

# Alliance2015

## COVID-19

### Advocacy Messages



#### Our EU in a time of COVID-19: a call for renewed leadership on **inclusivity**, **sustainability** and **resilience** building

Eight months into the global pandemic of COVID-19, Alliance2015, as a strategic collaboration of non-governmental European development and humanitarian aid actors, has remained active across its over 90 countries of operation. Daily we witness and try to respond to the very varied and still unfolding impacts of the pandemic and economic lockdowns on countries already handling a range of deep shocks and stresses. **While we acknowledge that European Union (EU) Member States reached an agreement on**

**the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the EU Recovery Package 'Next Generation EU' (NGEU) at their special European Summit in Brussels in July, we strongly regret that none of the funds of the NGEU will be allocated outside the EU and that the funds foreseen for development cooperation (NDICI) under Heading VI have been reduced, in comparison to the initial proposal by the European Commission in May.** Our concerns about adequate funding through appropriate aid modalities to meet increased humanitarian needs, reaching the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and guaranteeing and deepening European and international solidarity in the face of this new and pre-existing crises, are consequently increasing. As a globally active, European-based network, we call for specific upgrades to European Union global leadership, as follows:



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## **International cooperation and collaboration: a scarce but vital resource**

The pandemic is a crisis layered on top of multiple crises, exacerbating complex systemic failures including ecosystem degradation, and an exploitation and extraction-oriented economic model which drives widening extreme inequalities. Apart from the immediate impact the pandemic has on public health, the mid- and longer-term effects of the economic downturn on livelihoods, education, women's empowerment, democracy building, and food security are worrisome.

**Crucial advances, collectively achieved over decades, cannot be lost and must be addressed through global leadership.**

This global crisis must open the door to strengthen international and European solidarity and make the world a fairer, more equitable and more sustainable place where no one is left behind. The recovery phase should be an opportunity to build back better; building greener and more sustainable and resilient economies and societies, thereby helping to reduce social inequalities and counteracting advancing climate change.

Global pandemics demand global solidarity and



connected global responses, just as delivering the SDGs does. As the EU is a global leader, its Member States and the European Parliament must move rapidly to:

- **Avoid** a funding gap which may further exacerbate the impacts of the crisis and find a rapid agreement on the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) to enable a timely response.
- **Ensure** that the fight against hunger and poverty is prioritized in the NDICI programming process and that civil society organisations are involved at all stages in the programming, implementation, and monitoring of the new instrument.
- **Ensure** a fully funded COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP).



Myanmar, Phone Line Counselling helpline, by Helvetas and PIN (through LIFT fund)

## Responding to exacerbated impacts for the **furthest behind**

**COVID-19 has arrived at a time of unprecedented global need, with a record 168 million people already requiring humanitarian assistance at the beginning of this year.** New crises multiply and are driven primarily by armed conflict, economic shocks and climate events, such as the desert locust infestation in Asia and the Horn of Africa, or the ongoing conflict in Yemen, leaving millions acutely food insecure. Vulnerable communities with underlying health, food security and nutrition deficiencies, limited basic infrastructure, particularly unreliable access to clean water, safe health care, or basic education, disrupted

livelihoods, and those already facing disasters are some of those hit hardest, and their numbers will grow as the economic shock of coronavirus lockdowns play out. **Even before COVID-19, 820 million people were experiencing hunger, with 135 million of those facing acute food insecurity.** In the current situation, the World Food Programme predicts that the number of acutely food insecure people may double to 270 million, an 82 percent increase since 2019, which in turn would see over one billion people going hungry globally. **Oxfam warns that by the end of this year, 12.000 people a day could die from hunger linked to COVID-19, potentially more than will die from the disease itself.** Inevitably those facing structural discrimination for reasons of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, class, disability, legal status



or statelessness are further marginalised by the pandemic and restrictive government measures to slow the spread of the virus. **Income losses as a result of COVID-19 are expected to exceed US \$220 billion in developing countries and the World Bank expects remittances to plummet by US \$110 billion in 2020.** With an estimated 55 percent of the global population having no access to social protection, these losses will deeply and specifically affect the poorest and most vulnerable communities. The closure of borders, quarantine measures, interruptions in food production and restrictions to the market restrain people's access to sufficient, nutritious food. Those already struggling will be pushed further into poverty, including producers, small and medium-sized enterprises and informal workers, whose livelihoods

and survival depend on functioning markets. In the face of these challenges, it is vital that the current and upcoming EU programming cycles intelligently and rapidly link the multiple sectors required to ensure long-term human and planetary health, social protection, and human development. **The EU should lead and encourage all donors to allocate additional resources across the range of proven, effective actors and instruments to mitigate secondary impacts of COVID-19 now and in the future.** Any investments towards the recovery of the global economy should focus on accelerating the transition to sustainable, climate-resilient and inclusive societies.

Iraq, COVID-19 awareness campaign, supported by MADAD fund, by Acted, PIN and Welthungerhilfe.



Specifically, the European Commission should:

- **Establish** implementation plans for high-potential new policies and strategies such as the European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU-Africa Strategy which explicitly:
  - *coherently* link internal and external action,
  - *include* specific approaches and resources to reach identified groups of the most vulnerable populations, responding to their urgent needs and strengthening their resilience,
  - *include* markers to ensure actions reinforce climate resilience, increase social protection and reduce inequalities of income and opportunity.
- **Guarantee** that voices of local communities and civil society are heard at all levels in a truly participatory programming process, and that they are included as key partners in the programme design, funding and implementation, to ensure interventions are evidence- and experience-based.
- **Ensure** that adequate amounts of grant not loan-based funding are made available in the most vulnerable context.
- **Focus** on fostering community resilience by strengthening both longer-term as well as adaptive programming, making significant use of the crisis modifier approach.



Covid-19 Awareness raising campaign by Alliance2015 members in Guatemala

# About Alliance2015

Alliance2015 is a strategic partnership of eight European non-governmental organisations, with a shared commitment to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and a strategic focus on active collaboration and resilience-building. We aim to fight poverty more effectively by working together through joint programming in the least developed countries and influencing and campaigning together at the European Union level. Between us, Alliance2015 members have a presence in more than 90 countries, spending EUR 1 billion globally to reach our goals on sustainable development in communities around the world. As the COVID-19 crisis has unfolded, we remain operational in all our countries, adapting and expanding existing SDG-focused programming to support response and recovery.

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