

# CARITASNEWS

#154 | SPRING 2018

"Development has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person."

– Pope Paul VI,  
Populorum Progressio



> **HUMAN DIGNITY**  
The heart of social justice

> **ROHINGYA**  
Building new lives in Bangladesh

> **TIMOR**  
Small scale farming for big results

> **WOMEN FOR THE WORLD**  
Women with a passion for justice



End poverty  
Promote justice  
Uphold dignity

## THANK YOU FROM THE CEO

This Spring, Caritas Australia, through your support, looks to the new shoots of hope which are growing in the communities of marginalised and vulnerable people who are at the heart of our work. They are an inspiration and they remind us that development is genuinely a two-way communication.

Upholding the dignity of people in extreme hardship is integral to our work with Caritas.

The plight of the Rohingya refugees is just one example of challenges faced by the marginalised globally. The Rohingya refugees have survived incredible hardship in the course of their harrowing journey from Myanmar to Bangladesh. Many have lost their lives and survivors sustain the trauma of physical and psychological injury.

Most live close to the town of Cox's Bazaar where Caritas Australia, with Caritas Bangladesh and other members of the Caritas Internationalis network, have been major providers of essential food, shelter and medical supplies.

Another issue which is regularly raised with us by Church leaders and our partners in the Pacific and in Asia is the need to create a more sustainable world. It is the world's poorest who are impacted the most by climate change. Since he issued his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, three years ago, Pope Francis and the Cardinals of our region have all urged governments to commit to more ambitious carbon emission reductions.


To support our commitment to the poorest and most vulnerable, our Strategic Directions plan for 2018-2020 continues to focus on ensuring the dignity of all those with whom we work so that they become agents of their own change.

We continue to pursue a just world, at peace and free of poverty, where all people are able live in dignity and to sustain their hope.

Sincerely,

Paul O'Callaghan, CEO

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## WOMEN FOR THE WORLD 2018

Your support of Caritas Australia's Women for the World is generating a positive ripple effect all over the country. In schools and parishes throughout Australia, women and girls are taking action by donating and by hosting inspiring events of their own. Find out more about how you can get involved with Women for the World initiatives on pages 10 and 11.



Guests at Women for the World events are supporting Caritas Australia's work for peace, justice and sustainable development. Photo: Peter Brennan

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**Cover:** Rajida Begum, with her young child, was forced to give birth during an arduous journey escaping ethnic conflict in her native Myanmar. She and her child are now safe in Bangladesh, through Caritas Australia supported projects.  
Photos: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas

**All photos Caritas Australia unless otherwise stated.**

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MIX logo



Caritas Australia acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians, past and present, of the land on which all our offices are located. This edition may include images or words of indigenous people who may be deceased.



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# BUILDING ON SOLID GROUND

## HUMAN DIGNITY: The foundation of social justice

Like you, at Caritas Australia we believe in a world in which children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice have the right to a life of dignity.

By supporting people to become the architects of their own futures, we believe that all members of the one human family will grow in grace and hope.

Caritas Australia's Community Engagement Manager, Father George Sigamony, who is also the former head of Caritas Sri Lanka, spoke of the importance of Caritas Australia's work globally.

"Every person is created in the image of God," Fr George says. "We are all equal in the eyes of God and are owed the same respect and rights the moment we come into this world. This is why it's so important that we respect one another."

This principle of Human Dignity is one which is also closely connected to the other principles of Catholic Social Teaching, especially subsidiarity, solidarity and participation. We are deeply committed to listening with open hearts to the needs of the partners with whom we work.

"When we want to help others we have to keep in mind their unique cultures and ways of living."

By working in this way, Caritas Australia is not only supporting marginalised communities to overcome their challenges, but empowering them with the self-belief that stems, inherently, from their precious humanity.

**Thank you for your support.**

*"[Be]...like one building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built."*

— Luke 6:48



With monsoon rains and the onset of the cyclone season, fears are intensifying for the safety of Rohingya people living in makeshift shelters in Bangladesh, who have shown extraordinary resilience and resourcefulness.  
Photo: Christopher Riechert (CRS) for Caritas Bangladesh.







# LATEST JUSTICE NEWS

1 September – World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

1 - 30 September – Women for the World Events hosted around Australia

4 October – Season of Creation

4 October – St Francis of Assisi Day

16 October – World Food Day

18 November – World Day of the Poor

10 December – Human Rights Day

## ROHINGYA EMERGENCY

There is growing concern for the safety of Rohingya people living in makeshift shelters in Bangladesh.

Many of the 1.1 million Rohingya Muslims who have fled ethnic conflict in Myanmar are living on bare earth floors under tarpaulins, with almost no protection from the elements.

Many of the new arrivals sleep in makeshift shelters—tents made of bamboo and plastic constructed along roadways or on hillsides.

Caritas Australia, through the Caritas network, is providing shelters and other important support for Rohingya communities.



Through a Caritas cash-for-work activity, Rohingya refugees used local materials to build structures such as drainage and terraces to mitigate erosion and flooding in the refugee settlement. Photo: Christopher Reichert/CRS

## SHARE THE JOURNEY



Share the Journey  
#sharejourney

In our world today where an unprecedented 68.5 million people have been forced from home – among them, nearly 25.4 million refugees, we are joining Pope Francis' call to #sharethejourney, to promote the rights and the protection of refugees and migrants.

Caritas Australia, as part of the Caritas Internationalis network, is

standing in solidarity with those displaced from home and is supportive of the advocacy work of the Australian Catholic Office for Migrants and Refugees (ACMRO) and Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH).

Watch the Caritas Internationalis video produced on this subject at: [bit.ly/Pope-Francis-Share-Journey](http://bit.ly/Pope-Francis-Share-Journey)

## LAUDATO SI

Pope Francis writes, in his powerful encyclical, *Laudato Si*, that "All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."

He also says that, "This sister (the earth) now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her."



Women from Kuzviriritira Garden in front of solar power and water tank. Photo: Nicole Clements, Caritas Australia

## LOMBOK EARTHQUAKE

Following a string of powerful earthquakes which struck Lombok, Indonesia throughout August, killing over 400 people, Caritas Australia is working with its Indonesian partner agencies, Caritas Denpasar and Caritas Indonesia - Karina, to assess the extent of the emergency and needs on the ground.

By working with local churches in the Pacific 'Ring of Fire,' Caritas is able to respond quickly to the needs of marginalised communities by providing food, water and shelter to those most in need.

**You can donate to our Asia Emergency Appeal if you would like to help Caritas Australia respond to emergencies like the Indonesia earthquake. Visit [www.caritas.org.au/asia](http://www.caritas.org.au/asia)**



# HEALING THROUGH BROTHERHOOD

The men of the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation (KBHAC) are survivors of the kidnapping of boys between the age of 4 and 14 by the NSW government between 1921 and 1970: they were forcibly removed from their families as children and taken to Kinchela Boys Home (KBH) in Kempsey, NSW. Here they were stripped of their names and given numbers.

After the recent passing of Kinchela Boys Home survivor, Uncle Manuel Ebsworth #28, Chair of the Kinchela Boys Aboriginal Corporation, which the men founded for their own healing, the men were reflective.

**Uncle Lester Maher, #11:** "A lot of the locals didn't realise what was going on behind closed doors and the way we were treated.

There was no love there, there was no family, it was a place of rules and regulations, a place of punishment. We didn't do anything wrong, yet they called us inmates, we were in prison. We're still coming to terms with it, there's a lot of healing going on."

"Like I said at Uncle Manuel's funeral, whoever thought that we'd come to this place? Whoever thought we'd come to the place of shaking hands with the Prime Minister? Going into NSW parliament and changing the policies that needed to be changed, we did that - we are a force to be reckoned with now."

*"We're still coming to terms with it,  
there's a lot of healing going on."*

– Uncle Lester Maher

**Uncle Colin Davis, #50:** "When you talk about apologies, it's too flaky, because to give an apology you have to do the homework and give people the benefit of what is going on — don't say 'sorry' and then do nothing about it."

"Us Blackfellas we've still got this, 'come in brother, share with your brother and sisters' idea. But if the government says 'sorry,' then they must also give us the rights to go on living...how do I get some justice here?"

**Uncle Richard Campbell, #28:** "People come to me years ago and asked me what do you want to do with KBH, I'd say 'burn it down, put a match to it.' Now that I'm involved with KBH, all of us are proud of me because I'm actually talking about what happened to me and what happened with KBH too."

"I was going that way again you know, only for KBH, you know they just sit down and talk, they talked me out of going through that destructive time.

You talk about dignity — it's here, this place... KBHAC is built on dignity."

By sharing their stories with each other in a spirit of love and honesty, the men of the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation have been strengthened to move forward with their healing and to become mentors for young Indigenous men in their community.



## > LEARN

Learn more about the challenges faced by survivors of the Stolen Generations at [www.ab.co/20BseyH](http://www.ab.co/20BseyH)

At the site of trauma, members of the Kinchela Boys Home reflect on their painful memories and nurture hopes for the future. Photo: Peter Solness



# SURVIVING TRAUMA: ROHINGYA ON THE EDGE

Since the peak of the Rohingya humanitarian crisis last year, over 900,000 people now live in close proximity in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazaar and communities continue to suffer on a massive scale.

Rohingya refugees have overcome incredible traumas during their dangerous journey from Myanmar to Bangladesh - escaping ethnic conflict.

The situation in the port city of Cox's Bazaar is still very uncertain; over a million refugees now live closely together in makeshift camps.

Those impacted include children, the elderly and people needing medical care as well as pregnant and new mothers.

Rajida Begum, a 30 year old Rohingya woman, is the mother of a new born child.

"For four days, I hid myself in the forest. Then, we tried to walk to the border. I was so scared," says Rajida, who fled her village with neighbours last year, when she was nine months pregnant.

She gave birth to a baby girl in a rice paddy five days after arriving in Bangladesh.

As she cradled her newborn baby, she looked relieved. "When I saw that she was healthy, I was so happy. I gave thanks to God."

The refugees are living in varied conditions. Many of the new arrivals sleep in makeshift shelters — tents made of bamboo and plastic constructed along roadways or on hillsides.

For Michael Peyra, Caritas Australia's Program Coordinator for Myanmar (Burma) & Sri Lanka, it is crucial to keep the plight of the Rohingya refugees at the forefront of the public's attention.

"They have left their homes and their land to take shelter from persecution, only to find themselves exposed to immeasurable hardship and insecurity," Mr Peyra says.

"The downpours of monsoon season not only threaten the camp infrastructure such as water points and latrines, but also impact health by increasing the risk of cholera and other waterborne diseases."



Rajida Begum holds her child, born during her arduous journey from Myanmar as she was fleeing the Burmese army. Photo: Michael Hill/CRS

"For four days, I hid myself in the forest. Then, we tried to walk to the border. I was so scared"

— Rajida Begum

The onset of the cyclone season is of particular concern.

"The cyclone season is usually from June through to the end of October. Where can people go? The challenges are immense and the people are trapped in the camps - with nowhere to go" Mr Peyra said.

"This crisis is likely to continue for a long time so it's important that Caritas and other NGOs receive the crucial support that allows us to provide humanitarian assistance."

"In the face of one of the world's fastest growing refugee crises, the plight of the Rohingya must remain front and centre in the eyes of the international community."

Pope Francis has echoed this belief, saying in a visit to the Rohingya communities in Myanmar and Bangladesh last year that he would like to express the church's "full closeness to our Rohingya brothers and sisters."

Though they have been through hellish conditions, the Rohingya refugees are strong and resilient. Stand in solidarity with them: show them they have not been forgotten by making a donation today.

## > DONATE

To Caritas Australia's Spring Appeal now to stand with Rohingya refugees at [caritas.org.au/give](http://caritas.org.au/give)

## HOW CARITAS IS HELPING



**The aid that Caritas Australia is providing through the Caritas network alongside Caritas Bangladesh has reached over 60,000 people and includes:**



Emergency shelter and blankets



Food and water



Utensils and sanitation supplies



Many of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazaar are mothers. Photo: Christopher Riechert (CRS) for Caritas Bangladesh



# BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

Martha is a 58 year old Irak tribeswoman from Kilimamoja, a village in northern Tanzania. Before she became involved in a Caritas Australia-supported water project, Martha tilled a small plot with much effort and little reward, and spent hours collecting water each day.

Your support of a Caritas Australia funded training program has meant that Martha has a renewed sense of hope for herself and her entire community.

New ground-piping means that Martha has access to clean water within 300m from her house and the improved access to water has increased her capacity to farm and reap a yield from her previously arid soil. From the garden, the family has been able to increase the food they grow and to earn an income from the sale of their home-grown vegetables.

Martha has used the extra money to help her five adult children with their own families. She has also made improvements to her house, replacing the roof with iron sheets.

In the future, Martha hopes to build a brick house and to buy some livestock, another investment in her positive future.

Martha is dreaming big and setting new goals through her partnership with Caritas Australia.

Through her hard work, with the support of Caritas Australia and funding from the Australian Government's ANCP Program, Martha has a better chance at life for herself and her family.

*Thanks to a Caritas Australia-supported program delivering training, Martha has a renewed sense of hope for herself and her entire community.*



In Tanzania, Martha is better able to provide for herself and her family through support from Caritas Australia. Photo: Scott Martin, Caritas Australia

## DID YOU KNOW?

### A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH:

A recent research paper published by the University of Technology, Sydney, showed the Strengths-based Approach to development to be a powerful way of improving the quality of life for entire communities in Southern and Eastern Africa.

## > LEARN

...more about Caritas Australia's Strengths-based Approach to development at [www.caritas.org.au/sba](http://www.caritas.org.au/sba)



Irak elders express their appreciation for clean, reliable water provided to their community through the Caritas Australia water project. Photo: Scott Martin, Caritas Australia

Funding from the Australian Government's Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), allowed Caritas Australia to deliver support to Martha through this program.



# SMALL SCALE FARMING FOR BIG CHANGES

Marta Tilo is 33 and married with four children. Before participating in a Caritas program which improved her economic independence, Marta felt trapped. Food was scarce and money tight. Much to her distress, she could only send two of her four children to school.

Marta was forced to take out a very high interest loan, and this only added to her challenges.

"We weren't able to meet all of our daily needs including buying food, clothes and paying our children's school fees," Marta says.

"My husband and I had to borrow money at high interest but we had no choice."

Through Caritas Australia's skills-building programs and a financially sustainable loan scheme with our Timorese partner program, NGO BANO, Marta turned her life around.

The program, also offers a component which encourages participants to save their money, in order to build their resilience in the community.



Marta says that she feels more confident through a positive collaboration with Caritas Australia. Photo: Caritas Australia



Family life has changed for Marta as a result of her involvement with Caritas Australia's work. Photo: Caritas Australia

*"We're seeing Timorese women build their confidence and take more leadership in household decisions through this program!"*

– Ranmal Samarawickrama, Caritas Australia Acting Manager for Timor



*"I am able to sell my farming produce, like cassava, sweet potato and banana, as well as chips and cookies. I'm earning money every day."*



"I got the opportunity to borrow the money from the saving group to run small businesses," Marta says.

For Marta, the greatest improvement in her situation and the cause of her greatest joy is the satisfaction of knowing that now all four of her children will have a fair chance at an education.

"I and my family now have better life compared with before I joined the group; we have enough food for the whole year and have enough cash for emergencies," Marta says.

"We are very happy and thank Caritas and NGO BANO for supporting us."

Your support has equipped Marta, not only with the resources she needs to provide for her family, but a greater sense of self-confidence and a renewed sense of purpose.



# EMPOWERING WOMEN, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Caritas Australia's Women for the World invites women to stand up against violence and oppression.

**Our voices are always more powerful when we use them together.**

**Find out more about Caritas Australia's Women for the World at [www.womenfortheworld.org.au](http://www.womenfortheworld.org.au)**

Over 200 women gathered in solidarity with women living in vulnerable conditions in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

Women for the World recognises and celebrates the extraordinary work of women worldwide. Without the resilience and determination of women, many communities would not have the opportunities that are open to them today.

Michelle Fernon, Alison Green and Nicole Murphy are the founders of the Women for the World luncheons. They are moving into the fifth year of this special gala luncheon, engaging Australian women in the cause.

"We believe women are key to making a real, long-lasting change," Alison said.

While women are disproportionately vulnerable to all forms of poverty, it is their resilience and their capacity to drive change that will create lasting development opportunities in the poorest communities. This is why Caritas Australia works at the grass-roots to improve the economic and social participation of women and girls in their communities.

**Find out more at [caritas.org.au/women](http://caritas.org.au/women)**



Sydney



Melbourne



Canberra

Photos: Peter Brennan/Caritas Australia



The team at Australian Catholic Superannuation and Retirement Fund have thrown their support behind the Women for the World campaign!



Even workplaces are supporting Caritas Australia's Women for the World initiative. Photo: Viviane Piccinini, Australian Catholic Superannuation & Retirement Fund



## HOST A WOMEN FOR THE WORLD EVENT

By hosting your own Women for the World get-together, you stand in solidarity with millions of women who experience poverty and injustice. Your efforts will help empower female leaders to bring about positive change for marginalised communities everywhere.

[womenfortheworld.org.au](http://womenfortheworld.org.au)



Youth at St Raphael Catholic Parish in Cowra, NSW were central in the planning of a fundraising dinner for Caritas Australia. Photo: Fiona Gallagher/Louise Ellison

## COWRA COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE WITH HEART

At St Raphael Catholic Parish in Cowra, NSW, parishioners have partnered with Ray White Real Estate to organise the inaugural '535 Dinner'. The dinner brought 85 people together in solidarity with women all over the world.

Touched by the 535 million children worldwide who, according to the United Nations (UN), are living in high-risk situations, the St Raphael community felt strongly that they needed to improve the education of women in developing countries, and thereby tackle the root challenges of poverty and health issues.

"The long term benefits (of Caritas's work) are great, and we hope these changes will in turn make a huge difference in the lives of children and in future generations," said Fiona Gallagher, Assistant Parish Secretary at St Raphael's.

Thank you St Raphael's community for hosting your own Women for the World event!



Mary Vergheze's Caritas fundraiser left her feeling "overwhelmed by the generosity of those who truly contributed from their hearts." Photo: Mary Vergheze

## MARY VERGHESE'S CURRY IN A HURRY HIGH TEA

After seeing a promotion for Caritas Australia's Women for the World, Mary says that she empathised with the plight of vulnerable women striving for a better life for themselves and their children.

"A little helping hand from us would mean the world to them to break free from poverty," Mary said.

Since Women for the World fundraisers can really be anything hosts want them to be, she came up with the idea of a *Curry in a Hurry High Tea*. She asked friends to contribute cakes, sandwiches, curries and desserts, ending up with a very impressive spread.

Thanks Mary for your resourcefulness and creativity!

## > ACT

Add your voice and help empower women living in poverty. Sign up to host a Women for the World event today and you will be sent a host pack in the mail. Visit: [womenfortheworld.org.au](http://womenfortheworld.org.au)

#womenfortheworld





## Every year Caritas responds to humanitarian emergencies across the world.

Because we are embedded in local Churches - part of the social fabric of communities - we are often the first responders - able to provide food, water and shelter to those most in need. For Rohingya refugees, monsoons in Bangladesh bring further trouble to an already challenging situation, but Caritas, through your help, will be there to provide essential supplies.

Eight year old Halima collects firewood in Balhukali Rohingya refugee camp, Bangladesh, where she's been living with her family for the last 20 days. Photo: Aurélie Marrier d'Unienville/ Caritas Internationalis

☐ **YES, I WILL BECOME A CARITAS NEIGHBOUR AND GIVE MONTHLY.**

☐ \$10   ☐ \$15   ☐ \$20   ☐ \$30   Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly amount.

ALTERNATIVELY

**I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A ONE-OFF DONATION**  
to Caritas Australia to help children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty.

☐ \$45   ☐ \$125   ☐ \$215   ☐ \$535

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### ☐ DEBIT / CREDIT CARD

I authorise Caritas Australia to charge the amount above to my credit card each month.

☐ Mastercard   ☐ VISA   ☐ Amex   ☐ DINERS

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Card number \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

### ☐ DIRECT DEBIT

I/We authorise Caritas Australia (064 695) to debit the above mentioned amount from my/our account on the 27th of each month at the financial institution identified below. Acting on my/our instructions the user may, by prior arrangement and advice to me/us, vary the amount for future debits.

Financial institution name and branch \_\_\_\_\_

BSB \_\_\_\_\_ Account no. \_\_\_\_\_

Account name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Before payments commence, Caritas Australia will provide you with a full Service Agreement and confirmation of your details regarding this arrangement. Payments will be deducted on the 15th of the month. If this is not a normal business day, payment will be deducted on the next normal business day.

## YOUR DETAILS

Supporter ID \_\_\_\_\_

Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr / other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



Please return the completed form in the envelope provided



Or call us on 1800 024 413



Visit us online at [www.caritas.org.au/donate/monthly-giving](http://www.caritas.org.au/donate/monthly-giving)



**Caritas  
neighbours**