

## **Caritas Australia launches tax time appeal addressing hunger in Timor Leste.**

A prolonged dry spell in Timor Leste, driven by El Niño, has decimated crops, dried up water sources, and left farmers struggling to feed their families. This has exacerbated already high levels of poverty and steady increases in food prices.

As a result, more than one in four people in Timor Leste face acute food insecurity, with around half of all children under five suffering from stunted growth because they simply do not have enough food to eat.

As the end of the financial year approaches, Caritas Australia is appealing for supporters to make a tax-deductible donation to help farmers and their families in Timor Leste.

Donations will support agricultural and business training, enabling farmers to grow a wider variety of crops and better understand profit opportunities. Caritas Australia's programs in Timor Leste will also see communities engaged in Disaster Risk Reduction activities to help mitigate the impact of floods and droughts, which can devastate farms.

The campaign tells the story of Chiquito, a young father who relies on farming to support his family. He is the father of two children and lives with his wife, mother, sisters, nieces, and nephews. Without access to proper training and resources he struggled to grow enough food to feed his family, but through the Sustainable Livelihoods program was able to learn agricultural techniques that transformed his farm. He now has a steady income and can consistently feed his family.

Chiquito is also using his profits to employ two other community members as well as volunteering at the farm in a neighbouring orphanage, where he shares his skills and knowledge with the nuns.

**Fernando Pires, Country Representative for Timor Leste at Caritas Australia** said, "The impact of El Niño and rising food prices on Timor Leste's farmers cannot be overstated. With their livelihoods hanging in the balance, these resilient individuals are facing extreme hardships and uncertainty."

"However, there is hope, and you can make a difference. We know that communities like Chiquito's have the determination to tackle hunger. All they need is support from people like you to provide them with the tools, training and seeds they need to create sustainable change in their lives."

Your donation this tax time can help support farmers like Chiquito to feed their families and help make hunger history. Visit [www.caritas.org.au/donate-this-tax-time/](http://www.caritas.org.au/donate-this-tax-time/) or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

**ENDS**

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