of a comprehensive Humanitarian Strategy.

The Humanitarian Strategy informs the humanitarian component of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation Strategic Framework and will serve as the baseline for future work plans on humanitarian aid.

Much energy and expertise have also been invested in the revision of the Caritas Internationalis Emergency Guidelines. Caritas Europa has largely contributed to the process through organising regional consultations (i.e. Emergency Forums in 2005 and 2006) and



the continuous involvement of its Humanitarian Aid Commission, the Humanitarian Officer and the Executive Board. The Guidelines were approved by the governance structures of Caritas Internationalis in March 2007, as a 'living document' that may need to be adapted to developments following the implementation of the new Humanitarian Strategy.

Along with the Emergency Guidelines, an Emergency Response Toolkit has been created containing standard formats, templates and best practice examples for all stages of the project cycle management, from assessment to reporting and evaluation. It is a tool for the Confederation's international operational response teams and for the local Caritas organisations affected, as well as, for the supporting desk officers in headquarters of member organisations. Caritas Europa contributed to this tool through collecting relevant materials from its member organisations and the wider NGO community.

### **Coordination of European projects and relations with ECHO**

Caritas Europa is the 'focal point' for 13 of its member organisations who became signatories to a Framework of Partnership Agreement (FPA) with ECHO. The organisation is represented in the FPA Watch Group (an inter-agency working group dealing with operational matters arising from the terms and conditions of the FPA).

The Caritas Europa secretariat in Brussels facilitates and coordinates applications of member organisations for funding while nourishing the work of the FPA Watch Group with concrete examples drawn from experiences in programme implementation. It also promotes the exchange of best practices and acts as a platform to engage in strategic planning and direction setting towards ECHO.

In the reported period, Caritas Europa has established (with the collaboration of DCV-Caritas Germany) a compilation showing the projects carried out by European Caritas organisations holding a FPA for 2003-2007. The compilation highlights achievements in this area and is an important tool for the network to base its analysis, planning, and coordination upon when dealing with ECHO in response to emergencies.

### **Humanitarian advocacy**

At the Annual Partners Meeting of December 2006, ECHO announced that an elaboration of a European

Commission policy document on humanitarian aid was planned for 2007. A consultation was launched to which all organisations holding an ECHO FPA status were invited to contribute.

Caritas Europa took up the coordination for the member organisations and consolidated a policy statement on behalf of the network, which was then transmitted to VOICE (the European platform of voluntary organisations active in humanitarian work) to coordinate the process within the NGO community towards ECHO.

Furthermore, Caritas Europa participated in the ECHO Roundtable of February 2007, attended by stakeholders from the United Nations, Red Cross, and selected NGOs. At the meeting, ECHO presented the findings from the consultation with the FPA status holders and collected inputs in view of the forthcoming negotiations with governments of EU Members States.

During this phase (leading to the European Commission's Communication "Towards a European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid" of June 2007), Caritas Europa in accordance with the position of the NGO community, concentrated advocacy on three major arguments:

- Respect for Humanitarian Principles and access to beneficiaries
- Diversity of civilian actors in the delivery of EU humanitarian aid
- Principled delivery of EU humanitarian aid, including the need to clarify the role and mandate of civil protection and the role and mandate of the military

Caritas Europa invited its member organisations to follow the same line with their respective governments. The results of initiatives at both EU and national levels are documented in the section on humanitarian aid of the Caritas Europa website.



**C**ommitted to work towards the eradication of global poverty, Caritas Europa promotes sustainable development, peace building and human rights; in addition, it fosters the work of its member organisations in international development cooperation throughout the world.

### **Caritas Europa Intra-European Co-ordination**

Through its special Intra-European Coordination platforms (IECs), Caritas Europa ensures that participant member organisations exchange information and visions about relevant situations in various southern continents and about activities developed by European Caritas and the local Caritas organisations in these areas. The overall objective is to generate greater coherence with regard to the different approaches used by member organisations.

Four IEC platforms are currently working under the coordination of the Caritas Europa Commission on Development and Peace. These are: IEC Africa, IEC MONA (Middle East and North Africa), IEC LAC (Latin America and Caribbean) and IEC Asia. Below are a few examples of their activities during the report period.

#### ***IEC Africa***

Participants in IEC Africa were extensively trained in the areas of the humanitarian methodologies of Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD), Disaster Risk Management (DRM), and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). These three methodologies, used in combination with each other, are considered to be the best measures to prevent and work through crisis situations.

Exchanges during IEC Africa's meetings were related, among others, to the efforts of Caritas Europa member organisations to alleviate pressing needs of local populations. This includes projects concerning the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sahel, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan/Darfur.

In Sudan's Darfur provinces, several member organisations contribute to the Caritas Internationalis and ACT International joint Darfur Emergency Response Operation (DERO), which has been active since July 2004. Today DERO is one of the largest humanitarian operations in the region delivering social services, training in sustainable livelihoods, along with, peace-building and education with the aim of finding long-term solutions to the conflict.

The last IEC meeting held in Brussels in October 2007, included a session on EU-Africa relations. This is a new field of interest which will be further developed throughout 2008. According to participants the risk remains that development priorities are still defined predominantly from the point of view and interests of European donors.

#### ***IEC Middle East and North Africa***

This IEC looked in particular at the situation of migrants and the work done for migrants by Caritas organisations in the Middle East and North Africa. This included deepening knowledge and understanding with regard to the links between Migration and Development.

Special attention was given to migration as a consequence of the conflicts in Lebanon and Iraq. IEC MONA congratulated Caritas Lebanon on the efforts made to help the population struck by the 33-day war against Israel taking place in July 2006. In the aftermath of the war the Caritas Lebanon's Migrants' Centre assisted approximately 14,000 migrant workers and refugees by providing shelter, food, healthcare, counselling and repatriation assistance.

The IEC was also supportive of the work of Caritas Jordan, Caritas Lebanon and Caritas Syria in the care of refugees from Iraq in order to provide them with a dignified life while waiting for more security and stability in their country.

In addition, time was devoted to reflection on the spreading of HIV/AIDS and on specific aspects related to its epidemic in the Middle East and North Africa. A special study session on the topic was held in March 2007, with the support of Msgr Robert J. Vitillo (Special Advisor to Caritas Internationalis on HIV/AIDS).

In the framework of a joint meeting with the IEC MONA, which took place in Brussels in November 2007, this group also held a study session on the challenges of working as a Caritas organisation in a non-Catholic environment. It was agreed that for Caritas it is important to maintain a relation of secularism and neutrality, affirming at the same time its church based identity and its value based 'raison d'être'.

#### ***IEC Latin America and the Caribbean***

Among the frontline issues monitored by this IEC is mining in Latin America. IEC LAC is in solidarity with the fight of those pointing at the impoverishing effects



of unregulated mining industry in the region.

In May 2006, the group welcomed two guests from Peru: Archbishop Barreto (from the diocese of Huancayo) and Ms Eva Boyle (Executive Secretary of *Diaconía para la Justicia y la Paz* in the archdiocese of Piura y Tumbes). Exchanges touched upon the importance to raise awareness of the local population and of the international community about consequences of the lack of proper legislation compelling the mining industry to respect the environment in order to promote the good health of the nearby population.

In the report period, IEC LAC also dealt with gender issues. It was noted that Caritas organisations in Latin America, with the support of their European partners, are increasingly concerned with gender issues and are finding interesting ways to bring their positions to the attention of the public's opinion.

In March 2007, the Latin America Region of Caritas Internationalis organised their first Regional Gender Forum held in the Dominican Republic where they presented the progress of their work. This is no longer focusing only on the woman, but it looks more broadly at the relation between men and women in the context of Church and society, and transversally at the situation in different socio-economic areas.

An exchange between IEC LAC participants and the gender representative from Caritas Latin America and the Caribbean took place at the occasion of the last IEC LAC, which was held in Brussels in November 2007.

### **IEC Asia**

Already exposed to extreme weather phenomena like tsunamis, earthquakes and floods, the people of Asia also suffer from conflicts (Sri Lanka, East Timor and Kashmir) and harsh dictatorships (North Korea and Myanmar). In this context of deep poverty and insecurity, IEC Asia works to improve and strengthen the Caritas presence in this continent.

In the report period, IEC Asia has focused on keeping its members informed about the rebuilding efforts that local Caritas organisations are achieving (with the support of their European partners) in the areas which were stricken by the tsunami of December 2004.

Since its first experience with the Peace Forum in Sri Lanka in 2005, Caritas Asia has been developing peace programmes at regional level and has adopted a

multi-faceted peace building approach, which includes disaster preparedness for human-made disasters and conflicts. IEC Asia supports the strategy of Caritas Asia through scrupulous counselling and assistance paying specific attention to capacity building and disaster preparedness for weaker Asian Caritas organisations.

### **Integration of member organisations from the new EU Member States in the area of international cooperation**

For Caritas Europa, it is very important to strengthen the collaboration in the field of development cooperation between member organisations from the new and old EU Member States.

As direct result of this commitment, a development education project led by Caritas Slovenia, with a consortium of Caritas Austria and Caritas Slovakia (and Caritas Luxemburg, Secours Catholique-Caritas-France and CAFOD-Caritas England & Wales as associates) was submitted in 2007 in response to a specific call for proposals by the European Commission in the area of development education and awareness raising, which aimed at encouraging the participation of NGOs from the new EU Member States.

In February 2007, after a meeting facilitated by Caritas Europa, a concept note was submitted to the European Commission and, some months later, approved. The group then prepared the full application under the title of "HIV/AIDS and its impact on developing societies and development processes in Africa", and submitted it to the European Commission in June 2007. In October 2007, the European Commission decided to grant a maximum of 75% of the eligible costs for this project.

Preparing the application has been a very fruitful exercise for Caritas Slovenia and the members of the consortium. Caritas Europa has played a much appreciated role through facilitating the process and giving advice to the interested member organisations.

Caritas Europa was pleased to greet its member organisations from Bulgaria and Romania on the occasion of their countries' access to the European Union in January 2007. Specific accompaniment is provided by Caritas Europa to support their efforts related to international cooperation, be it in the humanitarian or development fields.



## **Advocacy work - making European Community aid work for the poor**

The year 2007 (at the European level), marked the beginning of a new seven-year cooperation period with Asia and Latin America along with the finalisation of programming for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries under the six-year 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund. Caritas Europa, in close partnership with its Catholic sister network CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity), felt that this was an appropriate time to look closely at the European Community (EC) aid which represents the collective commitment of EU Member States and its effectiveness in constructing substantial changes for the poor.

The resulting CIDSE and Caritas Europa report, “The EU’s footprint in the South: Does European Community development cooperation make a difference for the poor?”, draws upon multiple sources, most importantly upon evidence and views of local actors gained from research in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Zambia on EC cooperation in the 2002-2006 period.

The publication was launched in March 2007, at the European Parliament in Brussels in the presence of representatives of the European Parliament, European Commission and Member States.

The report demonstrates that some progress has been made towards more effective EC aid, but that much more could be done so that precious resources make a visible difference in the lives of people living in poverty. As a follow-up, over 50 civil society organisations and networks from 20 countries in the South and Europe joined CIDSE and Caritas Europa in addressing a letter to representatives of the OECD Development Assistant Committee (DAC), based on the findings in the networks’ report. In July 2007, the DAC published its peer review of EC development assistance including recommendations for a reform of EC aid, which found broad support within civil society.

## **Seminar on partnership, cooperation and access to development funding**

Grass-roots initiatives and community based projects run the risk of being undermined by new trends in development funding. Donors increasingly channel their aid directly to Southern governments despite the major role that civil society plays in certain development sectors such as health and education. Resources are pooled into narrowly defined sectors

without considering the variety of local needs, reducing the scope of community tailored interventions.

At this crucial moment of change, CIDSE and Caritas Europa organised a seminar on “Changing dynamics and strategies in cooperation and partnership for sustainable funding”. This was held in Arusha (Tanzania) in November 2007. The regional seminar brought together the European members of the two networks; their partners from Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia; as well as government officials and European donors.

The event allowed participants to gain a better understanding of the roles of civil society in the aid system and to develop potential synergies and complementarities with other development actors, including international NGOs, government authorities and the donor community. Sharing experiences led the audience to identify guiding principles and good practices that can be promoted.

The importance of holding similar events to build on the complementarities between development activities through a closer collaboration among relevant stakeholders has been a key message echoed during the event. The quality of discussions showed that much value can be added through an enhanced open communication.



**C**aritas Europa works towards the strengthening and development of its 48 member organisations through the promotion of good governance and quality management principles; the building of capacity; the administering of the Caritas Europa European Solidarity Fund (ESF); and the fostering of the intra-European coordination of projects and programmes.

## Strategic Organisational Development Approach

The Strategic Organisation Development Approach (SODA) programme has been carried out by Caritas Europa for over five years. It provides member organisations with the tools and expertise to help shape their structures in order to most effectively achieve their aspirations and goals. With this programme, Caritas Europa aims at ensuring that member organisations are sufficiently strengthened to take charge of their own development. This year the focus was on Caritas Russia, Caritas Bulgaria, Caritas Serbia and Caritas Slovakia.

An extensive evaluation of the SODA programme is planned to be carried out in 2008, in order to enhance the suitability and attractiveness of the programme for a wider circle of member organisations, including member organisations in Western Europe.

## Working group on organisational development

Caritas Europa has included in its structures a working group on organisational development. This group will give advice to the Commission on Internal Network with regard to capacity building and organisational development including the current SODA programme. A workshop on organisational development took place during the Annual Management Forum held in Brussels in March 2007 (see below), in order to present the new working group and its related plans to the network.

## European Solidarity Fund

The European Solidarity Fund (ESF) is a structural funding mechanism based on multilateral solidarity, which is coordinated and administrated at the level of Caritas Europa. Contributions to this fund are offered by member organisations who wish to assist financially weaker member organisations that are in need of support to finance their core structural expenses. A special ESF workshop was hosted by Caritas Albania, in Tirana in October 2006. The

workshop was notably opened by Albania's Prime Minister Sali Berisha. The main objectives of this workshop were to review the progress of the ESF to date while building a future strategy on the basis of an exchange of expectations and experience among ESF beneficiaries and donors, as well as to discuss the draft of a future ESF manual with participants.

## Management Forum

The Management Forum, organised by the Commission on Internal Network, is a relatively new space for meeting and exchange among chief executives and other managers who are responsible for management, financial and human resources processes and policies within their Caritas organisations. They are often challenged by the need to balance the requirements of national legislation or practices with the need to critically manage their resources.

Initiated with a 'pilot' Forum in December 2005, the following edition of the Management Forum was held in March 2007, and focused on a first exchange and exploration on the desirability and feasibility of agreeing – through a process of consensus building – a set of minimum and recommended standards and guidelines on management processes and policies to be adopted by member organisations.

Following the positive and encouraging outcomes of this forum, the Commission on Internal Network has charged its specialist working group on organisational development (see above) with the task to work out a first draft document containing both minimum standards and recommended guidelines on various aspects of organisational governance, operational management, financial management, HR management and other domains of management.

## Training and formation

Falling within the realm of Priority V, a further task of Caritas Europa is to continuously assess the training needs, but also to map and analyse the training resources available in the network.

Based on a network wide survey of training needs and training resources carried out in 2006, Caritas Europa is engaged in offering adequate and tailor-made training resources to its member organisations. In cases where the match between training needs and training resources is not possible, Caritas Europa may offer its support where appropriate by designing and delivering such tailor-made training solutions itself.

# PRIORITY VI:

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS,  
EXTERNAL NETWORKING,  
THEOLOGICAL REFLEXION AND ACTION



Caritas Europa is active in a number of areas that cut across the previously described thematic priorities and adds value to them. On one hand, they consolidate exchanges and cooperation within the Caritas Europa network while, on the other hand, they position the organisation in the political arena which is mostly relevant to its competences.

## Advocacy

Since 2006, Caritas Europa is in the process of implementing the Advocacy Strategy: "Advocacy...The other side of the coin!"

As part of this implementation, Caritas Europa's advocacy work towards the EU has been enhanced by broadening the scope of its 'Troika' meetings (see above). According to a review of this concept approved by the Executive Board in February 2007, the 'Troika' is now a permanent fixture on the yearly advocacy calendar of Caritas Europa and a tool for advocacy to all strategic priorities.

Every year contacts with the next EU presidencies are launched through the Permanent Representations in Brussels. 'Pre-Troika' meetings usually take place at the beginning of the year (with the second presidency of that year) and in July (with the first presidency of the following year). When the concerned Member States take over the presidency, each thematic department of Caritas Europa considers whether or not to pursue with separate specialist 'Troika' meetings.

In a meeting held in March 2007 (at the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels), a delegation of Caritas Europa presented its main advocacy positions to Ambassador Álvaro Mendonça e Moura and his advisory team.

In line with its overall mission to promote human development, social justice and sustainable social systems in Europe and throughout the world, Caritas Europa presented its concerns with regard to Social inclusion process and coherence of social and health services (Social policy); Promotion of voluntary return for sustainable return policies (Migration); Requirements for a principled delivery of EU humanitarian aid (Humanitarian aid); and Making European Community aid work for the poor (Development policy).

In view of the Slovenian EU Presidency, Caritas Europa has submitted in November 2007 an information briefing to Ambassador Igor Senčar. The views shared with the Slovenian Permanent Representation to

the EU in Brussels touch upon the following topics: Tackling child poverty through policy measures in support of families (Social policy); Promotion of a Common European Asylum System (Migration); Plea for continued EU support in Darfur and Sudan (Humanitarian aid); Effectiveness of EC development assistance (Development policy).

In general, the report period has seen the intensification of Caritas Europa's advocacy initiatives, mainly in the form of written contributions requested by the European institutions, policy papers on Caritas Europa's own initiative and through its participation in public hearings.

The Advocacy Update (a new online publication introduced following the Advocacy Strategy) has illustrated, among others, the following initiatives:

- Caritas Europa provides information briefing for forthcoming Slovenian EU Presidency  
November 2007
- After closing conference Caritas Europa will continue advocacy work drawing upon knowledge within the CONCEPT network  
November 2007
- Caritas Europa Emergency Forum laid foundation for advocacy in the humanitarian area  
October 2007
- Caritas Europa and ERIO jointly advocate for a Roma-specific EU education strategy  
June 2007
- Caritas Europa welcomes the overall vision of the Communication "Towards a European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid"  
June 2007
- Caritas Europa participates in a hearing held by the European Economic and Social Committee on Migration and Development  
June 2007
- Caritas Europa answers EC questionnaire on preparation of the European Year Against Poverty 2010  
May 2007
- Caritas Europa responds to the Green Paper "Modernising Labour Law to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century"  
April 2007



- Caritas Europa/CIDSE present recommendations for improving EC cooperation with civil society

January 2007

## Communications

Consistently in contact with the media, during the report period Caritas Europa issued an important amount of press releases including:

- Building a coalition against poverty  
November 2007
- Press statement on the 1st European Day Against Human Trafficking  
October 2007
- Caritas Europa 5th Migration Forum: Plea for the migrants' right of movement between countries of destination and origin  
September 2007
- DAC peer review should trigger EC aid reform  
July 2007
- Caritas Europa reaches out to forthcoming Portuguese EU Presidency with request of coherence between migration and relevant EU policy fields  
June 2007
- "Stigma or solidarity?"- Catholic Church addresses HIV/AIDS pandemic in Europe  
April 2007
- Caritas Europa presents its advocacy priorities for the forthcoming Portuguese EU presidency  
March 2007
- With change, European Community Aid could make more of a difference for the poor  
March 2007
- Europe's National Social Inclusion Strategies under the magnifying glass of Caritas Social Vision  
February 2007
- A Human rights, victims-centred approach is required to address human trafficking  
September 2006
- "Migration, a journey into poverty?" - Launch of Caritas Europa's 3rd Report on Poverty in Europe  
June 2006

- Caritas Germany hosted Caritas Europa's Regional Conference

May 2006

Caritas Europa is deeply engaged in facilitating exchange of information and best practices within its network. As an implementation of this engagement, Caritas Europa held the Follow-up Meeting to the 2nd Communication Forum in London in July 2007. This meeting was co-organised by Cafod-Caritas England & Wales where keynote speaker, legacy fundraising expert Richard Radcliffe FInstF Cert (UK), addressed the audience with his presentation on "Bringing Legacy Campaigns to Life".

In April 2007, Caritas Europa held in Brussels its 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting on Online Communications bringing together Online Communication Managers and Web Editors from interested member organisations. The event aimed at giving the opportunity to share knowledge and views, and to discuss topics such as network cooperation and corporate identity.

In October 2007, media and fundraising officers from across the Caritas Europa network came together in The Hague for the Annual Meeting on Communications and Fundraising, which was hosted by Cordaid-Caritas Netherlands. The event brought forth the recommendation to put together a small group of participants in charge of developing ideas about common Caritas communication projects in view of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Participants also agreed on the proposal (to be presented to Caritas Internationalis) for a Caritas Internationalis Global Communication and Fundraising Conference open to all members of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation to be held in Rome in May or June 2009.

## External networking

Caritas Europa fosters effective and appropriate networking through building of strategic partnerships, establishing thematic alliances, membership of appropriate platforms and umbrella organisations.

As a key European network actively collaborating with the European Commission in these areas, Caritas Europa was invited to participate in the 5th EU Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion, which took place under the Finnish EU Presidency in Tampere (Finland) in October 2006 and in the preparations for the 6th EU Round Table held under the Portuguese EU Presidency in Ponta Delgada, Acores Islands (Portugal) in October 2007.



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Caritas Europa is a member of CONCORD (European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development). During the CONCORD General Assembly of November 2006, Caritas Europa gave a workshop on the links between Migration and Development. Caritas Europa also led the work of the CONCORD task force assessing the effectiveness of the platform's structures and processes, whose recommendations were approved by the CONCORD General Assembly in June 2006.

Caritas Europa is a member of the Platform of Social NGOs and is regularly represented at the sessions of its Steering Committees, as well as, in the meetings of relevant working structures. In the report period, Caritas Europa has supported the organisation of Social Platform seminars on how to communicate effectively with the Brussels press corps (December 2006) and how to develop successful communication strategies (January 2008).

In the course of 2006, Caritas Europa became a registered member of the European Policy Centre, a 'think tank' that closely follows and analyses policy developments and organises briefings with leading policy makers on relevant topical issues on the global or European political agendas.

### **Theological reflection and action**

As a Catholic organisation Caritas Europa strives to ensure that its main public statements or reports include appropriate references to the Magisterium and Catholic Social Teaching.

The theme of the Caritas Europa Regional Conference held in Mainz in May 2006, was devoted to a common reflection about the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, their significance and their impact in the context of the Caritas work. The conference also aimed at discussing ways in which the specific Caritas work may contribute to the further development of the Catholic Social Teaching.

Furthermore, Caritas Europa supported the initiative taken by Caritas Bosnia & Herzegovina in March 2007, to organise a conference in Sarajevo on specific challenges and good practices of Caritas organisations working in countries with a predominant Muslim context. A similar event with regard to Caritas organisations operating in countries with a predominant Orthodox context was held in Romania in May 2007.



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