



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM) Announces Funding for Safeguarding Initiatives in the Global South

PCPM approves 230,000 Euros in grants as part of its Memorare Initiative.

Funds will provide training and qualified staff in several countries.

Conferences of Bishops and Religious sign cooperation agreement with PCPM

Vatican City, December 21, 2023. ----- At a recent meeting of the Executive Council of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, 230,000 Euros in funding to support several safeguarding initiatives in poorer countries was approved. Resources come from the Memorare Fund, established by the Commission in 2023, to build safeguarding capacity in the Church in the global south.

The purpose of the "Memorare Initiative" is to assist and work with local Churches around the world in training and capacity building in the prevention and protection of children and vulnerable adults. This assistance focuses on three areas: the accompaniment of victims and survivors, the implementation of prevention policies through the development of guidelines and codes of conduct, and the appropriate and timely response to allegations of abuse in accordance with Church law (Vos Estis Lux Mundi article 2).

The Memorare Fund is administered by the Commission with significant support from the Episcopal Conference of Italy.

Projects that were approved to support safeguarding include the following:

- In Paraguay, funds will allow the new Safeguarding Center in Asuncion to hire a designated staff person to conduct a systemic review of policies and practices currently in place throughout the Church, including reporting and assistance services, to see where improvements need to be made.
- In Panama, funds will provide a training program to Church leaders in updating their safeguarding guidelines and establishing a system for victim survivor accompaniment and safeguarding formation.

- A grant to the Association of Members Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) that covers 13 countries in Western African that will provide a series of workshops over the next 2 years for church leadership and safeguarding practitioners. The workshops will focus on policy development, implementation, and review with the goal of providing accessible and comprehensive services to individuals who have experienced abuse, their families and communities.
- A grant to Mauritius to co-sponsor a first Francophone Safeguarding Seminar for Church leadership from French Speaking Africa together with the Bishops Conference of Mauritius. The five-day seminar will include workshops on recent updates to church norms, the role and responsibility of leadership in outreach to victims and survivors, building capacity for the creation of safeguarding systems and structures within local churches.
- A grant to undertake a week-long training program for leadership of CARITAS from 22 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Memoranda of Understanding defining the nature of the collaboration between the Commission and local church bodies have been signed to ensure a one-church approach to safeguarding. They are available [here](#)

The Executive Council is an organ of the Commission that meets monthly to ensure adherence to the Commission’s Strategic Plan and to oversee the work of the personnel. It is comprised of three Rome-based Commissioners, led by the President, who are assisted by personnel and subject-matter experts. According to its internal protocol, the Executive Council approves disbursement from the Memorare Fund [\[see link\]](#) in line with policies established by the Secretariat of the Economy.

Cardinal Seán O’Malley, President of the Commission, said “It is important that all parts of the Church have the resources and personnel necessary to implement and maintain robust safeguarding at all levels of the Church’s life and ministry. We thank those who have provided this support. We are following the direction given to the Commission by Pope Francis "to address inequalities within the Church [for] it is not right that the most prosperous areas of the world should have well-trained and well-funded safeguarding programs." (Francis, Address to the Plenary Assembly of the PCPCM, 5 May 2023).
