

Unite against coronavirus

As we continue to cope with life under lockdown in the UK, there is great concern for our sisters and brothers in countries throughout the Global South as the spread of coronavirus continues.

With fragile health systems and challenges such as overcrowded housing and poor sanitation facilities, these countries are less prepared to cope. It will be the most vulnerable who are hit the hardest.

But we are responding quickly. Our local experts are already in these communities helping those in need, preventing the spread of the virus and protecting lives.



As well as responding with practical help, our own government has a role to play. We have a new petition which urges the UK Government to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised people are the priority in the UK's international efforts as well as at home.

As the Campaign Volunteer in your parish, please will you ask as many people as possible to sign our petition? You can share our announcement below, as well as the petition wording in the box to the right.

Emergency appeal

We have launched an emergency appeal to help us scale up our response to the immense need. Donations are needed more than ever, and if you are also the Fast Day contact in your parish, you will be hearing more about this.

Visit cafod.org.uk/coronavirus for details.

Our petition asks our Prime Minister to work with other world leaders to:

- Make sure that any **vaccine** developed with UK public money is made available to everyone regardless of income or where in the world they live.
- Provide urgent **financial and technical support** to help developing countries cope with this crisis.
- Cancel all **debt** payments by developing countries due in 2020 so that countries can spend money on much needed healthcare rather than debt repayments.
- Put plans in place to **rebuild a fairer, more just society** after the crisis so that the world's most vulnerable people can live in dignity and to restore our common home for future generations

Use this announcement to share the petition with your parish, friends and family

Even though we are no longer meeting face-to-face in parishes, there are new ways of connecting online, whether that is through parish websites, bulletins, emails or social media.

Unite against coronavirus

As we cope with coronavirus in the UK, we think of our sisters and brothers in developing countries who are facing this pandemic with fragile health systems, some of which have almost no intensive care beds or ventilators.

Food prices have already risen with borders closing, the poorest are losing their jobs and income with wholesale shutdowns. Furthermore, inadequate healthcare, lack of access to washing facilities and limited ability to social distance will result in loss of life on an intolerable scale. The likely impact will be devastating.

We are one global family. Please will you sign the CAFOD petition to ask the government to work with other world leaders to help the most vulnerable people in our world cope with this crisis?

To sign the petition visit cafod.org.uk/coronaviruscampaign

CAFOD Campaigns Update – May 2020

You are signed up to receive this update as a CAFOD Campaigns volunteer. For queries or to order resources, contact CAFOD Campaigns hotline: 020 7095 5692 or campaigns@cafod.org.uk

Photo credits: Caritas Homa Bay, CAFOD



Pope Francis urges debt cancellation for poorest countries

In his Easter Urbi et Orbi message of hope, Pope Francis called for the world to be united in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Urging us all to reject indifference, he called for the reduction or cancellation of the debt that is "burdening the balance sheet of the poorest nations."

This is one of the things we're urging the government to do with our petition (see overleaf). The government must wield its influence and work with world leaders to cancel all debt payments by developing countries due in 2020. This money could then be used for desperately-needed improvements to health systems and infrastructure.

There has already been some progress. In April, the G20 group of the world's largest economies announced that more than 70 countries could stop making debt payments over the next eight months to the countries they owe. This would save around \$12 billion.

This is a welcome step to help countries prepare for the devastation of coronavirus. However, debts must be cancelled - not just suspended - to avoid simply postponing an economic crisis to next year.

To read more about this visit cafod.org.uk/latestnews. You can also listen to our online talk on debt led by our policy team by visiting cafod.org.uk/onlinetalks



Stay connected from home: join our online events

We have much to offer you online during this unusual time. We have Eucharistic Celebrations, an interview with our director, Christine Allen, a talk about the impact of COVID-19 on international debt, and much more.

See cafod.org.uk/onlinetalks to register for upcoming events or listen in your own time to previous talks.

Have you got...

» 2 minutes?

Sign our petition cafod.org.uk/coronaviruscampaign

» 5 minutes?

Share the parish announcement overleaf with others in your parish if you can

» 10 minutes?

See our prayers for the time of coronavirus cafod.org.uk/coronavirusprayers

Meet Liam...

Liam Finn is CAFOD's new Campaigns Manager. He tells us of his hopes for how we rebuild our common home after the coronavirus pandemic.

"Raising our voices to bring about a better world is fundamental to our vocation as Catholics. CAFOD has given me a way of doing this since I was in school – campaigning for governments to cancel unjust debts, for action to halt the climate crisis and for our leaders to respond to the situation faced by migrants and refugees.

I feel lucky to work alongside Catholic communities across the country to continue this work. And although it's challenging to start a new job in the current circumstances, I'm convinced we have a crucial role to play in building a more just world in the aftermath of the pandemic.

One of our fears is the devastation the virus might have on the communities we serve overseas. The pandemic is forcing us to consider how we rebuild in a way that is just – and that poor communities are not, as Pope Francis warns, an "afterthought" in decision-making processes.

I look forward to working alongside you to make sure the voices of those communities are heard."



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Photo credits: CAFOD, Caritas Bangladesh, Caritas Internationalis