

MEDIA RELEASE: Over 50,000 displaced in the wake of Indonesian earthquake

24 November 2022

Caritas agencies are responding after over 50,000 people were displaced in the wake of the magnitude 5.6 earthquake that struck Indonesia this week.

The earthquake killed over 260 people, many of them school children, and injured over 1,000. It is the deadliest earthquake in Indonesia since the 2018 Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami and has left extensive damage to buildings including schools, a mosque, boarding school, government office and thousands of homes.

The earthquake was so strong that it was felt in Jakarta, more than 75km away. Warnings have been issued to residents in the affected areas for potential hazards such as landslides and flash floods.

Caritas Australia's partners are responding to support communities who require immediate assistance and assessing the most urgent needs of people impacted by the earthquake including medical services, emergency shelters, sleeping supplies, clean water and food.

While a 5.6 magnitude earthquake would typically be expected to cause only light damage to buildings and other structures, this earthquake caused significant damage and loss of life in Indonesia.

"Inadequate infrastructure can mean that buildings that are not earthquake-proof are at risk of collapsing. At least 80 schools suffered damage during the earthquake and many of the casualties were children attending school," said Damaris Pfendt, Caritas Australia's Humanitarian Emergencies Lead.

"The damage is extensive. The pictures our partners in Indonesia are showing us are of great concern. We need to respond to the immediate need right away, but there will also be a long recovery process."

Indonesia is located on the Ring of Fire, an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Ocean, where many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur. Indonesia records thousands of earthquakes every year, but most are minor and do not lead to casualties.

However, in recent years there have been several deadly earthquakes that have struck Indonesia. In February this year, a magnitude 6.2 earthquake killed at least 25 people and injured more than 460.

Caritas Australia's partners are collaborating with local governments, trusted partners, and Churches to assess the needs on the ground and deliver emergency relief in the hardest-hit regions. One of the local Caritas offices, in the Diocese of Bogor, has been providing emergency food for affected families and humanitarian workers at the Parish of St. Peter, Cianjur.

Visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/indonesia-earthquake/ or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to Indonesia by donating to our Asia Emergency Appeal.

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