

What is Caritas?

www.caritas.org.nz

Caritas is the Catholic agency for justice, peace and development. Caritas can be translated as “love in action”, which means that we work to make a real difference in the lives of people living with poverty or injustice. Gospel values and **Catholic social teaching** provide the foundation and framework for our work.

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand is part of **Caritas Internationalis**, which is a confederation of 165 Catholic aid, development and social justice agencies from around the world. Caritas agencies work in over 200 countries and territories. The **Caritas Internationalis network** is one of the largest non-government aid and development agency in the world. It has consultative status with the World Food Programme, UNESCO and UNICEF.

Within Aotearoa New Zealand, Caritas is a member of the [Council for International Development](#). It is a registered charity with the [New Zealand Charities Commission](#). Our registration number is **CC36055**.

What does Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand do?

Caritas delivers aid, supports development, and works for justice in New Zealand and abroad. We work to make a real difference in the lives of people living with poverty or injustice:

- We support locally run community development projects among poor communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. These projects address the causes of poverty and lift the standard of living for people who are often desperately poor;
- We fund **emergency relief work** following major disasters;
- We work to change the structures which cause poverty in New Zealand and overseas;
- We help New Zealanders understand the causes of poverty and injustice, and keep them informed of current aid, development and justice issues.

Caritas Development Work

Internationally, Caritas works with the poorest and most vulnerable communities, regardless of ethnicity, religion or nationality. Caritas works through partnerships with local organisations and Church structures. We do not set up our own offices, or send staff overseas to work permanently. This is a low cost way to operate, and ensures that the local community is strengthened and has ownership of the project, which results in real needs being identified and met.

We support a wide variety of project work including supplying drinking water and irrigation, teaching sustainable farm management, strengthening primary health care, developing new skills and credit for small businesses, and working with women and indigenous peoples.

Our international development work is community, rather than individually based. This approach is sound development practice, generates less administration costs, and is based on the **Catholic social teaching** principles of inclusiveness, and participation. It recognises the importance of family and community in a person’s life.

To find out more about Caritas, read about:

- [Our Strategic Plan](#)
- [Our history](#)
- [Our people](#)
- [Advocacy](#)