



COVID-19

faith

Response

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FBO COVID-19 Response Summary

Objective: To inform potential areas for faith collaboration with WBG client country offices around the COVID-19 response, particularly around **community engagement**

Context: Faith actors uniquely engage local communities and governments, through their **reach** and **trust**, and make effective partners in responding to pandemics such as HIV, Ebola, Cholera and now COVID-19. This report is a high-level summary of information from **142 Faith-Based Organization (FBO)** leads on their COVID-19 response efforts.

Response to COVID-19 Overview

Faith actors have been at the forefront of the response, advocating for efforts to flatten the curve and leveraging their reach and trust at the country level to mitigate impacts of the pandemic. The following highlights key actions FBOs have taken by priority area with emphasis on how WBG can engage with this strategic stakeholder group at the country level.

Key Response Priorities

WBG	Focus Area	Key FBO Actions	Key FBOs	
Prevention and Control	Social Distancing and Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize gatherings (e.g. virtual religious services) Leverage trusted relationships with faith leaders, communities, local government representatives, etc., to disseminate critical, context-specific messaging and fight against spread of misinformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Episcopal Relief & Development Islamic Relief 	
	WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of supplies and equipment (hygiene kits, hand-washing stations) Training of health workers and community members on handwashing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADRA World Vision World Hope 	
Mitigating Collateral Damage	Social Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on vulnerable populations (e.g. refugees, women, children) Safety nets and direct cash transfers Support those at risk for Gender Based Violence Provide psychosocial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christian Aid CRS IsraAID World Vision 	
	Food Security	<u>Agriculture and Food</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address immediate and long-term needs for availability of and access to food (e.g. distribution of food packages, seeds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADRA Buddhist Global Relief
		<u>Food Systems</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote resilience to shocks (e.g. training on agricultural practices, inputs for food preservation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread for the World CRS
		<u>Agribusiness and Value Chain</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen support for small holder farming Provide livelihoods support to farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IsraAID World Relief
	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Health systems strengthening</u> (e.g. results based financing, training for health workers, temporary isolation facilities) <u>Disease surveillance</u> Provision of supplies and equipment (e.g. medicine, protective gear) <u>Behavior change communications</u> (e.g. burial practices, promote healthcare seeking behavior) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMMB Cordaid LDS Charities Samaritan's Purse World Relief 	
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing virtual/alternative education programming where possible Equip families to support children (e.g. training for remote education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cordaid World Vision 	
Debt and Funding Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for debt cancellation for poor countries (G20, WBG, IMF) Advocate for WBG/IMF to adjust funding mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christian Aid Jubilee USA 		
Preserving Economic Livelihoods	Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate jobs/continued livelihood programming for smallholder farmers Savings groups / cash transfer programs Support small and medium enterprises Micro lending (e.g. MFIs, Savings Groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cordaid Corus International World Relief World Vision 	

Lessons Learned from Previous FBO Responses

Faith Actors have been at the forefront of recent epidemics and are applying lessons learned to the COVID-19 response. A few notable examples include the following:

- **Ebola:** The 2013 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa led to 28,000 people being infected, and more than 11,000 deaths in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia. Because of their influence, trust and reach, engaging the faith sector was a critical factor in changing the tide of the epidemic due to their role in changing traditional burial practices, leveraging their networks to provide health services, and disseminating accurate information.¹ Utilization of such faith networks in the COVID-19 response will be key to prevent and control the spread of the pandemic.
- **Malaria: Nigeria Interfaith Action Association (NIFAA)** was one of the implementing partners for the World Bank's \$180 project to improve access to and utilization of mosquito nets in Nigeria. Leveraging the fact that 98% of Nigerian citizens are religious, NIFAA trained Muslim and Christian leaders to encourage increased utilization of nets. In Akwa Ibom State, this resulted in twice as many children under five (51.6%) sleeping under a net in comparison to nearby Anambra State (25.1%) where no faith leaders were trained.² Understanding the trust and reach of these faith leaders was key to elicit effective behavioral change at the community level, and this approach can be adapted for COVID-19 activities such as handwashing and social distancing.
- **HIV/AIDS:** In 2018, **PEPFAR** announced a \$100m investment to address key gaps in HIV Epidemic Control, particularly referencing the importance of involving FBOs due to their demonstrated ability to elicit behavioral change and influence social norms at the community level. An example of FBO impact includes support of the **Coptic Orthodox Church** in Kenya to provide HIV prevention, treatment, and support services each year to over 125,000 people living with HIV in two facilities-Nairobi and rural western Kenya.³ Applying lessons learned from such engagement will be critical in the COVID-19 response.

¹ Christo Greyling & Jolly Ann Maulit & Susan Parry & David Robinson & Sally Smith & Anne Street & Robert Vitillo, 2016. "Lessons from the Faith-Driven Response to the West Africa Ebola Epidemic," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Taylor & Francis Journals, vol. 14(3), pages 118-123

² UNICEF. (n.d.). The reality of malaria. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/health/files/health_africamalaria.pdf

³ PEPFAR. (2018). PEPFAR will invest \$100 million to address key gaps toward achieving HIV epidemic control including through faith-based organizations and communities. Retrieved from <https://www.pepfar.gov/press/releases/287642.htm>

FBO Operation Locations and Partnerships

Operation Locations (Region, Country): FBOs are working in every region around the response. The following highlight countries with FBO presence where WBG COVID-19 projects are currently being implemented.

Region	Country (WBG COVID-19 Response ⁴)	FBOs (Country Level Response)
Africa	Benin	Misean Cara; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Burundi	Catholic Relief Services; Christian Aid; World Relief; World Vision
	Democratic Republic of Congo	Episcopal Relief & Development; Catholic Relief Services, Cordaid; World Vision; World Relief; BIFERD; DRC Baptist Church; World Vision; Corus International; Conseil National des Religions pour la Paix RD Congo; Vision Fund International; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Eswatini	World Without Orphans, World Vision
	Ethiopia	Catholic Relief Services, Cordaid; Jewish Distribution Committee; World Vision; Misean Cara; Vision Fund International
	Ghana	Episcopal Relief & Development, Catholic Relief Services, Christian Aid; Corus International; World Vision; Misean Cara; Vision Fund International; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Kenya	Episcopal Relief & Development, Catholic Medical Mission Board, Catholic Relief Services, IsraAID, Christian Aid; World Vision; World Relief; Islamic Relief USA; Corus International; Community of Sant'Egidio; World Renew; Misean Cara; Vision Fund International; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Liberia	Catholic Relief Services; Cordaid, Episcopal Relief & Development; Misean Cara; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Mali	Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief; World Vision; Corus International; Vision Fund International
	Malawi	Christian Aid; World Relief; World Vision; Community of Sant'Egidio; World Renew; Vision Fund International; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference; Christian Aid Malawi, World Relief Malawi
	Mauritania	World Vision
	Niger	Christian Aid; Islamic Relief; World Vision; Corus International
	Rwanda	World Relief, World Vision; Rwanda Children; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Senegal	World Faiths Development Dialogue, Le Cadre des Religieux pour la Santé et le Développement (CRSD); World Vision; World Renew; Misean Cara; Vision Fund International
	Sierra Leone	World Hope International, Christian Aid, Cordaid; World Vision; World Renew; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
South Sudan	Catholic Medical Mission Board; Christian Aid; Cordaid; Islamic Relief; IsraAID; World Relief; World Vision; Corus International; Misean Cara	
The Gambia	Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference	
East Asia and Pacific	Cambodia	Catholic Relief Services, LDS Charities, World Hope International; World Relief; World Without Orphans; Adventist Development & Relief Agency; World Vision; World Renew; Church World Service
	Lao PDR	World Vision; World Renew
	Mongolia	LDS Charities; World Vision; Vision Fund International

⁴ World Bank Group. (April 2, 2020). World Bank Group's Operational Response to COVID-19 (coronavirus) – Projects List. Retrieved April 9, 2020, from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/what-we-do/brief/world-bank-group-operational-response-covid-19-coronavirus-projects-list>

	Myanmar	Christian Aid; Cordaid; World Vision; Vision Fund International
	Papua New Guinea	World Vision
	Philippines	ADRA; Cordaid; LDS Charities; World Hope International; World Without Orphans; World Vision; Episcopal Relief & Development; Corus International; Vision Fund International
	Vanuatu	IsraAid, World Vision
Europe and Central Asia	Armenia	World Vision; Vision Fund International
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catholic Relief Services, World Vision
	Georgia	World Vision
	Kyrgyz Republic	World Without Orphans
	Moldova	World Without Orphans
	Romania	World Without Orphans; World Vision
	Ukraine	World Without Orphans
Latin America and Caribbean	Argentina	Jewish Distribution Committee
	Bolivia	Vision Fund International
	Colombia	IsraAID; Global Network of Religions for Children; World Vision; Corus International; Misesan Cara
	Dominica	Christian Aid, Corus International, IsraAID, LDS Charities, World Vision
	Dominican Republic	LDS Charities, Christian Aid, IsraAID; World Vision; Corus International; Food for the Poor; Vision Fund International
	Ecuador	Centro del Muchacho Trabajador; Iglesia Evangelica; Centro Cultural y Cooperacion Ecuatoriano Irani; World Vision; Vision Fund International
	El Salvador	Christian Aid; World Vision; Corus International
	Haiti	Episcopal Relief & Development, Catholic Medical Mission Board, World Hope International; Christian Aid; World Vision; World Relief; Corus International; Global Health (The Dalton Foundation); World Renew; Food for the Poor; Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Honduras	Christian Aid; World Vision; Corus International; World Renew; Food for the Poor; Vision Fund International
	Paraguay	World Without Orphans
	Saint Lucia	Caribbean African Faith-Based Leadership Conference
	Egypt	Jewish Distribution Committee; Church World Service
	Jordan	Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief, World Vision
	Lebanon	Catholic Relief Services, Christian Aid; World Vision; Corus International
	West Bank & Gaza	Islamic Relief; World Vision
Yemen	Cordaid; Islamic Relief; Corus International	
South Asia	Afghanistan	Catholic Relief Services; Christian Aid; Cordaid; World Vision
	Bangladesh	Episcopal Relief & Development; Catholic Relief Services; World Faiths Development Dialogue; Christian Aid; World Vision; World Without Orphans; Islamic Relief; Buddhist Global Relief; World Renew
	India	Christian Aid; World Vision; World Without Orphans; Shanti Ashram; Jewish Distribution Committee; Corus International; World Renew; Misesan Cara; Vision Fund International
	Nepal	LDS Charities; World Without Orphans; World Vision; Corus International; Misesan Cara
	Pakistan	Islamic Relief; World Without Orphans; Search for Justice; Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights
	Sri Lanka	Episcopal Relief & Development; World Without Orphans; Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement; Buddhist Global Relief; World Without Orphans; World Vision; Vision Fund International

FBO Advocacy Efforts

FBOs have been leading advocacy campaigns and hosting dialogues/webinars to promote sharing of knowledge and best practices during the response. Notable campaigns and events by focus area include:

Focus Area	FBO Campaign / Event
Debt and Funding	A letter from Eurodad on behalf of over 150 CSOs/FBOs was sent to Bank-Fund leadership calling for the permanent cancellation of all developing country external debt payments due in 2020. Signatories include interfaith advocacy networks Jubilee Debt Campaign (UK) , Jubilee German , and Jubilee USA .
	Jubilee USA is petitioning the IMF to deliver aid, cancel debt, and help mitigate economic and health impacts of pandemic (Christian Aid is among one of the signatories). They, along with U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops , have also urged President Trump , to take action.
	Christian Connections for International Health signed on to a letter urging the U.S. Administration to maintain funding for the World Health Organization and encouraged CCIH members to sign as well.
	World Renew has supported collective action in policy and lawmakers correspondence to encourage increased and targeted foreign aid/funding to match needs of COVID-19 responses. This includes being a signatory of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation's letter to the Canadian Minister of International Development sent on April 3 rd , 2020.
Economic Livelihoods	Catholic Relief Services is the co-lead of the Collaborative Cash Delivery Network , which is involved in COVID-19 related advocacy as it relates to Social Protection and the critical role of Cash Assistance. They are connecting with WBG's Social Protection team to explore potential collaboration around this programming.
	Bread for the World is planning a convening with key actors in the Washington DC global food security and nutrition space to discuss food insecurity as a result of COVID-19.
WASH	The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development announced that a strategy is being defined to address WASH in healthcare facilities belonging to the Catholic Church.
	Water Mission has been involved in WHO/UNICEF advocacy campaign for improved WASH in healthcare facilities .
Climate	The UN Faith for Earth Initiative co-hosted a virtual dialogue with Sida, Stockholm International Water Institute and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency on March 16-18 around the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and biodiversity loss, and the role of moral duty bearers such as faith actors and indigenous groups.
	Inger Anderson, Executive Director of the UNEP , and Azza Karam, Secretary General of Religions for Peace , called upon citizens to consider how treatment of the planet's natural resources has had a hand in causing the COVID-19 pandemic. Faith leaders are pushing for action to address such environmental concerns, and their authority will be crucial to impact behavior of people globally.
	WBG's Connect4Climate team and Earth Day Network had digital outreach around Earth Day in April (50th anniversary this year), including interaction with faith community starting with a Global Faith Dialogue on April 6th.
	Christian Aid is advocating for a global recovery plan that addresses climate issues and human rights acceleration in localization efforts.
Social Protection and Vulnerable Communities	Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) have shifted their annual Capitol Hill Advocacy Campaign attention to protect vulnerable populations, particularly refugees and prioritize education for children among forced migrants.
	Arigatou International has launched a campaign titled Faith in Action for Children - Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic that aims to mobilize religious communities and child protection actors to work together to keep children safe.
	The Collaborative Cash Delivery Network is advocating in the social protection space, notably around the Grand Bargain Initiative (WBG is a signatory), a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations who have committed to get more means into the hands of people in need. They also launched an advocacy paper on social protection and humanitarian cash.

Messaging and Overall Response	Pope Francis addressed the crisis in an interview on March 20 where he conveyed hope that the crisis will bind humanity together. He emphasized the need for everyone to work together and urged no distinction between believers and non-believers impacted by the pandemic.
	The World Health Organization's EPI-WIN Initiative have released COVID-19 guidelines targeted at faith actors to prevent misinformation and promote consistent messaging at the country level. The EPI-WIN Initiative provides tailored information for audiences during a public health event like COVID-19 to prevent misinformation and promote consistent messaging.
	Georgetown University's Berkley Center , in partnership with the World Faiths Development Dialogue and Joint Learning Initiative , have launched a platform to collect and communicate information related to religious actors responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, organizing the information so that it can be quickly found and used by development policymakers and practitioners and religious actors who seek to work together in the COVID-19 response.
	World Hope International rolled out their Get-Support tool , which is being utilized by 35 community organizations across the US, CAN, AUS, and DEU as of 3 April, representing over 40,000 people. Users can submit and respond to requests for assistance.
	The Joint Learning Initiative , partnered with UNICEF and Religions for Peace , have launched a Multi-Religious Faith in Action COVID-19 Campaign through RfP and UNICEF's regional and country offices.
	The International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) reviewed challenges for religion/faith actors and communities – responses from the field in a webinar including WBG participation.
	The G20 Interfaith Forum released a statement highlighting urgent topics for the attention of G20 members, notably the need for collaboration and coordination with faith actors to address immediate and long-term impacts of the pandemic
	United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres appealed to religious leaders of all faiths “to join forces to work for peace around the world and focus on our common battle to defeat COVID-19.”
The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development has released a joint statement with the endorsement of the IATF Multi-Faith Advisory Council to express its concern about the challenges presented by the pandemic and called upon stakeholders to work together through a “whole-of-body, human-centered approach.”	

Examples of FBO Response Efforts

Below are a few examples from strategic FBO partners of their efforts on the ground:

- **Catholic Relief Services** is working in **Guatemala and Mexico** with partners that manage several shelters along the migrant routes and on the U.S.-Mexico border to improve awareness and adjust procedures for safety and prevention.
- **Catholic Medical Mission Board** is working with **Haiti's** national and communal ministries of health to produce communication materials in Creole and have supported COVID-19 trainings for more than 1,000 healthcare providers and community health workers. Their Medical Donations Program is working to rapidly procure and deploy critical equipment and supplies.
- **Cordaid** is supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in preparation for an economic downturn, including provision of loans to SMEs through their partner Micro-Finance Institutes. They also offer financial and technical support to keep businesses running and provide liquidity to temporarily cover fixed costs.
- **Corus International** is working in northern **Iraq** to support agricultural improvements and access to clean water. In **Kenya**, they are providing infection prevention and control training, as well as PPE, for key staff of the Christian Health Association of Kenya.
- **Episcopal Relief & Development** partner **Episcopal Church of the Philippines** is mobilizing local assets and resources to meet PPE and food needs, engaging community members from vulnerable households to sew masks and paying labor costs to provide an income stream.
- **Islamic Relief USA** is working in **Yemen** to raise awareness, distribute ready-to-eat meals and hygiene kits at quarantine centers, and provide dignity kits on a needs basis.
- **IsraAID** has been implementing child protection programs in **Kenya's** Kakuma Refugee Camp since 2011, and is utilizing local community networks within the Camp to raise awareness about COVID-19 and promote handwashing. They are also providing malaria testing kits and distributing food supplements to combat rise of malnutrition and malaria cases, which may exacerbate impact of COVID-19 on health facilities.
- **Samaritan's Purse** has sent emergency field hospitals fully staffed to 2 of the epicenters of the outbreak, including a 68-bed respiratory care unit in **Cremona, Italy**.
- **The Vatican:** Cardinal Turkson, First Prefect of the **Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**, has been tasked to lead a Vatican COVID-19 Response Team. The team is composed of 5 working groups with focus on 1) evidence-building; 2) addressing long-term challenges (e.g. economic impact); 3) advocacy (e.g. debt relief); 4) communications/ consistent messaging; and 5) fundraising to help mitigate immediate needs.
- **World Hope International** developed the **Get-Support** platform to foster and accelerate community organization responses to COVID-19 related needs across their memberships. Through this tool, users can submit and respond to requests for assistance.
- **World Relief** works with networks of over 3,000 local churches in Africa and has developed tools and resources to support their ability to engage communities through Social Behavior Change Communicates that leverage the Church's unique leadership and community trust to prevent COVID-19.
- **World Renew** is working with the **United Church of Zambia**, which operates a number of healthcare facilities, to provide protective equipment to frontline healthcare workers, promote hygiene practices to reduce transmission, and improving triage of patients to reduce potential spread.
- **World Vision International**, through its microfinance arm **Vision Fund International**, is expecting to deploy \$172 million for recovery loans for rural and urban microbusinesses, expanding loans to savings groups, immediate liquidity for microfinance operations, and investment in digital data and mobile banking to reduce in-person contact in lending practices.

Annex: FBO COVID-19 Response “Fact Sheets”

COVID-19 response summaries includes information collected from the following strategic FBO stakeholders:

- Association Conseil de la Paix Comoros
- Asociacion Civil Unidos por los Ninos
- BIFERD DRC
- Bread for the World
- Buddhist Global Relief
- Caribbean and African Leadership Conference
- Catholic Medical Mission Board
- Catholic Relief Services
- Catholic Relief Services COVID-19 Prevention Response by Country
- Central Union Mission
- Centro Cultural y Cooperacion Equatoriano Irani
- Centro del Muchacho Trabajador Ecuador
- Christian Aid
- Christian Aid Malawi
- Christian Aid Nigeria
- Christian Connections for International Health
- Cordaid
- Corus International
- Conseil National des Religions pour la Paix RD-Congo
- CSAAE Nigeria
- Episcopal Relief & Development
- Global Impact Charity Partner Responses
- Global Network of Religions for Children Colombia
- Iglesia Evangélica Ecuador
- Islamic Relief USA
- IsraAID
- Joint Learning Initiative
- LDS Charities
- Misesan Cara
- Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights
- PIRON Global
- Puerta de Esperanza Guatemala
- ReLink Global Health
- Rwanda Children
- Salesian Missions
- Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement Sri Lanka
- Search for Justice Pakistan
- Shanti Ashram India
- Strength in Diversity Development Center Nigeria
- Tearfund
- Tearfund COVID-19 Global Response Strategy
- The Vatican
- USAID COVID-19 Resources for Faith and Community Leaders and Organizations
- USAID: Faith-Based Organizations Responding to COVID-19 April 2020
- Vision Fund International
- Vision Fund’s Response to COVID-19
- World Faiths Development Dialogue
- World Health Organization: Practical considerations and recommendations for religious leaders and faith-based communities in the context of COVID-19
- World Hope International
- World Relief
- World Relief Malawi
- World Renew
- World Vision COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan
- World Vision
- World Vision Chile
- World Without Orphans