

**\*\*MEDIA RELEASE\*\***

## **Caritas agencies respond to devastating earthquake in Morocco**

12 September 2023

Caritas agencies are responding to the devastating earthquake in Morocco, where over 2,600 lives have been lost and thousands have been injured.

The 6.8 magnitude earthquake is the strongest in over a century. Entire buildings have collapsed, and there are reports some remote villages have been completely destroyed, leaving people trapped or homeless. Many families are spending sleepless nights outdoors, fearing aftershocks. Search and rescue efforts are ongoing.

“Earthquakes of this magnitude devastate communities, destroying homes and infrastructure. This means people are just trying to survive but have no access to shelter, food, medicine or water. We are working with our partners on the ground and across the region to ensure help gets to those who need it most,” said Melville Fernandez, Caritas Australia's Humanitarian Emergencies Associate Director.

The earthquake's epicentre was near the rural town of Ighil, in the Al Haouz province. The death toll currently stands at over 2,600 people, with over 2,500 people injured, many of them seriously.

Pope Francis expressed his “profound solidarity with those who are touched in their flesh and heart by this tragedy,” and prayed “for the repose of the dead, the healing of the injured and the consolation of those who mourn the loss of their loved ones and their homes.”

Immediate needs include getting essentials like food, clean water, emergency shelter and medicine to families affected by the earthquake, while preparing for the long-term needs of people who no longer have homes to return to.

Caritas agencies in the region are assessing the scale of the damage and are coordinating with local authorities and other organisations to see how they can best assist. Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from disaster.

Visit [caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/Morocco-earthquake](https://caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/Morocco-earthquake) or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to families affected by the Morocco earthquake.

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