

Caritas applies Church teachings to furthering women's participation and leadership.

As part of a month of action on empowering women, Caritas Internationalis has launched a new booklet "Equality, Encounter, Renewal: A Caritas commitment to women's leadership and participation", downloadable from an online hub featuring a variety of webinars and stories.

Within the booklet, Holy Scriptures and Catholic Social Teaching values are accompanied by testimonies from across the world and examples of good practice from across the Caritas Confederation. The aim is to increase understanding of Church teachings in relation to women's leadership among Caritas staff and volunteers, the local Church and communities, and other stakeholders in the fields of advocacy, humanitarian response, and integral human development.

Kirsty Robertson CEO of Caritas Australia said, "These new resources harness Church teachings to strengthen our understanding of how we – as individuals, communities, and organisations – can support women's leadership and participation. Launched in time for International Women's Day, it provides a great opportunity for faith-based organisations to reflect on their role in the empowerment of women."

The booklet launched via a hybrid event hosted by Stephanie MacGillivray, Officer Promoting Women's Leadership at Caritas Internationalis, with opening remarks by Secretary General, Alistair Dutton. Testimonies were given by Caritas Mauritius, Caritas South Africa, and Caritas Mexicana, alongside The Handmaids of the Divine Redeemer (HDR) Sisters in Ghana, and with regional representation from Caritas Middle East and North Africa.

As part of a month of action on women's participation and leadership, Caritas Australia CEO Kirsty Robertson also spoke on a Caritas Internationalis International Women's Day Conference "Women Leaders, Towards a Brighter Future", which is available to view via the online hub.

On the 19th of March, Caritas Internationalis will also co-host an event at the United Nations' 68th Commission on the Status of Women. The "Fragile Contexts Strong Women" event is set to demonstrate the commitment of the Catholic Church and the Caritas Confederation to the empowerment of women through addressing poverty and strengthening institutions.

"Poverty has a female face, but the face of hope and change is also that of a woman. I am proud to be part of the Caritas Confederation which values the voice, agency and presence of women at all levels" concluded Kirsty Robertson.

All resources can be accessed online at: <https://www.caritas.org/equality-encounter-renewal-2024/>

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