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CARITAS NETWORK SUPPORTS RECOVERY AFTER PNG EARTHQUAKE

Caritas Australia with its partners on the ground is responding to the impact of a 7.5 magnitude earthquake which has killed 150 people and has left, according to the UN, 270,000 people including 125,000 children, in need of emergency aid.

Caritas is providing urgent shelter and health support, especially in the form of clean water, sanitation and hygiene support (WASH) as well as trauma counselling.

An outbreak of dengue fever is of particular concern for the local population as are cases of diarrhoea and dysentery. Access to clean water, food and medical resources is still strained and tribal conflict has been exacerbated by these stresses. As a result the numbers of displaced peoples are on the rise and the Papua New Guinean military and security personnel have moved in to protect a number of state owned assets including a hospital in Hela province.

“The Caritas network is working alongside church partners to respond. At the moment some agencies have suspended response efforts due to the escalating conflict. However, the churches are continuing to provide support despite the ongoing challenges. This highlights the importance of the church network in the response,” said Milton Tyotam Kwaipo, Caritas Australia’s Disaster Response and Management Officer, Papua New Guinea.



Locals affected by the earthquake in PNG’s Central Highlands.
Photo: Milton Tyotam Kwaipo

Caritas is additionally investing in rebuilding, with efforts already underway to rebuild schools, hospitals and houses throughout the Central Highlands Region.

Caritas Australia is grateful for the AUD \$1.5 million support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the NZ \$900 000 support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

Caritas Australia is supporting the relief effort in Papua New Guinea through the Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CAN DO) consortium. CAN DO comprises Act for Peace, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency Australia, Anglican Board of Mission, Anglican Overseas Aid, the

Australian Lutheran World Service, Transform Aid International (Baptist World Aid Australia), UnitingWorld, and Caritas Australia.

Responding church agencies include UnitingWorld, Caritas Australia and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). Through the PNG Church partners, Caritas Australia has capacity to reach and support more people affected by the earthquake.

If you would like to assist the people of Papua New Guinea, you can donate to the Caritas Australia Pacific Emergency Appeal by calling 1800 024 413 or by visiting www.caritas.org.au/pacific-appeal

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