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MEDIA RELEASE: World faces most significant increase in hunger in decades

16 July 2021

A report released by the UN this week shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the most significant increase in world hunger in decades, with global hunger increasing last year by an astonishing 18 per cent compared to the year before.

The report estimates that 690 million people are undernourished or going hungry, and a staggering 2 billion people are unable to access enough food or adequate nutritious food year-round.

“The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating on communities that were already living close to the edge,” said Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia.

“We’ve seen how easy it is for food systems to fail – and the devastating long-term impacts for low and middle-income countries.”

“When farmers can’t get to market because of lockdowns, they can’t sell their crops, which means that not only do they not earn enough income for that season, but they can’t invest in seeds and fertilisers for next season.”

“When this happens to enough farmers, entire regions that were previously food secure are put at risk of food shortages and famine because nobody can afford to grow crops.”

An alarming 418 million of those who were malnourished lived in Asia, and were impacted by problems with the supply of local produce in markets, which drove up food prices.

Caritas Australia works with local communities in Asia, Africa, the Middle and the Pacific to support them to maintain food supplies and earn an income during COVID-19.

Visit [caritas.org.au](https://www.caritas.org.au) or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to vulnerable communities globally by donating to our Emergency Response Appeal.

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