

**CARITAS AUSTRALIA PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR BEIRUT FOLLOWING  
DEVASTATING EXPLOSION**

Caritas Australia has today provided an initial \$50,000 in crucial emergency relief as part of its Middle East Regional Appeal.

“Today Lebanon is reeling from the effects of the explosion in Beirut on Tuesday. Caritas Lebanon is already on the ground working to assist the most vulnerable - a huge undertaking with the sheer scale of people impacted. The most urgent needs are food, health and shelter”, said Kirsty Robertson, Caritas Australia’s CEO.

Hygiene kits, already essential to combat COVID-19, are even more needed to protect people from the toxicity dispersed into air from the 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate. Medications are needed with many supplies and hospitals directly impacted in the blast, coupled with the high number of injuries experienced. Material for clean-up and renovation is critical.

“The situation is dire. Caritas Lebanon has told us that hundreds of thousands of families were affected, many of whom have slept in shattered homes and in the streets during a deadly pandemic. The economy is in free fall and parts of Beirut are uninhabitable”, Ms Robertson said.

“Through its in-country staff and partners in Lebanon, the wider Caritas network is working to deliver emergency food and water, hygiene kits including masks and soap, material for shelter repairs and the clean-up of debris and medication and other health services”, she said.

Caritas Australia continues to monitor the situation and is in regular contact with partners on the ground in Beirut.

According to Ms Robertson, “We pray for the people of Beirut, wider Lebanon and the Lebanese community here in Australia at this time of enormous heartbreak and loss”.

Donations to Caritas Australia’s Middle East Regional Appeal can be made at [www.caritas.org.au/lebanon](http://www.caritas.org.au/lebanon) or by calling 1800 024 413.

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