

IRISH CHARITIES LAUNCH GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS APPEAL

Six of Ireland's leading international aid charities have joined forces to form the Irish Emergency Alliance, in response to the worsening global Covid-19 pandemic and in a bid to save lives in some of the poorest countries in the world.



The Irish Emergency Alliance is made up of ActionAid, Christian Aid, Plan International, Self Help Africa, Tearfund and World Vision, and between them the aid agencies have programmes in 85 different countries.

The Irish Emergency Alliance aims to raise money from the Irish public and respond in countries facing rising coronavirus cases and struggling to cope with the impact of conflict and displacement, widespread poverty, increased rates of hunger and poor health care.

The coronavirus appeal will focus on vulnerable communities in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, all coping with the impact of widescale conflict, as well as Ethiopia, Kenya, Lebanon and the Rohingya refugee camps of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

"These seven countries are home to more than 17 million refugees and displaced people. For people living in refugee camps or slums it is nearly impossible to practice physical distancing, while a lack of soap and water in many homes makes it harder to prevent the spread of coronavirus," noted Helen Keogh, Chair of the Irish Emergency Alliance.

Money raised by the Irish Emergency Alliance's coronavirus appeal will go towards food, water and medical care as well as providing soap,

masks and vital information to prevent the spread of the virus.

ALLIANCE OF SIX AID AGENCIES

The Alliance is made up of ActionAid, Christian Aid, Plan International, Self Help Africa, Tearfund and World Vision. Between them the aid agencies have programmes in 85 different countries, giving them the global presence, expertise and experience required to respond quickly to this and future crises.

Helen Keogh noted that the unprecedented scale of the global coronavirus pandemic motivated the charities to join forces and help those most in need. "We have all seen the devastating impact of the coronavirus crisis in Ireland, so you can imagine how much harder it is for people living in countries without enough doctors or nurses let alone enough ICU beds or ventilators.

"The situation is even more critical in countries already struggling with the impact of conflict and buckling under the strain of massive refugee and displacement crises," she said.

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"A lack of widespread testing in many



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developing countries suggests that we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg of the true scale of the global coronavirus crisis. What is clear is that some of the world's poorest people are being pushed even further into poverty and disruptions to farming and supply chains risk severe food shortages.

"By working together, the Alliance will reach some of the world's most vulnerable people, giving them the supplies and information needed to keep safe from the virus."

Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy TD, said that through the Irish Aid programme, his department has already provided over €16m to the the member agencies of the Irish Emergency Alliance for this year to provide humanitarian and development assistance to the world's most vulnerable communities.

The Irish Emergency Alliance is modelled on similar joint appeal coalitions that operate successfully in the UK and across many European countries. By working together, the Alliance aims to reduce fundraising costs to make donations stretch even further and has pledged to work together in response to future humanitarian crises across the globe.

Donations can be made on www.irishemergencyalliance.org, by calling 1800-939-979 or by texting IEA to 50300 to give €4.