

## **Caritas Australia welcomes Australia's commitments to climate finance and renewables at COP29.**

Caritas Australia has welcomed the Australian Government's [\\$50 million](#) contribution to the loss and damage fund at COP29, which follows last week's announcement of a [\\$125 million](#) investment into Pacific renewable energy transitions.

Investment into the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage will support developing countries as they experience extreme weather and slow onset climate events. The fund was established last year at COP28 in recognition of costs outside of adaptation, both economic and non-economic, being faced by climate vulnerable countries.

**Damian Spruce, Advocacy Associate Director at Caritas Australia** said of this investment, "Committing to the Loss and Damage Fund demonstrates global leadership on climate finance and is a real show of support for our Pacific neighbours. There is an expectation from Pacific faith communities and civil society that Australia will stay true to its leadership on this issue and call for the incorporation of Loss and Damage into the climate finance targets being developed for the National Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) process to ensure that the work prioritises funding in this area."

The government's investment of \$75m into the REnew Pacific program will support off-grid and community scale renewable energy in remote and rural parts of the Pacific. Meanwhile, \$50m in funding for the Australia-Pacific Partnership for Energy Transition (APPET) will support Pacific nations as they work to capture more of the benefits of renewable energy investments. This includes research, modelling, and collaborations to support Pacific energy transitions.

"This sort of responsible grants-based funding is exactly what is needed to guard against the danger of climate debt distress in the Pacific" added Damian Spruce, something Caritas Australia has been advocating for at COP29 through the launch of its [Weathering the Storm](#) report.

Caritas Australia has already collaborated with the Albanese government to deliver off-grid solutions in the Pacific as part of the Australian Government's [Business Partnerships Platform](#). Caritas Australia and its local partner, Catholic Church Health Services, and technical partner, Bechtel.org, are installing off-grid solutions at two rural healthcare centres in Papua New Guinea, improving health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities. Rural health centres in Papua New Guinea are the frontline of healthcare for around 80 per cent of the population, with many operating without any electricity at all, or via unreliable and expensive infrastructure such as fuel generators.

"Off-grid solutions provide affordable and reliable sources of energy to communities, enhancing their resilience to economic shocks as well as climate shocks. This form of climate mitigation also has the capacity to become income generating for Pacific nations, enhancing their ability to pay down debt and fund future climate projects" concluded Damian Spruce.

**ENDS**

**Media contact:** Tara Harvey on 0484 002 021 or [tara.harvey@caritas.org.au](mailto:tara.harvey@caritas.org.au)