

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028



FOREWORD

The world today is changing rapidly, and we find ourselves in an age of uncertainty. Amid the ongoing climate crisis, the multiplication of war and aggression, the increased concentration of wealth and the erosion of democracy, we are witness to increased human suffering. Ever more people are displaced from their homelands, facing hunger and food insecurity and losing faith in democratic structures and spaces for civic participation.

Our organization exists, fundamentally, to pursue integral human development and peace. These are both rich concepts, requiring wholistic views of both the challenges we face and the solutions that allow people not just to live, but to thrive, and that do not just at meet basic needs but establish right relationships on the local and global scales.

Unfortunately, the economic and political colonialism that has characterized international relations for the past 250 years continues today, increasingly repackaged in “green transition” terms. Corporate-backed “green energy” solutions to the crisis of our planet often reinforce consumption instead of reducing it. They also entail modes of mineral extraction exploit and impoverish peoples, drive down labour standards, perpetuate land conflicts and ruin ecosystems around the world.

Competition for resources such as land and water and changing food production patterns as a result of climate change are forcing the displacement and altering the livelihoods of many people. Conflict, aggression and violence are becoming more common as competition increases. We see increased polarization, identity politics and forms of communication devoid of real spaces for listening and discernment.



FOREWORD (cont'd)

Amid these challenges, we have lived some of our own in these last years, as Canadians and as members of this organization. So, we have intentionally slowed down in these past 18 months to consult, to listen, to discuss, to discern.

As the Church has prepared and held is Synod on synodality to look at how she will face the world today, we have used synodal processes to reflect on how our organization can face the social, political and economic challenges it is confronted with.

Our partners remain a source of inspiration, motivation, wisdom and learning. Their courage and leadership in advancing alternative systems that promote human dignity are essential in the pursuit of justice and peace.

Our networks have been places of invaluable support and sharing as we face new global realities together. We have reinforced our place in this collective of movements working to make our world a better place.

We are recentring our values so that we can effectively bring God's love, caring, justice and peace to the centre of what we do and to the world we live in.

We are excited to continue this journey together.

In solidarity,



Carl Héту

Carl Héту,
Executive Director



INTRODUCTION



Dear friends, members, donors and supporters,

After 18 months of consultation and rebuilding, we are excited to present a way forward. After the triple crisis of the financial downturn, the partner review and the COVID-19 pandemic, our 2022 Orientation Assembly gave us a clear mandate for renewal.

This strategic plan is built on the learnings from an extensive consultation process, including three rounds of progressive consultation within our movement, a survey of 97 partner and ally organizations, 11 sharing circles with 24 partners, and a year of discussions among the staff and national council. By this method, we have started a process of discernment that will continue through this five-year plan to ensure that our foundations are updated and relevant, and to set ourselves up for success into the future.

This strategic plan is a plan for renewal. It therefore starts with a rearticulation of the mission, vision and values that have carried us since 1967, to create a strong platform on which we can unite and grow into the future. This plan challenges us to ensure that our movement is a strong, inclusive, and vibrant sign of hope in the world. This plan tasks us to reclaim our prophetic voice by putting forward a stronger advocacy approach, by reestablishing frameworks on our priority themes, and by increasing our knowledge and capacities at all levels. This plan calls us to better demonstrate the impacts of our partnerships and of our movement through a more focused approach to issues and through increased communication internally and to the public. This plan calls for us to be intentional about living our values at the local, regional, national and international levels, which will require a revision of policies, practices, structures, priorities and habits.

Some of this work has already begun. Our National Council is completing a restructuring of our democratic processes and our management team has been studying and preparing organizational, fundraising and collaboration strategies. We have been focusing on generative processes and clarifying our roles and complementarities, while our members have carried on the work of pursuing justice for our partners through our campaigns.

Our dedication to our mission and values remains unwavering, and we are enthusiastic about undertaking this collective effort.

Join us.



Brenda Arakaza,
President of the National
Council

OUR MISSION

Development and Peace – Caritas Canada addresses the root causes of poverty, oppression, and inequality by working with partners in the Global South and by mobilizing Canadians in the common struggle for justice and dignity. We champion women and social movements as key agents of lasting change.



WHO WE ARE

Development and Peace – Caritas Canada, the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada, is a democratic movement for global solidarity rooted in Catholic Social Teaching.

OUR VISION

Our human family living on a healthy planet in dignity, solidarity, justice, and peace.

OUR VALUES

Our values are at the heart of who we are and what we do. We will courageously live and promote these values in all aspects of our work :



DIGNITY

We believe in the inherent dignity of the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God. We work for Integral Human Development, which is concerned with the social, economic, political, and ecological wellbeing of each person.



THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

We believe those who have been impoverished by unjust systems are powerful actors for social change. We listen to, amplify, and join their voices. We prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized as we pursue the common good so that no one is left out.



PARTICIPATION

We believe all persons are entitled to participate in community and in decisions that affect their lives. We encourage and enable people to be protagonists – active players in creating a world where all can thrive.



INTEGRITY

We believe we are accountable to those who place their confidence in us to accomplish our mission: our members, local communities, partners, donors, and institutional funders. We manage the resources entrusted to us with transparency, sharing our learnings and our successes.



SOLIDARITY

We believe in the interconnection and interdependence of the whole human family. We walk side-by-side with all who struggle for justice, taking up our cause together. We share the joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the women and men of our time, and in particular those who are impoverished and marginalized by unjust systems, as we think and act in the spirit of community.



OUR APPROACHES

We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.

– *Laudato Si'*, 139

PARTNERSHIP

Partnership, for us, is a process and a relationship that requires a dialogue based on trust, mutuality, and respect. We work in partnership with communities, local organizations, and social movements to promote alternatives to unjust structures and ensure real, systemic change. We give particular attention to the interconnections of development work, humanitarian aid, and peacebuilding.

EDUCATION AND MOBILISATION

Informed by the work of our global partners, we draw connections showing how the actions of citizens, companies, and the government of Canada affect communities abroad. Through our campaigns and actions, our thousands of members across Canada engage the public by raising awareness about the root causes of injustice and inviting their communities to take action in solidarity with others around the world.

WOMEN AT THE HEART OF CHANGE

We recognize the distinct way women are affected by poverty, oppression, and violence. We also recognize the lasting benefits for families, communities, and countries when women actively participate in leadership and decision making. We work for the recognition of women's rights and voices. We join women in transforming unequal power relationships so that they can overcome the barriers they face to exercising their full role in society.

ADVOCACY

In connection with our partners, networks, and allies, we explore and promote alternatives to systems that exploit human beings and the environment, advancing the way we see and understand the world. We believe Canada has unique responsibilities and opportunities in our global system, and so we advance policies, programs, and positions that promote the dignity of every person and work toward the common good.

Priority 1

BE A DYNAMIC MOVEMENT

Development and Peace – Caritas Canada is not just an organization that supports international development, it is a movement of people living in solidarity who pursue, together, a more just world. We must ensure that we create a space at our table for everyone who shares our vision and values, and that we are ready to join at others' tables as well. We need to be skilled to organize our work, and ensure the democratic nature is always a strong asset of our movement so that we can pursue our mission with passion, efficacy, and unity. We must strengthen our collaboration with the Church in Canada and with civil society groups to ensure ongoing shared learning and strength in local and global justice movements.

Strategy 1

Diversify the movement

- We will increase the visibility of Development and Peace – Caritas Canada in the wider public to increase awareness of our approach and to invite others to join in our mission.
- We will seek to better understand our reach and learn where we can grow and do better at making space at our table for all who wish to join us.

Strategy 2

Reinforce the capacity of the movement

- We will foster a culture of encounter, which transforms our hearts, and allows us to build community. We seek to ensure all feel welcome, valued, and empowered to grow and use their talents in pursuit of a more just world.
- We will increase skills training and intentionally make space for the diversity of voices in our movement to participate in the democratic spaces of the movement.

Strategy 3

Participate in the Church 'going forth'

- We will strengthen our relationships with the dioceses of Canada and seek to work more collaboratively with the local churches in our pursuit of the dignity of all of God's creation.
- We will actively participate with civil society groups who are pursuing a more just world to learn, dialogue, and create relationship where our vision, values, and objectives align.



Priority 2

BE A PARTNER IN SOLIDARITY

We strive to live in solidarity with those who are been impoverished, oppressed, and excluded by the historic and ongoing social, political, economic, and ecological systems. We live this solidarity in three ways – by supporting partners who are organizing their communities in the pursuit of alternatives to unjust systems, by educating and mobilizing Canadians on the causes of poverty and solutions that support our partners, and by amplifying the call for justice to decision-makers who can implement laws, policies, practices, and standards that promote human dignity for all.



Strategy 1

Advance integral human development through structural change

- We will consolidate program frameworks that address our priority themes to focus our impact, share learnings and advancements, and ensure collaborative and wholistic approaches that provide for the flourishing of individuals and communities.
- We will pursue relationships with our partners that seek to overcome the power imbalances created by unjust social, economic, political, and ecological systems, and allow mutual trust, learning and support to flourish in real solidarity.
- We will improve our demonstrations of the impact of the projects we support to reinforce the efficacy of our approach, to increase awareness of alternative approaches, and to better invite others to join in this work.

Strategy 2

Nourish the engagement of the Canadian population

- We will seek to raise awareness among the Canadian population of the causes of poverty and how we can actively create change through campaigns, online presence, engagement with national and local media, and word of mouth.
- We will mobilize as many Canadians as possible in actions that create a more just world through raising their voice, financially supporting partners, and engaging as active citizens.

Strategy 3

Promote systemic change in the service of human dignity

- We will use our prophetic voice to influence public discourse and governmental decisions by advocating for just social, political, economic, and ecological systems by strengthening our research base, advancing alternatives proposed by and with our partners, and ensuring that the voices mobilized in our campaigns are heard by decision makers who can make change.
- We will engage with partners, networks, coalitions, and allies to raise our common call for justice, endorsing the work of others and participating in collaborative projects that advance dignity for all members of our human family.

Priority 3

BE AN INSPIRING ORGANIZATION

Inspiring confidence among our donors, institutional funders, and supports is essential to our institutional reputation. Strengthening our organization's capacity to serve our mission through financial growth will allow us to better plan long-term programmes, invite donor and members into active solidarity, and create stability through diverse sources of funding. Inspiring our movement, attracting, and retaining talent to serve our mission, and ensuring cohesion and harmony as both a movement and an organization will allow us to grow our impact in pursuit of our mission.

Strategy 1

Ensuring financial growth

- We will increase institutional revenue through strengthening of our philanthropy strategy and capacities, to allow more profound engagement with those who support our mission in financial means and pursue an annually balanced budget.
- We will diversify our funding sources and the way in which donors can engage with us to allow greater ease of participation in our mission for new sectors of the public and enhance the creative capacity of the organization in the pursuit of alternative solutions to unjust systems.

Strategy 2

Foster an engaging culture

- We will build on our learnings to ensure participatory processes in organization, seeking synodality, diversity, collaboration, and joy as we work towards our vision together.
- We will ensure clear and open communication between the sectors of our movement, strengthening our instances of governance, our policies, and our practices to ensure our values are a constant guide in action in all aspects of our work.

