

A MAPPING REPORT ON HUMANITARIAN WORK BY CARITAS ORGANISATIONS IN AFRICA REGION.



(Photo Courtesy: Caritas Australia)

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRICE	Building Resilience through Integrated Community Engagement
CA	Caritas Africa
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CMDRR	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
CAMO	Caritas Africa Member Organization
CI	Caritas Internationalis
CIMO	Caritas International Member Organization
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EP&RP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
FAO	Food and Agricultural organization
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IPC	Infection Prevention and Control
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFI	Non-Food Items
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
SADI	Safety, Access, and dignity with Inclusion
SCIAF	Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
SWG	Sector working group
WASH	Water sanitation and hygiene
WESCOORD	Water and Environmental Sanitation Coordination
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an initial mapping of Caritas Africa Member Organizations humanitarian work. The information was collected through online survey and by interviewing key sister Caritas partner funding agencies and key staff from member countries. The purpose of the mapping was to identify key areas that can be prioritized in supporting Caritas Africa and its members in humanitarian work. The findings have established key hazards in the region as mentioned by the respondents to the survey: floods, drought, conflict, epidemic (cholera, Ebola), insect infestation (locusts), cyclones, landslides, and earthquake were all mentioned and prioritized. Major emergency interventions were listed by the 29 members that participated in the survey which demonstrates members' wide experience in humanitarian work, from early onset emergencies to recovery work.

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By the time of the survey, all members except one were responding to the COVID 19 pandemic, which calls for sharing of learning among the members in this type of intervention. Survey respondents identified the funding CIMO's that are currently funding them. It was notable that there has been an overall drop in support in comparison to previous years (with some members reporting big reductions in support). Caritas Country Coordination Forums were found to have some weaknesses and members provided some suggestions on how these can be overcome. Key suggestions related to the establishing of a humanitarian reference group to ensure humanitarian voice in the forums, funding CIMOs to enhance their coordination with National Caritas, and in general, all to enhance value of the forums, ensure emergency protocols and roles are well coordinated and promoted, encourage frequent communication, and strengthen zonal meetings.

The survey highlighted that about 17% of members trained have left their organizations which calls for a need to have a retention strategy.

The surveys identified grievances against UN/OCHA Coordination forums, Cluster System and technical working groups including language barriers and complaints of sidelining national/local NGOs. Six members indicated that they have successfully received funds via the forum and bilaterally with UN agencies. There is however room for improvement on this. CA with support of funding from Catholic sister agencies has conducted various trainings to members geared towards enhancing their humanitarian skills.

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Main recommendations to:

The CA Secretariat:

- Initiate learning from members and support members to develop Humanitarian Response Plans,
- Support high risk countries to develop Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EP&RPs) and other pre disaster activities,
- Offer support to members who scored poorly on country forums and CA coordination mechanism.

Funding CIMOs:

- Support the development of CI surge, which will trickle down to the regions and support humanitarian officer position at CA.

CI:

- Together with CA, support members to develop country coordination,
- Coordinate with CA Humanitarian Reference Group members at the zonal level.

CAMOs:

- Improve participation in UN/OCHA NGO forums and bilaterally with UN agencies,
- Identity key staff to participate in the forums and to provide feedback,
- Be well prepared with info and data down to diocesan level
- Take advantage of decentralization of UN agencies to discuss key localization issues.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

Caritas Africa released its Operational Plan 2020-2023 in January 2020 and sought support from CAFOD to ensure the coordination, facilitation, and implementation of its Strategic Orientation 2. Reducing the impact of humanitarian crises on affected population in Africa Region.

George Wambugu, an emergency response officer working with CAFOD was deployed to support CA, to initially map out what is currently existing in humanitarian programme work, with a view to making some initial recommendations and look at what needs to be assessed more in the future.

A time frame of 3 months (17th August – 13th November 2020), was agreed upon on a part-time basis (2 days per week). The work could however not be completed by 13th Nov due to delays in responding to the survey, whose timeline had to be extended.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives entailed mapping of the following:

- Identifying current disaster profiles per sub-regions (contexts),
- Identifying Caritas major Emergency Responses (including responses to COVID-19)
- Identifying CIMOs active in Africa/their broad strategies
- Identifying existing initiatives and systems for Emergency preparedness
- Identifying active Caritas forums
- Identifying capacity building initiatives (e.g., previous trainings provided since 2017),
- Assessing feasibility of a regional surge team and
- Support to the writing of an opinion paper on localization by Caritas Africa.

The mapping was expected to contribute to recommendations towards:

- CA capacity building and Emergency Preparedness & Response models
- A model for support to emergency responses.
- Ideas for discussion at a planned 1st Caritas Africa humanitarian forum.

2.3 Methodology

The methodology used in this study included:

- Online Survey. There were 29 responses to the Survey out of 46 members.
- Key Informant Interviews with 3 funding CIMO supporters (CI, CRS, SCIAF), Bishop President CA, and 3 CAMOs
- Virtual meeting with Caritas Africa Member Organizations to present preliminary findings, seek clarification and collect additional information. The meeting was held on 22 October 2020 and had 25 participants. 14 countries were represented (Nigeria, South Sudan, Eswatini, Guinea, DRC, CAR, Sierra Leone-2, Tanzania-2, Niger-3, Uganda, South Africa, Mauritius, Cameroon and Burkina Faso, Total 18 participants). In support was a team of 4 from caritas Africa and 3 from CAFOD.

The following are the number of members who responded to the survey per zone.

29 Countries responded to the Survey (60.9%)

	Out	Of	
ACEAC	3	3	
ACERAC	2	6	
AMECEA	7	9	
CEDOIM	1	4	
IMBISA	7	9	
RECOWA-CERAO	9	15	
	29	46	63.04%

Findings

2.4 Disaster Profile in the Region

The three most common hazards reported from 29 respondents (countries) were: floods with 26 mentions, drought with 22, conflict 14, epidemics (Cholera, Ebola) 13. Others mentioned in the top 3 hazards in the region were, Cyclones 4 (all in IMBISA region), Insect infestation (Locusts) 3, Landslides 1 and Earthquake 1.

Top 3 significant hazards in the Zones

Below are the top 3 significant hazards at the Zones for each country as reported in the online survey; all the countries in each Zone are listed and the countries that responded to the survey are underlined>.



Courtesy; CAFOD& Caritas Marsabit

ACEAC: Burundi, Congo DRC, and Rwanda. All three countries responded to the online survey. The most common hazard is Flood. Epidemics is common to DRC and Burundi while Rwanda has Landslides/ Earthquake, Burundi Drought and DRC Conflict.

ACERAC: Cameroun, Central Africa Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. Two countries responded to the online survey. Conflicts and floods were common to the two countries while Cameroun separately mentioned drought and Congo Brazzaville mentioned epidemics.

AMECEA: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. 6 countries responded to the survey. Drought and Floods were common to all of them while epidemic was common to Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia, Conflict was specific to South Sudan and Ethiopia while Malawi had insect infestation (locusts).

CEDOIM: Comoros, Mauritius, Madagascar, and Seychelles. Only Madagascar responded to the online survey. Drought, floods, and cyclones were reported as the 3 priority hazards to consider in Madagascar in that order of significance.

IMBISA: South Africa (SA), Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe and Zimbabwe. 7 countries responded to the online survey. Drought was common to all. Floods was common to all except **Eswatini** and **SA** (though **SA** had landslides). Cyclones were common to **SA, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar.** **Eswatini, Angola** and **Namibia** had epidemics with **Eswatini** also mentioning conflict and **SA** mentioning landslides.

RECOWA-CERAO: This zone has the highest number of countries and is composed of 15: **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.** 9 countries responded to the online survey. Floods are common to all the countries; Conflict was common to all save for Gambia. Drought was common to **Niger, Senegal, Nigeria, and Gambia.** Epidemics were specific to **Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo** and Insect infestation to **Liberia and Gambia.**

Table showing three most significant disasters for each Zone as reported in the survey. They are ranked 1 to 3 with 1 being the most significant to consider in mitigation planning.

Caritas Congo ASBL – ACEAC 1. Conflict 2. Epidemics 3. Floods	Caritas Rwanda – AC-EAC 1. Floods 2. Earthquake 3. Landslides	Caritas Burundi-ACEAC 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	Foundation Caritas Cameroun -ACERAC 1. Conflict 2. Drought 3. Floods	Caritas Congo - ACERAC 1. Floods 2. Epidemics 3. Conflict
Caritas Benin-R-C 1. Floods 2. Epidemics 3. Conflict	Caritas Cote d'Ivoire -R-C 1. Conflict 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	OCADES Caritas Burkina – R-C 1. Drought 2. Conflict 3. Floods	Caritas Niger-R-C 1. Drought 2. Conflict 3. Floods	Organization de la Charite pour un Deve / Togo R-C 1. Floods 2. Epidemics 3. Conflict
Caritas Senegal – R-C 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Conflict	Caritas - Liberia – R-C 1. Floods 2. Conflicts 3. Insect Infestation	Caritas Nigeria – R-C 1. Conflict 2. Floods 3. Drought	Caritas Gambia –R-C 1. Floods 2. Drought 3. Insect Infestation	Caritas SS – AMCEA 1. Conflict 2. Floods 3. Drought
Caritas Tanzania – AMECEA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	Caritas Kenya - AME-CEA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	Caritas Zambia – AMECEA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	CADECOM/CJP Malawi - AMECEA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Insect infestation	Caritas Africa - AMECEA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics
Caritas Ethiopia – AMECEA 1. Drought 2. Conflicts 3. Floods	Caritas South Africa -IMBISA 1. Cyclones 2. Drought 3. Landslides	Caritas Lesotho - IMBISA 1. Drought	Caritas Eswatini - IM-BISA 1. Epidemics 2. Drought 3. Conflicts	Caritas Mocambicana -IMBISA 1. Floods 2. Cyclones 3. Drought
Caritas Zimbabwe - IMBISA 1. Cyclones 2. Drought 3. Floods	Caritas Angola - IM-BISA 1. Epidemics 2. Drought 3. Floods	Caritas Namibia - IMBISA 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Epidemics	Caritas Madagascar – C-M 1. Drought 2. Floods 3. Cyclones	

The above disaster profile, can provide guidance on the risks to focus on in each country while preparing Emergency Preparedness plans

2.5 Major Emergency Interventions

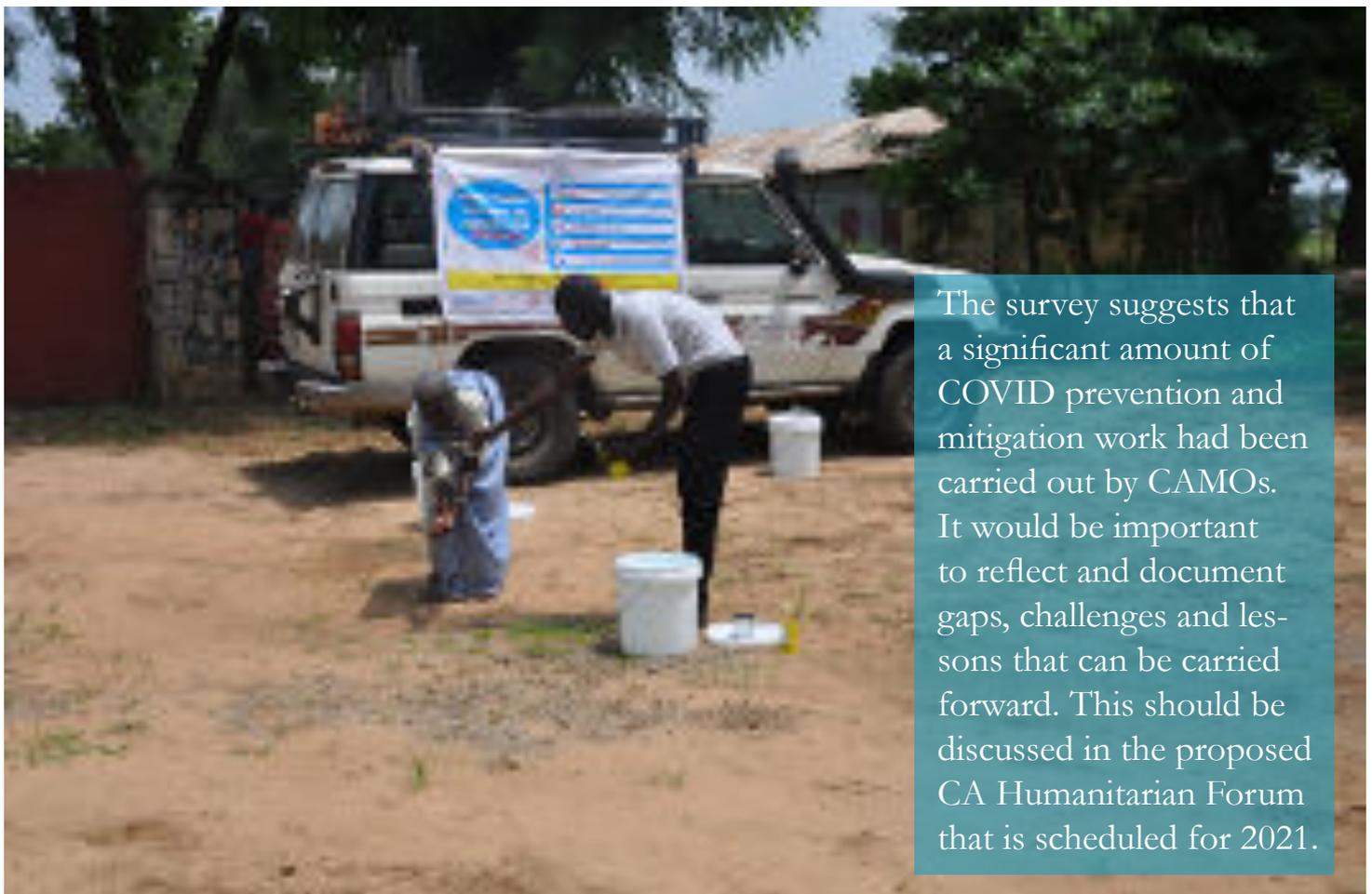
2.5.1 COVID-19 Response

The mapping also established that Caritas Africa Member Organisations (CAMOs) were all heavily involved in COVID 19 pandemic interventions. 29 out of 30 respondents in the survey indicated that they were responding to the pandemic.

There were three types of sources of funds mentioned:

- Local fund raising/local response
- Repurposed funds from ongoing projects
- New donations and support from international community specifically to respond to the COVID crisis.

The major interventions reported for COVID-19 response include: infection prevention and control (IPC) trainings for health care workers from catholic hospitals using approved curriculum and training of front-line staff in hygiene promotion measures relevant to COVID-19 prevention; Food and cash assistance to vulnerable groups, support to staff affected directly or indirect by the consequences of COVID (e.g. supply of food during lockdown); Provision of medical supplies including oxygen concentrators, PPEs to catholic health facilities; hygiene programmes that include distribution of COVID 19 hygiene Kits and hand washing stations (some were specifically mentioned to be foot operated); media health promotion campaigns (TVs, Radio), local community sensitization and behaviour change IEC materials. COVID 19 response teams were set up, and work was aligned to multi sectoral COVID-19 response plans (established through multisectoral coordination e.g., the local National Disaster Management Authority - NDMA).



The survey suggests that a significant amount of COVID prevention and mitigation work had been carried out by CAMOs. It would be important to reflect and document gaps, challenges and lessons that can be carried forward. This should be discussed in the proposed CA Humanitarian Forum that is scheduled for 2021.

2.5.2 Other Major Humanitarian Interventions Since 2017

The survey demonstrates that the CAMOs have vast and varying experience in emergency response. The disasters they have responded to since 2017 include, floods, drought, conflict, epidemics (Ebola, cholera), cyclone, landslides, earthquake, and desert locusts. These hazards are listed in the order of perceived severity. It is acknowledged that currently COVID-19 has the highest impact because of the economic implications and negating gains made in increasing resilience and poverty reduction.



CRS training on handling protective equipment during the outbreak of Ebola.
Photo Courtesy: CRS

The members have experience in emergency interventions from emergency to recovery phases and listed the following as activities carried out since 2017: Voucher and cash programmes (e-wallet), food distribution, NFI distribution (WASH, Cooking, Shelter), income generating activities, health outreaches, mosquito net distribution, support to government health workers, undernutrition management, psychosocial support (counselling), WASH and irrigation, agriculture, livestock, peace building and protection. Other interventions include school fees and exam fees support. Physiotherapy and exam fees were specific to fire victims in Benin.

Training cuts across all the activities and includes good agronomic practices, income generation, vocational skills, undernutrition management, and community hygiene training to manage/Ebola/cholera just to mention a few.

Members have also embarked on disaster prevention activities and disaster risk reduction (DRR). These include development/management of water resources, reforestation, and distribution of drought resistance seeds/crops. Others include humanitarian watch, collecting and sharing disaster alerts with OCHA and CI, DRR/CMDRR/BRICE training, the development of emergency preparedness and response plans and advocacy to local and national Government.



Other interventions include school fees and exam fees support. Physiotherapy and exam fees were specific to fire victims in Benin.

Burgabo borehole, in Marsabit, Kenya.
Photo Courtesy- Caritas Marsabit

2.6 Supporters (Funders) from Caritas Internationalis Member Organizations (CIMO) and other Catholic Organizations

All the 29 CAMOs who responded to the survey responded to the question of CIMOs that are currently supporting them as well as those that have supported them in the past.

CRS 18, CI 10, CAFOD 9, Caritas Italy 8, Caritas Japan 8, Misereor 7 (CIDSE member), C. Belgium 6, C. Germany 6, Caritas Spain 6, were the top 8 listed as the Catholic Organizations that are currently supporting CAMOs.

CRS: CS18,	CI: CS10,	CAFOD: CS9,	C. Italy: CS8,	C. Japan: CS8,	Misereor: CS7,	C. Belgium: CS6,
C. Germany: CS6,	C. Spain: CS6,	C. Korea CS5,	Trocaire: CS5,	Dicastery IHD: CS5,	C. Austria: CS5,	Secours Catholique: CS3,
SCIAF: CS4,	Caritas Africa Solidarity Fund, CS3:	Cordaid: CS3,	C. Australia: CS3,	C. Denmark: CS3,	C. Switzerland: CF2,	Fastenopfer: CF2,
C. Luxemburg: CS1,	C. New Zealand, CF1,	Others that have provided support: Caritas Seoul (OBOS), Caritas Norway (Current support), Caritas Canada; Caritas Czech working with CAFOD with funding from Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Caritas Seoul, (OBOS), Caritas Sweden, CANADA, Taiwan, MACAU, Slovenia. Act Alliance members (NCA) and CIDSE (Manos Unidas). Caritas Sweden for EA 2019 and ALBIHAR Foundation (Spain).				

Currently Funding Humanitarian Projects

Have Funded humanitarian projects before.

The survey shows that historical support for Caritas Africa has been strong. However, of the 8 previously recorded supporting organisations only 5 are currently supporting CAMOs. Of those that have reduced their support Secours Catholique (Caritas France) has reduced its support from 12 to 3 projects and Caritas Luxembourg has reduced its support from 8 to 1 project.

This information is however relying on 29 CAMOs that responded to the on-line survey and may change if all 46 had responded. It is therefore important to follow up on this to understand if the drop is due to scarce resources, the refocusing of resources, or if the funding was short term and informed by a particular emergency.

2.7 Existing Initiatives and Systems for Emergency Preparedness

In CA strategic framework 2019-2023, the Strategic Orientation 2 focuses on reducing the impact of humanitarian crisis on affected populations in the African region, while the strategic objective is to consolidate the preparedness and response capacities of Caritas Africa Member Organizations (CAMOs) before emergencies. This is generally well aligned with CI protocol for CI coordination in emergency response which indicates the role of the Caritas regions as follows; to build emergency response capacity among its members and train staff for emergency deployment. The regional Caritas is also expected to identify experienced staff among its members and propose that they are put forward for the CI sectoral working groups or pool of CI coordinators. The regional Caritas should also be able to promote information sharing and collaboration in multi country emergency.

In the on-line survey conducted, 15 out of 30 respondents indicated that they have had Emergency Response Preparedness Plans (EP&RP) in place. 7 were current, 2 beyond timeframe and needed review while 6 reported that they were still developing theirs.

One member said that they have contingency plan through the UNHCR Refugees program but needed training to understand how to act best for different types of emergencies. Caritas Africa needs to consolidate its role here by proactively engaging members to renew their EP&RPs and support those who are developing them to complete what they have started and assist those without to prepare new ones, Initially CA can focus on high-risk countries and subsequently move on to other members in less hazard-prone areas.

2.8 Coordination

2.8.1 Caritas Country Forums

Regarding the question of whether the partners had active Caritas forums, 22 out of 30 respondents indicated that they have active forums. On the question of what was generally discussed in the forum, 7 respondents indicated that humanitarian issues were discussed, 4 said it was development and 11 said it was a mix of both humanitarian and development issues. Regarding the frequency of the meetings that were held from January to December in the years 2017 to 2020, the results are as tabulated below with month 1 being January and 12 December.

The number of Caritas members who held Caritas Country Forums in the years 2017 to 2020

	4	3	3	4		1			1	1		
	3	2	7	1				1	1	1		
	4	8	1	3				2		1		
	3	3	3	1	2	1	1		1		1	

From the analysis of each of 29 respondents to the question of how often they had a Caritas forum from 2017 to date (2020), 12 met once each year (4 times each), two met 3 times each, 2 met only twice each, 3 met 1 time each while 10 had no Caritas forums from 2017 to 2020.

The participants had been asked to score the benefit they gain from the Caritas Forum in a scale of 1-5, one being the lowest and five being the highest. There was a mix of answers with 5 providing a score of 1 and 2-, and 5-members scoring average (3). 13 scored above average (4 and 5).

Score by CAMOs of benefits gained from Caritas Forums.

1	2	9	18
2	2	9	
3	5	22	22
4	9	39	56
5	4	17	

The respondents provided some suggestions of how the forum composition, activities and functioning could be improved and these included the following: frequent communication, setting up permanent diocesan and national humanitarian desks with designated personnel, setting up strong Caritas forum to guide and coordinate the collective action of various arms of Caritas in the country, regular and frequent meetings with consensus agenda and following up of decisions compulsory attendance by heads of programmes, strengthening zonal meetings, including both Caritas and non-Caritas organizations, ensuring funding sister Caritas partners are involved to enhance value of the forum and improve the functioning of forums at diocesan level.

Information from the interview with the Key Informants has revealed that there is great value in the Country Forums and that CA should be a key supporter of country forums, thereby ensuring that Caritas members are coming together regularly.

There was a comment that there have been some issues from members of country forums around roles and protocols and how they come into play in a response and that it is necessary to ensure that protocols during a response are well coordinated and promoted. It was suggested that those on the humanitarian reference team need to ensure that there is a humanitarian voice in the Country Forum. CA should make a note of funding CIMOs that are working outside the Country Forum structure. Those organisations that are working without the blessing of the National Caritas should be encouraged to work within the structure and to respect Caritas Forum protocols. Even CIMOs providing remote support should let the national Caritas know what support they are providing; this should include the scope of any engagement with non-Caritas/non-Catholic partners to avoid duplication of effort and to present a clear picture of their activities to forum members.

Whereas some of the suggestions may be a challenge due to limited resources e.g., setting up permanent diocesan and national humanitarian desks with designated personnel, there is an opportunity for CA to take up some of the recommendations by ensuring that its coordination role does not lose sight of internal coordination forums. For a start, CA may need to focus on humanitarian coordination by ensuring that all ongoing emergencies have a coordination forum from the onset. This would mean contacting the national Caritas in the respective emergencies to inquire and support them around coordination during a crisis.

Currently face to face meeting may not be feasible due to the pandemic but virtual meetings are highly encouraged. As suggested by members the meeting should have a consensus agenda, share relevant information, define points of action and be able to keep time to avoid members apathy. The meetings need to be as short as possible and when virtual it would be good to avoid the 40-minute limited zoom where possible by purchasing the extra time or using other appropriate apps that have no time limit (Teams etc).

It is also important for funding CIMOs to support CI localisation commitments by allocating a percentage of their financial support towards capacity strengthening of Caritas Africa and the National Caritas in emergency response coordination, especially in countries with high humanitarian risk ranking.

One other area that can be explored would be for leadership at the Diocesan and Bishops conference to set aside some funds to support a humanitarian desk to ensure continuity even when an emergency response project comes to an end. This may be done at the zonal level with the Humanitarian reference focal point taking charge. The current practice is that once a humanitarian project ends, the staff contract end and it limits organisational/ institutional capacity to respond to recurring disasters. There have been some tentative ideas and efforts around trying to set up a local surge capacity, including through inclusion of member's staff to the CI Technical Working Groups, however this has not been as successful as hoped is seen more as CI owned. In setting up regional surge, there are several practical issues that need to be thought about and resolved, in relation to contracts, salaries, duty of care to the deployed staff member, none of which should be insuperable but all of which need thought and attention to detail. In addition, a commitment to localisation and capacity building might want to explore secondments from local partners to funding CIMOs to give key humanitarian staff experience of funding CIMO systems, advocacy, donor relations and compliance and technical support issues.

Regarding coordination with the partner CIMOs, it is instructive to reiterate the declaration from the meeting of Bishops from 34 Countries of African region who met in Kinshasa in November 2012 and stated among others that opening of offices in the region's countries by sister organizations from the global north poses problems when they come to compete with local Caritas which undermines and discredits them. The meeting encouraged the Bishops Conferences to verify existing MoU's with a view to making necessary adjustments. With this background, the funding CIMOs need to ensure good coordination with the national Caritas especially in information sharing. Regarding support of National Caritas, the commitments on the bishops' conference in Dakar in September 2017 reiterates the need to pay more attention to migration and refugees due to political crises and national disasters.

2.8.2 CA Coordination

To assess coordination by CA the members had been asked to rank the support they have received from the CA initiatives such as projects or solidarity funds, trainings etc, 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. There was a mix of answers as well here with 11 providing a score of 1 and 2-, and 8-members scoring average (3). 11 scored above average (4 and 5). This question had 30 respondents, but the countries were 29 because two departments participated from Malawi. It is important to note that 3 participants from Francophone countries gave a score of 1 compared to only 1 from Anglophone. Also 3 participants from Anglophone countries gave a score of 5 while no participant from Francophone countries gave a score of 5. There were only two participants from Lusophone countries and they both gave a score of 2.

Score by CAMOs of coordination through Caritas Africa

1	1	3	
2	3	2	2
3	4	4	
4	5	3	
5	3		

When asked about the challenges faced in relation to humanitarian programme work, many members (13/29) listed resources/funding/funding fluctuation as a huge challenge. Core funds were identified as the biggest challenge. Members requested for support to access unrestricted funding and learning opportunity/skills to build and sustain core funds.

In relation to technical support, this is available from CI – the latest example of this type of support was during the cyclone Idai Emergency Appeal evaluation, when Caritas Uganda and CRS provided Caritas Malawi staff with technical support to carry out the evaluation under the CI Technical working group, however, it is felt that CAMO members are not taking full advantage of this support.

This issue should be further investigated at the proposed CA humanitarian forum. Other challenges that were mentioned included Staff turnover, Humanitarian programme staff capacity especially at diocesan level, lack of coordination, reactive Humanitarian Programmes/donor dependence, Partner fatigue and underfunding of the humanitarian response.

During discussions with KII, it was opined that CA needs to adapt to remote support arrangements currently due to the pandemic and CIMO funding partners need to participate and enhance their support to CA in its humanitarian programme. Regarding support provided by CA it was recommended that they need to participate in members humanitarian programme especially at the peak of the crisis even if by only paying a solidarity visit/call. There was a comment that CA was not as conspicuous during the Ebola Crises in DRC as expected. It is important to put solidarity among Africans at par to that of the Global North . There is need to have confidence in each other.

2.8.3 UN Led Cluster Coordination

In relation to a question on regular participation at the UN led cluster coordination and other UN led coordination forums (Inter agency working group, WASH Cluster/WESCOORD, Health and Nutrition Cluster etc,) 19 out of 30 responders replied in the affirmative. The members listed their participation as follows: Submission of monthly 5Ws (Who, what, where, when, whom) to relevant cluster/sector, development of Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), info sharing, sector/cluster joint assessment and analysis, in the areas of Refugee Care, Food Security, Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Care, WASH and HIV prevention and management.

Other participation included sharing plans, sharing and learning from other partner’s best practices, attending meetings through appointed focal persons and sharing back and by being part in the consortiums that are created, participation through industry groups that meet regularly, participating in on-line trainings, participation in the process and the development of the interagency and national contingency plan, participation in planning and evaluation meetings; exchange of information; public presentations and verification visits. Two members however said that they were not invited in the past, but one said after COVID-19 they are able to participate in online training with UN led through CA or CI. Another member felt that coordination is limited to information on what partners are doing only. Efforts are not made to consolidate the contributions made by the partners and so it is difficult to assess impact at the national level. Availability of staff was mentioned as a hindrance to attending the external meeting since some offices were working with minimum number of staff.

There were however some barriers that were mentioned as curtailing the ability to participate in the external UN led cluster forums which were cited as follows: top-down decisions and in some places, meetings not being regular and especially inconsistent at local level. Lack of regular info, sometimes there is limited participation.

Not being part of the HCT. One member said there can be an excessive focus on meetings intended for planning and coordination and diminishing focus on community level impact and how implementing partners sustain support to the vulnerable. At times, the silo-approach where partners are allocated to areas can also prevent efficient action taking place as the communities assigned may not be as familiar or open to the partner directed to them. One respondent said that in some instances, there are a lot of things that have nothing to do with humanitarian endeavour and too much politics in UN system which makes it difficult to benefit from the forums, but this needs further substantiation. Some members said that the language used is English limiting participation because some staff who participate do not understand English.

The forum is dominated by UN bodies and local NGOs voice is not very much amplified.

Another member said that from their experience, when there is an emergency crisis, more opportunity is provided to UN agencies and International NGOs who come with huge funds. Local NGOs like Caritas who have adequate experience of crisis are left out from the implementing partners and the leadership is seen as failing to value the local actors experience and expertise.

For those who are selected for funding or being members of the cluster coordination, there was a general feeling that the process of selection is not transparent. Some felt that there is a weakness internally which has nothing to do with UN systems of partners lacking relevant information to share with other actors which can be traced to poor collection of information and data from diocesan Caritas. There is also lack of capacity/resources to sign for large-scale actions.

During the individual interviews with supporters and key CAMO members as well as in a virtual meeting with directors to discuss some early findings, there was an agreement that CAMOs need to take some steps to improve access to UN pooled funds. The key issues mentioned included building relationship and creating linkages with UN Cluster systems and other inter agency forums and to be more present and more visible. It was also felt that there is a need to develop a funding strategy with support from funding CIMO partners and to be able to demonstrate transparent use of funds. It is important to put Caritas in a position where the organization can influence agendas at the cluster level, relying on our experience, reach and expertise. It was however noted that Caritas needs to be well prepared with quality data/information (all the way from the Diocese) and be clear on the areas of intervention and be aware of niche and the members strengths (strategic positioning). Additionally, Caritas needs to be well equipped in surveillance and with an up-to-date EP&RP.

It is important to note that despite the challenges that the members mentioned regarding participation at the cluster forums, several of them have received funding from the cluster system, having participated in Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). They have also received other bilateral funding from UN actors. These members include Caritas Nigeria, who have secured funding for food security intervention, Senegal, through participation in the food security cluster, accessed the EU food for work fund, Caritas Congo (DRC) through participation in HRP has accessed funding for improving rapidity (surveillance) of the humanitarian response -a training project for security guards- and Caritas Congo (Brazzaville) secured funding to develop humanitarian watch (surveillance) through protection and shelter SWGs.

Others who have received UN actors funding include Caritas Eswatini who have previously received funding from FAO, WFP, and UNICEF for their intervention in Food security and Water in their programme focusing on rights of children, refugees, and rural communities most at risk. Caritas Cote d'Ivoire reported that one of their dioceses received funding for COVID-19 from UNICEF through participation in an inter-agency forum chaired by solidarity Government minister and resident coordinator of UN. Cameroon has been involved in inter agency assessments and beneficiary identification while Caritas Angola, in collaboration with UNDP, Government, and other Civil Society actors, are working on Community Intervention Plan to Combat COVID 19 in Luanda province, and one of the objectives of acting together is to facilitate international fundraising.

2.9 Capacity Building Initiatives

2.9.1 Review of Trainings Delivered in 2017

With the support of CI, CAFOD, CRS and other Catholic funding Organizations, Caritas Africa has conducted several trainings since 2017 to date aimed at building the capacity of members in Emergency Preparedness and Response and Volunteer Management, Communication, Resource Mobilization, Disaster Risk Management, Management and Programme Standards, (through training on CIMS (CI Management Standards), Core Humanitarian Standards and Sphere standards), and cross cutting themes of protection and safeguarding. 124 staff members from CAMOs from different corners of the continent were trained. Out of those trained, 21 have since left their organization representing 17% of those trained. Many staff members were trained in 2017 and this also represents the highest number of staff who have left. Apart from the CA trainings, the survey response gave evidence of other trainings that the members have received in the same period. These include humanitarian advocacy and voice, accountability, Safety Access, and Dignity with Inclusion (SADI), humanitarian logistics, security, humanitarian rights and ethics.

During interviews with partners and some CAMO members it was reported that the support requests that come from CAMOs revolve around fundraising, proposal writing and organizational capacity strengthening. Several CAMOs also listed the same as a need in the survey responses. CAMOs need training on local fundraising which will generate proper mechanisms for the purpose.

Details of trainings carried out from Jan 2017 to date are as follows:

2017

- EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE, & CI TOOLKIT by Alessandra Arcidiacono on May 26-30, 2017, in Nairobi and from 03 to 08 July 2017 in Grand-Bassam
- Communication Training
- Resource Mobilisation

2018

- CI Toolkit and Emergency Preparedness and Volunteers Management - PEOPLE Project from 19 to 20 November 2018 by Cassie Dummett, Samba Fall, Gill Price,
- Resource Mobilisation

2019

- Training of Trainers on Caritas Internationalis management Standards
- CI Protocols and Emergency Response Toolbox by Irene Broz and Samba Fall from 11-13 April 2019 (RECHANGE)
- Basic Humanitarian Standards (CHS and Project SPHERE) by Boniface Nakwagelewi from April 15 to 17, 2019 (RECHANGE)
- Cross-protection and safeguarding policy by Bruce LUABA (CRS) and Imogen Prickett (Independent Consultant) from 09 to 11 September 2019
- Volunteer Management by Nha Truc (Caritas Vlanderen) from 14 to 18 October 2019
- Monetary transfer (CASH program) by Kassoum Ouattara and Sebastian Deschamps from 02 to 06 September 2019

2020

- Exchange and planning for disaster risk management by SHOLL Pierre Grégoire from 10 to 12 February 2020

2.10 Regional Surge Team

The question of a regional surge team was discussed during the KII with supporters and CAMOs selected staff. There was an acknowledgement that a local surge team would be a great idea since the members would be well versed within the region by having worked in similar disasters. It was also felt that there is value in promoting peer to peer support and a good idea to have a task force like the one CI has. This would be a group of local technical people that can be available to travel to support in fields such as Cash, WASH, Food security, Financial Management, Financial Reporting, and Project Reporting, since there is enormous capacity, from anglophone, francophone and Portuguese speaking countries. A humanitarian skills mapping of staff and their location would need to be made. Some said that the surge teams could be established in zones and work in coordination with CA. This was corroborated by one key interviewee. CIMOs could take the role of funding. There was however a concern around funding since Bishops' conferences may not have capacity to fund, and funding CIMOs are currently struggling and the financial situation of funding sister CIMOs could get worse before getting better.

There was also a feeling that instead of having its own surge team CA may work with CI coordination and sector working groups since there is an opportunity to encourage the regions' skilled staff to join the CI SWGs that have already been expanded into three categories (resource, deployable, associate (emerging members)).

For this arrangement to succeed, it was felt that there would be a great need for funding CIMOs to commit to support the CI Coordination and SWGs since they represent a great opportunity for surge for CA and other regions. CA/CAMO's humanitarian staff and reference groups can receive remote support from CI, including online trainings and joint activities (previous joint activities carried out by the SWGs include Philippines Needs Assessment simulation and Malawi joint evaluation of Cyclone IDAI response). For a regional surge team to be considered it is important to ensure that it is not duplicating the work of CI surge (Coordination and Sector Working Groups) and it needs to be linked with CI for technical support in building its capacity. CA needs to identify potential candidates, what resources it requires, what opportunity there is to work with CI working groups, and possibility to engage remotely.

In the past Caritas Africa had established a humanitarian team to support the secretariat in humanitarian work. This team was selected from staff of CAMOs with skills in humanitarian work. The team was joined by funding CIMOs for skills sharing and support during its meetings. Though the last team was expected to meet annually, they only met twice; during the launch and in the two subsequent years due to funding constraints. The team term ran from 2016 to 2019. Though this team had a general plan, it had not developed its own strategy. At the end of the term, there was no evaluation of its performance, so little learning has been captured from it. A new team is currently being recruited and will run until 2023 to coincide with the end of CAs (Caritas Africa) current strategic framework. The KII (Key Informant Interviews) interviewees have commented that since CA relies on the Humanitarian Reference group for its humanitarian work, the right people with relevant skills should be selected for this group and it is important to keep the group engaged and connected to CI working Groups.

CAMOs may also need to ask if the reference group has added value to the Humanitarian work. This can be done through an evaluation when its term ends. The initial group was created as a forum for reflection, analysis, and action. It included funding CIMOs who play a significant role in humanitarian work. The team was composed of professionals. The guidance regarding country Caritas forums was made at the humanitarian team meeting. For the new reference group, it was recommended that its terms of reference be updated to reflect current situation. The group needs to agree on how to work collectively when there is an emergency. There was a recommendation that to address some gaps, emergency expert teams should be created in the zones taking into consideration the major hazards that exist in that zone. These teams could intervene in different zones according to the needs.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To the Caritas Africa Regional Secretariat

- Initiate learning from the work by members on work on COVID-19.

Bring members together in a meeting to discuss key issues around Caritas humanitarian work. The meeting can initially be held virtually and later face to face as COVID-19 pandemic gets controlled. Members have expressed what they would like to see discussed in such a forum, the first one of its kind. Recommendations from this report together with a previous evaluation titled 'The Role of the Regions in Improving Emergency Preparedness and Response Recommendations for Caritas Internationalis based on Interviews and Case Studies' by Chloe Colchester and Cassandra Dummett need to be discussed, priorities agreed as well as strategies to achieve them.

Topics for discussion listed by members:

- Fund raising, challenges and possible solutions, local resource mobilization, innovation in fundraising, sustainable core operational and humanitarian programme funds. Types and forms of collaboration especially in the mobilization of resources (internally from the confederation and externally with potential donors: ECHO, USAID etc., Resource mobilization in the wake of the pandemic.)
- Agroecology and response to effects of natural disasters.
- Improved coordination, partnership, and cross-country coordination.
- How to integrate trends in humanitarian funding into work design.
- Uniform procedures and practices.
- Gender and Development- access to land.
- Surge team including zonal teams and desk office at zonal level.
- Improving communication.
- DRR, EP&R and Post Disaster Recovery.
- Experience sharing between members of the same zone.
- Map out and prioritize high risk countries (can use inter agency risk analysis report INFORM although other factors may need to be considered) to support in emergency preparedness and response plans through trainings and follow up and reminding members of outdated plans. This would require CA to keep a tab on major initiatives of priority country offices.
- Facilitate consolidation of learning from CAMOs that have secured UN OHA-pooled funding and bilateral funding from UN agencies.
- Reach out to members who gave low scores on questions regarding Caritas Forums and support provided by CA. This will provide an opportunity to interrogate more on support that they need.
- Reach out to Members at the onset of emergencies to understand the crisis for sharing with potential supporters.
- Established why some members in HRP countries are not participating in the UN/OCHA led humanitarian forums and support that they may need in order to participate.

3.2 To Caritas Africa Member Organisations

- Endeavour to participate more in UN led cluster forums/HRP and bilaterally with individual UN bodies. There has been remarkable success with 6 CAMOs that reported having received funding though HRP and from UN agencies. 2 countries reported having participated in joint inter agency efforts though they had not received funding. In general, when an organization receives external funding, it is an indicator of robust capacity, good programming, and achieving results and this provides an opportunity for Members to be more competitive in accessing external resources.
- Several members mentioned that it is good practice to identify key staff to attend Inter Agency meetings and report back. In addition, it was also felt that the staff should be well prepared and need to master the concepts of the agenda to be discussed. There was concern that Data from the Dioceses is sometimes not forthcoming and this internal issue need to be looked at.

- Some National Caritas in Africa have strong relationships with UN agencies, WFP, UNHCR etc. These UN agencies are decentralizing, especially UNHCR. There is an opportunity to engage more with these regional UN organizations to discuss shared concerns and interests and it provides an opportunity to engage them better with discussion regarding indirect cost funding, capacity strengthening, risk sharing etc.
- Mapping and updating humanitarian work of diocesan members even for support that they have sourced independently. National Caritas need to be well prepared for interagency and Caritas forums with data from the diocesan Caritas.

3.3 To CIMOs Supporting Caritas in Africa

- On surge, support CI Coordination and SWGs, since these are envisaged as a great resource for CA and other regions especially with the upcoming expanded membership. CA needs to align its humanitarian coordination structure with the CI surge groups.
- Support for the proposed position of Humanitarian officer. This position has been vacant for a long time because of lack of funds. This will enable CA to step up its role of coordinating humanitarian work in Africa especially around mitigation and emergency preparedness through trainings and simulations where appropriate.

3.4 To the CI General Secretariat

- Internal coordination was mentioned several times as an issue both at the country Caritas forums and between dioceses and national Caritas. Working with CA, coaching of National Caritas's on chairing meeting, and how to make meetings effective (including virtual meeting). Ensuring Emergency protocols during a response are well coordinated. Disseminate learning from countries that have done well in coordination.
- CI staff coordinating various zones in Africa need to coordinate their activities with the humanitarian reference team members of the zone. Caritas Africa should provide the list of members of the reference group to CI.

4. Conclusion

Whereas CA is keen on quality humanitarian programming for the region, its work is hampered by lack of funding and capacity.

Though CA has benefited from deployments from supporting CIMOs in support of the humanitarian department, it is important that a full-time humanitarian officer be appointed to carry out the important task of coordinating humanitarian work in the African region with the support of the humanitarian reference group.

This can only be realized with buy-in from key supporters. On top of this CA/CAMOs need an innovative method of fundraising, build relation with donors for resource mobilization and set up mechanisms to boost emergency fund. CA needs to be empowered to carry out its mandate. There is need to build on from capacity strengthening carried out between 2017 to date and strengthening CA coordination structure and aligning it with CI emergency programme.

Some of the recommendations in this report mirrors on recommendations in the report 'The Role of the Regions in Improving Emergency Preparedness and Response Recommendations for Caritas Internationalis based on Interviews and Case Studies' by Chloe Colchester and Cassandra Dummett (date not clear but quotes documents of 2016). The report notes that both the regional and the general secretariats have some shared responsibilities which always apply: e.g., promotion of key CI documents and procedures, and they will support each other in these responsibilities. It however notes that the role of the region should be light touch and hands off and this can enable the regional secretariat to have a positive impact with limited resources. The role of the region is connecting/linking and facilitating. In my opinion however the role should provide good coordination and complementarity with CI mandate. It is important for CA to revisit the recommendations of the Chloe/Cassandra report together with this mapping report for guidance on how to play its role optimally.

