

One of the most important aims of *Commitment for Life's* work in Zimbabwe is to strengthen the resilience of poor and marginalised women and men, helping them access to inclusive markets for their wellbeing. But the arrival of COVID-19 has deepened the challenges faced by workers in the informal economy.

Workers and their families are going hungry, as many are dependent on daily sales of their wares in order to survive. Also, food reserves have diminished significantly.

As the pandemic widens, there is an urgent need for the government to establish sustainable protection safety nets for informal workers. This net should be set up not only for the duration of COVID-19, but as a way to ensure that violence, harassment and insecurity are eliminated permanently.

The Zimbabwe government might want to examine Christian Aid's carefully designed and constructed policies in this regard. Its 'Participatory Market Systems Development' (PMSD) approach is designed to help deliver inclusive markets programmes that reduce poverty on a large scale, while striving to protect the environment. The inclusive markets programme helps to bring systemic change and transformation for poor women and men.

The programme focuses on three selected value chains including horticulture, sorghum and organic herbs and spices.

Commitment for Life in partnership with Christian Aid is guided by the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). This standard has nine commitments to help organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response improve the effectiveness of their assistance. Christian Aid applies the CHS across their entire programme.

Prayer

Loving God, though we may be separated in body, we are one in spirit; set apart, but drawn together to magnify your name.

Thank you for your grace in Jesus, helping us to live in the fullness of life that you desire for all.

May your will be done on earth as in heaven, helping us to turn from fear; forgive all debt, and set the prisoner free.

In the light of Christ's name, we pray. *AMEN*

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