



AFRICA/TANZANIA - Today the 1st Integrated Meeting for the Pastoral Care of the Road/Street for the Continent of Africa and Madagascar

Dar-es-Salaam (Agenzia Fides) – In the afternoon, September 11, the 1st Integrated Meeting for the Pastoral Care of the Road/Street for the Continent of Africa and Madagascar, on the theme "The Pastoral Care of the Road/Street: A Walk together" will take place in Dar-es-salaam, Tanzania, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, in collaboration with Tanzania's Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. In a statement sent to Fides Agency it is emphasized that the main objective is to promote initiatives and programs in local churches for the benefit for people who live on or from the road/street, this includes: street women and children, people of no fixed abode, transport workers and those responsible for road safety.

A rough calculation of street children in the world is about 150 million, 40% of whom are homeless and 60% work in the streets to support the family. More than a billion people on the planet do not have adequate housing and 100 million have no housing. Every day, approximately 50 000 people, mostly women and children, die because of inadequate shelter, polluted water and lack of hygiene. About 70 million women and children live in cramped environments so that the smoke of cooking damages their health.

During the meeting, crucial issues will be faced such as the fact that women, even in Africa, forcibly or voluntarily, are victims of new forms of slavery, and the situation of young children and adolescents in the street that comes from the contrasts existing at a household, social and cultural level in the continent. Among the many causes that lead women and children in the street, one notices poverty, family violence, tribal and civil conflicts, superstition, organized crime and exploitation.

Registered participants at the meeting, which ends on September 15, are more than 85 people from 31 nations of the continent. Among them Bishops, priests, men and women religious and lay people who are delegates of the Episcopal Commissions for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, Caritas Internationalis, and religious institutions involved in the pastoral care of the categories of people who live in the street. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 11/09/2012)