

Unfolding catastrophe in Venezuela threatens tens of thousands more lives.

Caritas is warning that the humanitarian situation in Venezuela is rapidly deteriorating in the aftermath of the devastating double earthquake on 24 June, with fears the true scale of the catastrophe is still emerging and could reach up to [100,000](#) casualties in the coming weeks as missing people are located.

Current official figures confirm at least [1,700](#) people have died, more than 5,000 have been injured, and tens of thousands remain trapped or missing. Entire housing complexes have crumbled, including up to 16 towers in La Guaira alone.

Caritas Venezuela, has been working in the country since 1963 and is present in all states across the country through its Diocesan network. Prior to the earthquake the organisation was supporting over 60,000 vulnerable households amid an economic crisis that saw 7.9 million people already requiring humanitarian assistance before the earthquakes struck.

The organisation reports that “people are still trapped under rubble. The window of survival closes within the first 72 hours. This is the most critical action at this time.”

Critical infrastructure has been badly damaged across multiple states, including Caracas, La Guaira and Miranda, where mass displacement is underway and communities remain cut off or unsafe.

Caritas Venezuela further reports that “hospitals are overwhelmed” and urgently require field hospitals, medical supplies, blood, surgical equipment and trauma specialists. Water and sanitation systems have failed, and thousands of families are sleeping outdoors amid ongoing aftershocks and fear of further collapse.

Humanitarian needs are immense and immediate, including search and rescue teams, emergency medical care, food, clean water, sanitation, shelter, and psychosocial support.

Despite the scale of the disaster, local communities have shown extraordinary courage and solidarity.

Caritas Venezuela described how “from the very first hours, thousands of Venezuelans poured out their support: neighbours rescuing neighbours, families sharing what little they have, and volunteers tirelessly giving their time and effort.”

But local capacity alone cannot meet the scale of need. Caritas Venezuela has activated a nationwide emergency response, deployed thousands of volunteers and coordinated aid delivery through its extensive network, which reaches even the most remote communities.

This response continues to be supported by “national and international allies, our sister Caritas organisations throughout the region and the world, the universal Church, humanitarian organisations, businesses, institutions, and individual donors” who Caritas Venezuela says “have delivered their support with a speed that renews our hope”.

Looking ahead, Caritas Venezuela warns that “this tragedy will not be resolved in days. The emergency will give way to recovery and then to reconstruction, and at each stage we will need the same solidarity that moves us today.”

As aftershocks continue and search efforts intensify, the coming days are critical, not only for saving lives, but for shaping the trajectory of this crisis. Caritas is urging the international community and the public not to look away as the disaster fades from headlines.

“The scale of human suffering unfolding in Venezuela is immense, and the worst may still be ahead,” said **Kirsten Sayers, CEO at Caritas Australia**. “Behind every number is a family searching for a loved one, a child sleeping in the open, or a community that has lost everything.”

To support Caritas Australia’s Venezuela Earthquake Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/venezuela or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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Media contact: Tara Harvey 0484 002 021 tara.harvey@caritas.org.au or caritasmedia@caritas.org.au