

### Support people living with disabilities this Christmas

This Christmas, Caritas Australia is shining the light on the many vulnerable people living with disabilities around the world. For people living with disability in Vietnam, the added challenges of COVID-19 have made it especially tough to get the necessary care.

This year, Caritas Australia has made people living with disabilities the focus of our annual Christmas appeal. By contributing to the Caritas Australia Christmas appeal, you can help ensure that people living with disabilities continue to receive the support they need.

Supporting children like *Phuong\**, from Vietnam, who was born with hydrocephalus, a medical condition which causes seizures and makes speaking and walking difficult. His family struggles to balance earning an income with caring for *Phuong*, who frequently needs medical care.

*Phuong* and his family have received support from Caritas Australia's Empowering People with Disabilities program, which is implemented through its partner organisation, Sustainable Rural Development (SRD).

The program first started in 2018, and around 1800 children with disabilities and their caregivers have benefitted from health, education and sustainable livelihoods support.

Through the program, *Phuong* now has access to a rehabilitation therapist and community-based classes, and his parents have joined a support group for parents of children living with disabilities.

However, COVID-19 has brought new challenges. The lockdowns mean that *Phuong* has reduced access to his rehabilitation therapy and community-based classes, and his parents are struggling to earn enough for the family.

"We could not sell our agricultural products at the market and they became rotten," said Van, *Phuong's* mother.

Caritas Australia's partners continue to provide support to the family by providing updates regarding COVID-19 preventative measures to ensure that people living with disabilities and their carers had access to health and other essential services.

Despite the challenges, *Phuong* has made incredible progress. "He is counting up to 100 now, he can write his name, and is even learning some English," said Van. "He is more confident and he smiles more."

This year has been challenging for everyone, but this Christmas, now more than ever, families living in poverty around the world need your support.

To learn more or to donate to support people living with a disability visit: [www.caritas.org.au/](http://www.caritas.org.au/) or call 1800 024 413.

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