



## **SECRETARIAT FOR ACCESS TO RIGHTS AND EQUITY (SARE)**

### **COVID-19 NEWSLETTER MARCH-APRIL 2020**

**“Coronavirus is not some grand leveler: it is an amplifier of existing inequalities, injustices and insecurities” Owen Jones**

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The **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**, declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020, has affected 185 countries and territories. **A total of 2,295,456 persons have been infected** with the coronavirus and 207,583 have died. In the Americas, with the confirmation of the first case in Haiti, on March 19, COVID-19 has reached all countries of the region where 1,140,520 persons have contracted the virus, and 64,892 died.

**The serious consequences of the pandemic have tested the response capacity of all governments**, revealing the weaknesses of public health systems, disaster emergency alert systems, social protection systems and social development policies. In this context and in the most unequal region of the world, the health emergency is also a social and economic pandemic. This is because in the Americas different groups in situations of vulnerability coexist and they are subject to different levels of discrimination and face enormous gaps in access to economic, social, cultural and political rights. **If these gaps were already present before COVID-19, they are more evident during this emergency, making vulnerable groups the first and main victims of the pandemic.**

The mission of **the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE)** of the Organization of American States is to build more inclusive and equitable societies, promoting access to rights, the empowerment of groups in a situation of vulnerability, and citizen participation.

To attend to this mission and to the “Integrated Response of the General Secretariat of the OAS to the COVID-19 crisis”, **SARE has set up initiatives to facilitate the exchange of information, tools, public policy experiences, good practices and lessons learned to help member States prioritize** equality and non-discrimination principles. These initiatives are designed with a rights-based approach in order to address the serious consequences of the pandemic.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS, FORUMS AND WEBINARS ADDRESSING COVID-19


 [Virtual Roundtable “The post COVID-19 new “normal” and persons with disabilities: towards disability-inclusive responses” \(available in Spanish\)](#)

**Date:** 14 de Mayo de 2020

**Time:** 2pm (EST)

**Facebook Live:** [HERE](#)

This webinar will collect information from key government actors, as well as multilateral and civil society organizations, on **States’/Governments’ responses to the post-COVID-19 world for persons with disabilities** with a rights-based approach that reduces gaps and avoids dynamics that normalize inequalities.

 [Facebook Live “Youth and Inclusion in the COVID-19 context” \(available in Spanish\)](#)

**Date:** May, TBC.

The Facebook Live event will promote a **discussion among its participants, specifically those that are in vulnerable groups:** youth with disabilities, youth of African Descent, Indigenous youth and LGBTQI youth, as well as those living in poverty, among others, **to learn how they have been affected by the pandemic, and to collect their proposals for governments from a transversal and inclusive perspective.** The question that will spark the discussion is: **If youth were to run the government, how would they do it?**

 [Meetings of Experts from the National Councils on Disability](#)

**Date:** May 29, 2020.

The objective of these meetings is to **exchange ideas and proposals about this emergency and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the post-COVID-19 world** emphasizing good practices in inclusive policies implemented by member states. There will be two meetings, one for Spanish-speaking countries and another meeting for English-speaking countries.



## MEETINGS, FORUMS AND WEBINARS – THROUGH MAY 2020



### [Exercise of the Right to Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

**Date:** March 24, 2020.

The webinar organized in collaboration with the O'Neill Institute of Georgetown University discussed **the formulation of public health policies with a rights-based approach focusing on the different responses to COVID-19 from the perspective of vulnerable groups**, persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, persons of African Descent and Indigenous peoples. The video of this webinar is available [HERE](#). Please turn on subtitles in other languages by turning on closed captions and selecting the preferred language in the video settings.



### [COVID-19 and equity challenges in the Americas \(Spanish\)](#)

**Date:** March 31, 2020.

This webinar organized by the Venezuelan organizations Fundación de Derechos Humanos de Los Llanos and Red Justicia y Libertad addressed **the social panorama in the region, mapping the main challenges in terms of poverty and inequality, with particular emphasis on the effects of the COVID19 pandemic on groups in situations of vulnerability.**

For more information click [HERE](#)



### [UN75 Seminar: Promoting Human Rights, Justice, and Humanitarian Action in the Americas](#)

**Date:** April 16, 2020.

The Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy organized this webinar in collaboration with the Stimson Center, Global Challenges Foundation, Together First, UN2020, Igarapé Institute, Adelphi, One Earth Future Foundation's PASO Program in Colombia, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), and Universidad Externado de Colombia. **The seminar addressed the role of the OAS in human rights promotion and sought to make visible people's rights violations in the region.**

For more information click [HERE](#).



### [Equity and Inclusion during times of Pandemic \(Spanish\)](#)

**Date:** April 21, 2020.

Youth & Democracy (USA) organized this webinar during which youth from the region **discussed the main challenges regarding access to human rights, particularly, the humanitarian challenges that States face in managing migratory movements.**

For more information click [HERE](#)



**Inter-American Meeting of High-level Authorities on Policies for Afro-descendant Populations**

**Date:** April 24, 2020.

This extraordinary meeting of the Inter-American Network of High Authorities on Policies for Afro-descendant Populations (RIAFRO, for its Spanish acronym) organized by the Department of Social Inclusion, convened ten countries of the region (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru) **with the objective of mapping the main effects in the context of the pandemic, and to propose concrete actions for member States in cooperation with multilateral organizations to protect their rights.**

For more information click [HERE](#).



**Vulnerable Populations and COVID-19 (Spanish)**

**Date:** April 28, 2020.

The webinar organized by the Peruvian organizations ANKAWA Internacional and Centro de Investigación y Defensa de Poblaciones Vulnerables **analyzed the main public policy responses in social matters to protect the rights of groups in situations of vulnerability, as well as the main human rights regulatory frameworks in this area, such as the “Protocol of San Salvador”.**

For more information click [HERE](#).

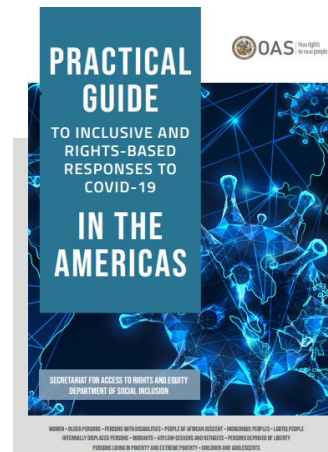


**FEATURED RESOURCE**

Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity. **“Practical Guide to Inclusive and Rights-Based Responses to COVID-19 in the Americas”.**

The objective of the guide is to support member States in their efforts to respond to the pandemic by offering tools to decision-makers that take into account the specific needs of groups in situations of vulnerability.

The guide is available in English [HERE](#).





## INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES

- March 19, 2020. Interview with Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian, Un Mundo Sin Mordaza. “**The Americas: Equity and Inclusion**”, available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- March 20, 2020. Muñoz-Pogossian, Betilde. “**Women Are on the First Line of Defense Against COVID-19**”- Caracas Chronicles, available [HERE](#).
- March 26, 2020. Muñoz-Pogossian, Betilde. “**COVID-19 and its impact on women**”- El Nacional, available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- April 8, 2020. Muñoz-Pogossian, Betilde. “**COVID-19’s Impact on the Most Vulnerable**”- Caracas Chronicles, available [HERE](#).
- April 9, 2020. Interview with Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian, Voice of America (VOA). “**OAS concerned about vulnerable groups in Latin America during pandemic**,” available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- April 9, 2020. Muñoz-Pogossian, Betilde. “**Responding to COVID-19: OAS Proposals**”- El Nacional, available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- April 9, 2020. Muñoz-Pogossian, Betilde & Pamela Molina. “**Promoting Inclusive and Rights-Based responses to COVID-19 in the Americas: Until Inclusion becomes a custom!**” Available [HERE](#).
- April 10, 2020. Interview with Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian, (EFE News). “**Latin America and the Caribbean will collectively face poverty through COVID-19**,” available [HERE](#).
- April 17, 2020. Interview with Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian, Voice of America (VOA). “**OEA y grupos vulnerables desafían COVID-19**,” available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- May 1, 2020: Interview with Pamela Molina, En Perspectiva, de México. “**Practical Guide to Inclusive and Rights-Based Responses to COVID-19 in the Americas**”, available in Spanish [HERE](#).
- April 3, 2020. Roberto Rojas and others. People of African Descent in Latin America: **The Challenges of Covid-19**. El País, América, available in Spanish [HERE](#)



## REPOSITORY OF POLICIES AND INITIATIVES IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS



### Launching of the “Post COVID-19: OAS Portal for Consultations, Forums, and Repository”

The objective of the [Portal](#) is to be a participatory and democratic space where everyone has the opportunity to express their ideas on how we can shape the post-COVID-19 world so that more people access more rights beyond the pandemic.

Participants can propose ideas and initiatives that may later become real projects to be implemented with a priority objective: to guarantee more rights for all people, beyond the



pandemic.

For more information click [HERE](#).

- **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC):** [COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)
- **WORLD BANK (WB):** [World Bank Group’s Operational Response to COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) – Projects List.](#)
- **INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF):** [Policy Responses to COVID-19.](#)
- **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO):** [Country policy responses.](#)
- **ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD):** [OPSI COVID-19 Innovative Response Tracker.](#)
- **CITIBANK:** [COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)
- **UNITED NATIONS (UN):** [COVID-19: Bachelet urges States to take extra steps to include people with disabilities.](#)

### FOLLOW SARE’S WORK:

**Website:** <http://www.oas.org/en/sare/default.asp>

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