



Dear Caritas Friends,

04/05/2020

### **COVID-19 - Sitrep#4**

On behalf of Caritas Jerusalem kindly find sitrep #4 regarding COVID-19.

The Israeli government has significantly eased the lockdown; shops, companies and schools are gradually reopening. The Palestinian Authority has introduced limited easing of travel restrictions in the West Bank. These measures allowed us to resume our work in the West Bank and enabled the staff from HQ- Jerusalem to enter Ramallah for the first time in two months. In addition, 8,500 workers from the West Bank were permitted to enter Jerusalem yesterday which gives some financial relief to the families that were badly affected by the closure of the borders.

Both governments will lift the remaining restrictions if the number of infections remains low.

- As of 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020, in Palestine, the total number of cases diagnosed with COVID 19 are 522; two persons died, and 106 patients have recovered.
- There are no reported new cases in Gaza, Gazans who return from Egypt must enter quarantine for 14 days.
- Israel's Ministry of Health officially reported a total of 16,208 cases and 232 deaths with 9,749 patients recovered.
- In Israel and Palestine people are adhering to social distancing and wearing of masks.

### **Caritas Jerusalem activities**

- Caritas Jerusalem contacted all Catholic priests in Palestine to enquire about the needs of poor families in their parishes. In response we provided 460 families with food parcels coordinated by our Youth Officer and volunteers.
- In Gaza, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, we resumed our Mobile Medical services and the Health Centre continues to offer a range of specialist primary health care services.
- In Gaza the MoH held meetings with other health care providers, including Caritas, to prepare for a coordinated response in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak. We prepared a Contingency Plan to be activated if the virus spreads. The Plan includes cessation of current outreach work, continuation of medical services in the Health Centre and activation of three Mobile Medical Teams to provide 24-hour service to treat non-Covid-19 patients in their homes. The Gaza Strip would be divided into zones with Caritas serving Gaza city and other NGO health care providers serving other areas.

- Caritas Jerusalem approached some of its partners to assist us in intervening in West Bank with food and hygiene coupons. Our partners were very generous, and their solidarity will enable us to help 400 needy families in the West Bank.
- When we were informed through MONA about the COVID-19 Response Fund (CRF) initiated by Pope Francis and set up by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, we applied through CI for further funds to intervene in the West Bank and Gaza. The team in CI were very helpful in guiding us through the application which entails food baskets, hygiene kits, hot meals for lonely senior citizens, educational games for children and awareness raising radio spots with a free hotline for psychosocial and medical consultations both in Gaza and the West Bank. We are happy that this proposal was approved.

Both interventions will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May which will allow us to have an integrated approach to help the poor. We are truly grateful to you, our partners, those of you who contributed to the appeal during this extraordinary time where the need is not local but global, and to all of you who support us by your friendship and prayers.

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