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AUSTRALIA

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## **MEDIA RELEASE: Indonesia battles devastating second wave of COVID-9 outbreak**

22 July 2021

Indonesia continues to battle a serious outbreak of COVID-19, which is quickly spiraling out of control as the virulent Delta variant spreads across the nation.

For the past week, Indonesia has averaged over 49,000 new cases a day, and more than 1,000 deaths, figures which are widely believed to be severely underestimating the real impact due to low testing rates and poor contact tracing.

The Indonesian government has implemented restrictions including the closure of shopping centres and a work-from-home order for non-essential workers on the islands of Java and Bali, and in 15 other cities – although this restriction will be re-evaluated on Monday when it is set to expire.

The lockdown restrictions have had a significant impact on locals, as many Indonesians are reliant on informal labour, which puts their livelihoods at risk during extended emergency restrictions.

“There are so many people who work as street hawkers, vendors, shopkeepers, restaurant workers and drivers, which means that they earn their money day-to-day,” says Willy Tan, Caritas Australia’s Program Coordinator for Indonesia.

“This means that when towns and cities shut down, huge numbers of people are out of work and are put in a really vulnerable position where they might not have the savings to be able to feed themselves or their families for the duration of the outbreak.”

“Once you combine this with a health system that is nearly at its breaking point in some regions, and a critical undersupply of health workers, oxygen and drugs, you can see why this second wave of COVID-19 has had such a devastating impact on the country.”

“We’re working with local communities, our partners and the Church network to support vulnerable communities to meet their daily needs during this crisis, as well as support the vaccine rollout and testing.”

“We believe that it’s important to make sure everybody is supported during this crisis, because once this outbreak is over it will only be more challenging to rebuild if people have been plunged into poverty.”

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

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