

### **AID CUTS SIGNAL SHIFT TO AN INSULAR AUSTRALIA**

Caritas Australia has expressed deep disappointment in this year's federal budget, with a fourth consecutive cut to the overseas aid program that sees another \$303.3 million taken from the poor.

This comes at a time when the world is experiencing a range of unprecedented humanitarian crises, with over 20 million people facing starvation in East Africa and Yemen and tens of millions of people fleeing war and persecution in Syria.

Caritas Australia's Head of Advocacy, Negaya Chorley said these humanitarian crises combined with rising inequality and the growing impacts of climate change mean Australian leadership is now more important than ever.

"If people hope to see more peace in our region and the world, then we need to invest in those things that promote peace: health, education, sustainable livelihoods, women's rights, climate action and strong governance," Ms Chorley said.

"By continually slashing our overseas aid program we undermine progress in these areas that are fundamental to human development and stability."

Australia's aid program has played a critical role in supporting tens of millions of people to move out of poverty and live a life of dignity.

"By continually reducing our overseas aid program we undermine regional and global efforts to reduce poverty and promote human flourishing, and limit our collective ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals," Ms Chorley said.

"Given Australia remains one of the wealthiest nations in the OECD, this is especially disappointing. This trend undermines our ability to help end global poverty and it goes against our values.

"As a people we believe in fairness, equality and compassion. This budget is neither fair nor compassionate."

**Caritas media contact:** Nicole Clements on 0408 869 833 or email [caritasmedia@caritas.org.au](mailto:caritasmedia@caritas.org.au).