



Frequently asked questions about the campaign

Q: What is the Caritas Internationalis hunger campaign?

Caritas believes that it is a scandal that nearly a billion people are hungry today in a world that has the resources to feed everyone. Caritas organisations around the world joined together in the first ever global Caritas campaign to call for an end to hunger by 2025.

We believe the best way to achieve that is for governments to guarantee adequate and nutritious food for all in their national laws.

Q: Why the 'Right to Food'?

We believe God created an abundant world. There's enough food for everyone, yet one in eight people go hungry each day.

The right to food is a human, legal and clearly defined right (see the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)) which gives rise to obligations of governments to reduce both chronic undernourishment and malnutrition.

The right to food protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in dignity.

Key dates in the campaign

- Caritas Internationalis launched One Human Family, Food for All on 10 December 2013 with a 'wave of prayer' which swept around the globe.
- There was a global week of action in October 2014 with different events and actions around the world urging national governments to adopt a right to food.
- In May 2015, Caritas Internationalis hosted a 'General Assembly' in Rome for the leadership of all its members. The meeting had a special focus on eliminating hunger.
- Caritas took the campaign to the Milan Expo 2015 – Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life.
- The campaign was officially concluded on 10 December 2015.



Frequently asked questions about hunger

Q: What is hunger?

Hunger exists when people don't have enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active, healthy life. This means they live in a state of food insecurity – which can be chronic, seasonal or transitory.

Food insecurity can be caused by not enough food being available or by people not having enough money to buy it. Food may also be badly distributed because of weak systems or economic inequality. It may also be poorly used at the household or country level.

Q: What is malnutrition?

Malnutrition exists when people don't have the proper combination and balance of nutrients in their diet. It includes both under and over nutrition. Undernutrition can result in a person being underweight, too short (or stunted), dangerously thin (or wasted) or deficient in vitamins and minerals (suffering from micronutrient malnutrition).

Q: Who is undernourished in the world?

Globally, around 870 million people were undernourished in the period 2010–12. That's 12.5 % of the world's population, or one in eight people. The vast majority of these people – 852 million – lived in developing countries, where nearly 15% of the population is believed to be undernourished. In Latin America and parts of Asia, the number and proportion of undernourished people is falling, but in Africa and west Asia it is increasing.

Q: Why are so many people hungry?

There is enough food in the world, yet 842 million people are hungry. Hunger is not caused by a lack of food but by a lack of justice. All over the world, Caritas witnesses the harmful consequences of this lack of justice in the inequality of access to adequate food and nutrition. Caritas believes this is a moral and humanitarian crisis. It is exacerbated by unfair policies and practices such as market distortions due to excessive financial speculation on food commodities, armed conflicts, the diversion of food resources from consumption to energy production, the waste of food and the failure to provide access to markets for producers in developing countries.



Q: What does the right to food mean?

The right to food – and water – is a human right recognised under international law which protects the right of all human beings to feed themselves in dignity, either by producing their food or by purchasing it. To produce their own food, a person needs land, seeds, water and other resources. To buy it, they need money and access to the market. This means countries have to provide an environment in which people can use their full potential to produce or procure enough food for themselves and their families, with adequate incomes and social safety nets.

Q: Why and how does Caritas work on hunger?

Inspired by Christian faith and Gospel values, Caritas sees the world as one human family characterised by love, solidarity and compassion. Caritas organisations' work on hunger ranges from providing food aid in times of crisis to longer-term programmes improving small-scale agriculture, livestock breeding, infrastructure, agroforestry and reforestation. Caritas also promotes civic participation and advocacy on social and economic issues such as access to markets, nutrition, water and sanitation for vulnerable communities.

Ensuring food security for all is part of Caritas' vision of a world where human well-being and dignity are paramount. For Caritas, integral human development must be the goal of sustainable development strategies encompassing climate policies, education, empowerment and food sovereignty.