



香港明愛  
CARITAS - HONG KONG

THE OFFICIAL SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HONG KONG  
天主教香港教區社會服務機構

**SOA 22/2003**

**EMERGENCY APPEAL FOR THE ONGOING FOOD AND  
HEALTH CRISIS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC  
OF KOREA (DPRK)  
FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2003 TO 31 MARCH 2004**

THIS APPEAL SEEKS **US\$2,670,000** IN CASH SUPPORT TO ASSIST IN THE SECTORS OF FOOD AID, HEALTH CARE, FOOD SECURITY/AGRICULTURE, AND CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

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**1. OVERVIEW**

Since the early 1990's, or even earlier, the people of North Korea have been struggling to overcome economic difficulties caused by the loss of trading partners in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and, compounded from 1994 on, by a series of natural disasters. The government lacks the resources to maintain or renew infrastructure systems and the economy continues to stagnate. Recovery will be difficult as long as the country has no access to international financial institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank, ADB, etc. Thus, over 22 million people have to rely on food production from the barely 20 percent of arable land available, from food aid from the international community as well as limited commercial food imports.

In autumn 1995, Caritas began supporting the North Korean people. Special appeals are launched every year and so far humanitarian aid valued at over US\$27 million has been provided with support from Catholic and non-Catholic agencies alike.

Harvests in the past two years have been better, but the FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment of 28 October 2002, still estimate a cereal deficit for 2002/2003 (November/October) of 1.084 million tons compared to 1.47 million tons in the previous year. The World Food Program (WFP) launched an appeal, seeking 512,000 mt of food (mostly cereals) for 6.4 million beneficiaries in the year 2003.

Although the local food production increased, post-harvest losses are significant and geographical disparities are growing. For ordinary people it is no longer just a question of food being available, but also of having access to food. New vulnerable population groups are developing in urban areas. Many families in the DPRK find it extremely difficult or impossible to cover their basic food needs.

The results of the nutritional survey carried out last autumn are encouraging because they clearly indicate an improved situation. This, however, has to be seen as an improvement from an exceptionally bad starting point. But it also provided indirect evidence that the vast majority of food aid is reaching the identified target groups.

In July 2002, the DPRK government took its first steps in a process of economic reform. Measures taken have mainly been an increase in wages to boost production, price adjustments and the abolishment of the food-rationing coupon system. This marked a drastic change of lifestyle for the whole population. It is, however, still too early to fully appreciate the impact of these measures, but there is a risk that the concept of 'the survival of the fittest' will grow.

The need for humanitarian assistance has not changed and will be particularly crucial if the country is going through a transition. A gradual shift towards development interventions aimed at promoting economic recovery and growth as well as addressing peace and reconciliation issues needs to be planned.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Implementing Agency:	Caritas-Hong Kong 2, Caine Road Hong Kong
Duration of Appeal:	1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004
Contact Person:	Kathi Zellweger, Director International Cooperation
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Bank Account:	<p>Caritas-Hong Kong's US\$ A/C No. 616-101094-106            Fortis Bank Asia HK            27/F, Fortis Bank Tower            77-79 Gloucester Road            Hong Kong            Swift Code: GEBA HK KW            Remark: North Korea</p> <p>Caritas-Hong Kong's EURO A/C No. 0010009-01-8            Deutsche Bank (Asia)            51/F, Cheung Kong Center            2 Queen's Road            Hong Kong            Remark: North Korea</p>
Country:	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK/North Korea)
Area:	122,762 sq km

Population: Nation wide population figure provided by the Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee in early 2002: 22.272 million

Provinces: 9 (North Pyongan, South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, South Hwanghae, Kangwon, South Hamgyong, North Hamgyong, Ryanggang and Chagang)

Municipalities: 3 (Pyongyang, Nampo and Kaesong)

Counties/districts: 206 with 162 accessible to UN Agencies and NGOs (as at 31 December 2002)

Priority project locations: Provinces along the east coast and in the north east

- Kangwon (Population 1.4 million)
- South Hamgyong (Population 2.93 million)
- North Hamgyong (Population 2.22 million)
- Ryanggang (0.69 million)

Population segments affected: Widespread poverty and food insecurity persists among the general population

Proposed interventions, by sector:

- Food aid
- Health care
- Agriculture/forestry/small-scale rural industries
- Other humanitarian needs
- Capacity building and training

### **3. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT, UN AGENCIES AND NGOS**

Assistance provided by the international community aims at improving the situation of the most vulnerable and providing support to basic social sectors. The fragile recovery in terms of food availability still requires a continuation of the humanitarian aid programs.

Some positive developments in the operating environment for the humanitarian aid community can be noted and issues such as conducting another nutritional survey, easing restrictions on medical evacuations and improving telecommunications facilities have been addressed.

The DPRK government is aware that protracted crisis need solutions that address problems from a long-term perspective. However, to develop and implement a common strategy for a transition from humanitarian assistance to recovery and development takes time and needs commitments from all stakeholders. It remains an enormous challenge to find acceptable political, economic and cultural solutions to the DPRK's manifold difficulties.

In the meantime Caritas believes that humanitarian aid and development initiatives as well as peace and reconciliation efforts are needed to stabilize and improve the situation of millions of people.

#### **4. CARITAS' INVOLVEMENT IN NORTH KOREA'S EMERGENCY**

Over the past 8 years, the Caritas DPRK program, with aid valued at over US\$27 million, has grown into one of the biggest operations of the Caritas confederation with Caritas Coreana by now being the major contributor and Caritas-Hong Kong the liaison agency.

**The principal objectives of Caritas' work in the DPRK are:**

- a) to save lives and reduce human suffering
- b) to maintain and improve the nutritional status of young children and other vulnerable groups
- c) to strengthen health services at grassroots level
- d) to support agricultural production and diversification
- e) to enhance local capacity

#### **4.1 5 YEAR REVIEW OF CARITAS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE DPRK**

This review, completed in November 2001, serves as a guideline for future interventions, taking into account the following recommendations:

- a) **Caritas Internationalis should continue with the DPRK program.**
- b) **Caritas should maintain the present organizational structure with Caritas-Hong Kong as the liaison agency.**
- c) **The Caritas family should be encouraged to support appeals for the DPRK program.**
- d) **The Caritas DPRK country group should be reactivated with a new mandate.**
- e) **Future program strategies should build on the experience of the past five years, with Food Aid, Agriculture and Health as the main sectors.**
- f) **The main geographical focus should be on the east coast provinces, Kangwon, South Hamgyong, North Hamgyong and Ryanggang.**

#### **4.2 PROPOSED INVOLVEMENT IN 2003/04**

After a planning mission to the DPRK in March 2003 and in-depth discussions with the Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee, the relevant ministries and UN agencies, activities planned for the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 will remain similar to those funded last year. Precious knowledge is gained with each project on which future learning can be based. Moreover, new avenues of collaboration are opening up, i.e. in the field of working with the disabled, for the training of farm mechanics and for improving small rural industries.

**The east coast remains the Caritas target area for most of the support provided.**

Planning projects properly is often a very time-consuming process but remains crucial. In order not to create false hope, this process can often only start once a certain amount of funding has been secured. Moreover, the situation in the DPRK is not static and requires a certain amount of flexibility in order to make the best possible use of the scarce resources. Good co-ordination is essential in order to avoid overlapping.

Depending on the availability of funds, the proposed interventions in this appeal can either be enlarged or scaled down.

**Food aid** will be co-ordinated with the WFP, who appealed this year for 512,000 metric tons of food aid (mostly cereals) to assist 6.4 million particularly vulnerable people over a 12-month period. Already in 2002, there was a serious food aid shortfall and over 3 million WFP beneficiaries lost their rations. Caritas is not a major food aid donor, but can at times respond quickly and fill niches, thus avoiding pipeline gaps, and aims at providing a balanced and healthy diet for nursery and kindergarten children, children in residential care and possibly also pregnant and nursing women. It is very likely that this year again high-valued commodities such as oil, blended foods, sugar and canned fish will be scarce. Cereals are at times also urgently needed in order to avoid supply gaps.

By now 18 local factories have been rehabilitated and are producing enriched blended foods, fortified noodles and biscuits in Pyongyang, Hyesan, Hamhung, Wonsan and Sinuiju, mostly for children and pregnant and nursing women. Input shortfalls, at times, create bottlenecks and production halts. Caritas can often act quickly to avoid such problems.

**Health** projects are linked with WHO and UNICEF initiatives and focus on the provision of basic medical equipment and some supplies, mostly for county level units. In collaboration with the relevant UN agencies and the Ministry of Health, lists with the most urgently needed items were designed. Positive is the fact that the Ministry of Health agreed to support Caritas' recipient units, improve infrastructure facilities (windows, water supply, tiles etc.) and carry out necessary installation works (for generators etc.), thus providing a local contribution. Moreover, medical personnel of Caritas beneficiary hospitals will be included in training opportunities provided by WHO.

UNICEF and the Red Cross are planning to distribute the most vital drugs to all hospitals/clinics in the country (national coverage) and provided there is no grant shortfall, the provision of basic drugs should be secured.

In the **agriculture/food security sector**, Caritas' collaboration with the line ministries as well as UNDP/AREP will continue in order to plan and implement projects.

**Supporting individual farms** -- usually with a population of around 2,000 people -- with a package including inputs such as fertilizers, plastic sheeting, pesticides and safety equipment, tractor tires and a small tractor or truck, will help these communities not only to grow enough food for themselves, but hopefully also provide for the non-farming population.

Because of the harsh climate and the short agricultural season (the country has on average only 180 frost-free days), farmers depend on the availability of **plastic sheeting**, mainly for seed propagation and vegetable cultivation. The sheets are usually used several times a year, washed and stored during winter and reused again for 2 or 3 more years. It has been reported that farms in the mountains, in poor and often food-deficit regions have not received allocations of new plastic sheets for several years. Such a grant is therefore not only much appreciated, it is also a cost effective way to help increase food production.

In the more mountainous regions, the cultivation and processing of **sweet potatoes** has been promoted. In Pangyo county, Kangwon province, Caritas supported one pilot project and similar initiatives are being planned.

Addressing the damaging effects of deforestation is key to saving the environment. Although the implementation of a project for the **rehabilitation of a tree nursery** in Tongchon county, Kangwon province, is not yet completed, future involvements in this sector are planned at village or district level.

Improving **small-scale rural industries** is a new initiative that seeks support for a small pottery factory. This production base has an all women workers team and output and quality improvements aim at providing some extra income for women and their families.

**Other humanitarian needs** are targeted for **children in residential care** (approximately 8,000 in 39 homes/institutions) who are particularly vulnerable and in need of special attention. They lack parental love and care as well as basic necessities.

Good collaboration has been established with a company in Pyongyang and Caritas is planning to continue to locally produce **clothing for distribution** to needy children.

**Capacity building** is becoming a more important component of Caritas' involvement. Study tours, scholarships, exposure trips, the provision of books, technical assistance, including impact and needs assessments will be organized if required and appropriate.

A joint initiative with the Swiss Development Cooperation Office, German Agro Action and Caritas, focuses at establishing workshops for short-term **training for farmers in machinery maintenance**.

Old links with the 'Korean Association for Supporting the Disabled' have been revitalized and the establishment of a **resource center on disability** and **organizing an exposure tour** to China, and possibly also to Hong Kong, have been requested and are under consideration.

## **5. CARITAS' CAPACITY TO RESPOND**

Caritas-Hong Kong, at the request of Caritas Internationalis and in consultation with Caritas Coreana, has been the Liaison Agency for the DPRK since 1995. Regular visits to the DPRK take place 5 to 6 times per year with an average duration of 1 week, but if possible with an annual 4-week field trip to the more remote parts of the DPRK. In addition to planning and implementation of aid projects, Caritas-Hong Kong's advocacy work for the North Korean people remains an important component in a tense and complex political environment.

In 1996, a group of NGOs formed a Consortium and established the Food Aid Liaison Unit (FALU) to operate within the World Food Program (WFP) to support non-resident NGOs with programming, monitoring and reporting on their humanitarian assistance. While the international FALU staff is selected by the Consortium, they are regular WFP employees, with their salaries and operational costs paid by the Consortium of presently four organizations (Action of Churches Together, Caritas, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and World Vision International). At present FALU has one international

staff and two national staff members, who provide excellent service to Caritas, especially in regard to the monitoring of food aid, health inputs and assistance to residential childcare institutions.

Planning and implementation of projects in the health sector is done in close collaboration with WHO and involvements related to the agriculture/food security sector are within the framework of the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Environment Protection Program (AREP) under UNDP.

## **6. THE CARITAS BENEFICIARIES**

It remains imperative to follow the principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence, humanity and accountability. Caritas aid is made available to all people in need, irrespective of race, gender, religious affiliation or philosophy of life.

### **6.1 Geographical targeting**

The recent nutritional survey indicates that the northeastern provinces are the most vulnerable with South Hamgyong being the most critical. With few exceptions, Caritas will therefore continue to support mainly the provinces of Kangwon, South Hamgyong, North Hamgyong and Ryanggang. Limited arable land, mountainous territory, extreme climatic conditions, large urban populations, a decaying infrastructure and low government priority for resource allocation are the main problems these four provinces face.

In general, the farming community and people with access to land tend to be better off in terms of food security. North Korea is, however, a highly urbanized country with about 60 percent of the population living in towns, and as a result cities and industrialized counties are developing.

Like the UN organizations and other NGOs working in the DPRK, Caritas upholds the policy of 'no access, no food aid'. WFP's map on 'vulnerability to food insecurity in accessible counties' provides guidance for aid provisions from Caritas.

### **6.2 Beneficiary groups**

According to the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal 2003, the most vulnerable groups in the DPRK are identified as:

- ◆ all children under five years of age,
- ◆ pregnant and nursing women,
- ◆ orphaned children,
- ◆ school-aged children,
- ◆ the elderly,
- ◆ people with special needs such as the disabled and the chronically ill.

Caritas' food aid will target these groups, mostly in the four provinces specified under geographical targeting, thus about 580,000 children in nurseries and kindergartens and some 8,000 in residential homes in the whole country will benefit.

County hospitals usually serve the people of the county seat and due to transport problems only a limited number of village people. If 12 county hospitals are upgraded, at least 500,000 people will have access to better health care.

The population of the four Caritas priority provinces is approx. 7.24 million. Cooperative farms usually have 2,000 to 3,000 residents. It is, however, difficult to assess the beneficiary numbers of the other planned projects, but numbers will be in the thousands.

### **6.3 Selection criteria**

Regular access qualifies for assistance. As at 31 December 2002, the WFP had access to 162 of the 206 counties/districts (the number of counties has been reduced by 5 due to administrative restructuring), and is thus able to reach 80 to 85 percent of the total population. In Kangwon province 7 counties/districts are inaccessible, in South Hamgyong 6, North Hamgyong 5 and Ryanggang 3. These 4 provinces have a total population of 7.2 million of which 82% (5.9 million) are accessible.

The DPRK authorities by now accept that Caritas' focus is in the 4 above-mentioned provinces. Negotiations still continue in terms of reaching out to the poorest within the counties of these provinces. Poverty is widespread and many people suffer because of insufficient quality and quantity of food, access to food as well as poor health services, water and sanitation problems, etc. Setting priorities and striking a balance need in-depth understanding of the local situation and discussions with the authorities at different levels. Pilot projects need to be implemented in locations where the partner on the ground is willing to collaborate and at times also take risks.

### **6.4 Gender issues**

Gender is about the socially accepted roles of women and man in any given society. There have been enormous changes in the position of women in society in the DPRK in the last 50 years with a strong commitment to women's rights.

In the DPRK, as in many societies, women have the role of primary caretaker in the family. At the same time, participation rate in the labor force is very high, thus creating a heavy burden, even more so with the onset of economic problems in the 1990's where women needed to assume greater responsibility for food and nutrition in the household.

Caritas, being sensitive to gender issues, would like to see gender principles integrated in the humanitarian and development assistance in the DPRK. Greater participation of women in project planning, but also in monitoring activities, would be appreciated.

## **7. IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**

After eight years of providing humanitarian aid to the DPRK, procedures are generally well established and a coordinating mechanism is in place. With the limited resources available, the government and the aid community face a tough challenge in terms of improving targeting and prioritizing needs.

For most goods, Caritas obtains quotations from suppliers in South East Asia and for medical equipment and supplies from Europe. Costs, quality and services are compared and due to the fact that non-consumable goods have to last for a very long



time, not always the cheapest offer is chosen. SGS inspection is a standard requirement for food donations.

A project agreement is signed for each shipment and a distribution plan is agreed on prior to the arrival of the goods. Donations purchased in the region are usually transported on DPRK vessel free of charge, with Caritas only having to cover port charges and insurance costs. Inland transport and storage is also free for Caritas and is usually organized by the DPRK government. These are substantial and unusual contributions by an aid recipient government. There is a lot of goodwill vis-a-vis Caritas; WFP, for example, provides a US\$8 per ton subsidy for domestic transportation as well as international shipping costs for their food supplies.

Food aid deliveries are, by now, relatively easy to arrange, but all rehabilitation and development interventions that need in-depth planning, a dialogue on policy, data and information, increased transparency and accountability, are more complicated and time-consuming. In this context, the DPRK government and the donors are still on a mutual steep learning curve. The DPRK, which is technically still at war, is not ready to follow the procedures normally required by donors. Thus the difference between development cooperation and humanitarian aid has become blurred as most projects are carried out under the humanitarian aid umbrella.

## **8. MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP VISITS**

Monitoring of Caritas aid, excluding projects linked with UNDP, is done by FALU, who also gets the support of a team of international WFP emergency officers. Procedures established by WFP are followed and for each Caritas shipment a final report, detailing the agreement, arrival, distribution, use and impact as well as recommendations, is compiled.

Prior to the arrival of the goods, a distribution plan for the grant is agreed with the relevant government department. At entry into the country, the goods are checked and afterwards distributed by the government. For non-food items, difficulties or delays can occur due to the lack of transport facilities or petrol.

The three FALU team members, who spend about 50 percent of their time in the field, then start checking that aid is reaching the identified target groups. For field trips the submission of travel plans one week in advance is required. Transparency and flexibility remain issues and permissions to occasionally include unplanned visits are difficult to obtain. Although once trust and mutual understanding with local counterparts have been established, ad hoc visits/stops are at times possible. Problems encountered during monitoring visits can usually be addressed and most of the time the decisions made by the local authorities are acceptable and/or understandable. **So far Caritas feels confident that most of the aid is reaching the right people and no major aid diversion has been discovered.**

Regular visits by Caritas-Hong Kong will continue for planning purposes, follow-up on existing projects, monitoring missions with FALU or UNDP/AREP and for exposing donors and partners to the reality of the DPRK. Improving and deepening channels of direct communication with different DPRK partners assists the process of moving from basic need provisions to sustainable development.

## **9. COORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENT, UN AGENCIES AND NGOS**

A coordination mechanism is in place with the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) facilitating and ensuring an effective and well-coordinated approach. Caritas, whenever not present in-country, is represented at interagency and/or sector meetings through the FALU. Stakeholders, the government, UN agencies and NGO community, are generally eager to provide assistance in a coordinated, logical and timely manner. Minor overlapping at times is, however, difficult to avoid as not all non-resident NGOs are part of the sharing process.

The **Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee** serves as a coordinating body for Caritas' activities, provides guidance in terms of aid priorities, arranges field trips and meetings with line ministries and other possible partners. The dialogue with North Korean officials remains important in order to explore different channels and ways of collaboration and foster partnerships, but also with regards to creating a better understanding in terms of the requirements for rehabilitation and development programming.

The number of resident NGOs (approx. 10 organizations) and UN agencies has not changed in recent years and of this community less than 100 foreign nationals are permanently residing in the DPRK.

A joint capacity building project (agricultural mechanization training) with a local organization, a resident foreign government partner and resident NGO and Caritas, is a new pilot project to be tested.

Assistance provided by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and its members, especially the Mennonite Central Committee (Canada/USA) complement the Caritas program thanks to the close collaboration established over the years.

Although the Korean Catholic Association is not implementing Caritas projects due to capacity and other constraints, contacts are maintained. Caritas delegations usually attend the Church services and provide information on interventions planned or taken.

## **10. DONOR INFORMATION, ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING**

Caritas-Hong Kong, the Liaison Agency for the Caritas network, will facilitate visits of partner agencies to the DPRK, provide required information, updates and trip reports during the implementation phase. An audited account together with a final report will be submitted 6-9 months after completion of the project phase.

## **11. DURATION OF APPEAL: 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004**

## **12. ASSISTANCE PLANNED ACCORDING TO SECTORS**

Food aid	US\$ 996,000	37.3%
Health	US\$ 350,000	13.1%
Agriculture/forestry/rural industries	US\$ 730,000	27.4%
Non-food items	US\$ 120,000	4.5%
Capacity building	US\$ 200,000	7.5%
FALU contribution	US\$ 80,000	3.0%
Operational costs of Caritas-Hong Kong	US\$ 180,000	6.7%
Contingencies	US\$ 14,000	0.5%

**13. BUDGET****13.1 Food Aid**

Oil for approx. 580,000 nursery/kindergarten children or PNW (3 months x 30 gr./day = 1,566mt x US\$400)	US\$ 626,000
Sugar, oil, canned fish etc. for 8,000 children in residential care	US\$ 120,000
Inputs for local food production	US\$ 200,000
Food for special interventions	US\$ 50,000

**13.2 Health**

Basic equipment and medical supplies to 12 county hospitals	US\$ 300,000
Other essential health care supplies	US\$ 50,000

**13.3 Agriculture/Forestry/Rural industries**

Inputs for cooperative farms (6)	US\$ 300,000
Plastic sheeting, local production or import (2 mio sq. m)	US\$ 150,000
Sweet potato processing project	US\$ 150,000
Pilot project in support of small scale rural industries	US\$ 50,000
Rehabilitation of small scale tree nurseries at village or district level	US\$ 80,000

**13.4 Other humanitarian needs**

Support for baby homes, boarding schools and orphanages (approx. 8,000 children in 39 institutions) with daily necessities such as clothing, underwear, shoes, eating/cooking utensils, medicine, soap, toys, school material, sports equipment, etc	US\$ 120,000
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**13.5 Capacity building**

Establishing a resource center on disability and exposure tour to PRC and Hong Kong for 'Korean Association for Supporting the Disabled'	US\$ 100,000
Support for a training center for farm mechanics (EURO30,000 received from SDC/Swiss Government already)	US\$ 70,000
Books, technical assistance, visits abroad, consultancies, meetings etc. (lump sum)	US\$ 30,000

**13.6 FALU contribution 2003** US\$ 80,000

**13.7 Operational costs** - 8 percent or approximately US\$ 180,000

**13.8 Contingencies** US\$ 14,000

**T o t a l** **US\$2,670,000**

Figures rounded to nearest hundred and based on previous DPRK SOAs.

**Flexibility in terms of commodities and beneficiaries is required; needs are changing and priorities are established in close coordination with WFP.**

**Donors are encouraged to designate contributions towards the SOA, indicating preference sectors. Caritas-Hong Kong, together with the local partners, will then decide on priorities.**

#### **14. BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION**

Funds in response to this appeal should be transferred directly to the following bank accounts:

##### **Caritas-Hong Kong's US\$ A/C No. 616-101094-106**

Fortis Bank Asia HK  
27/F, Fortis Bank Tower  
77-79 Gloucester Road  
Hong Kong  
Swift Code: GEBA HK KW  
Remark: North Korea

##### **Caritas-Hong Kong EURO A/C. No. 0010009-01-8**

Deutsche Bank (Asia)  
51/F, Cheung Kong Center  
2 Queen's Road  
Hong Kong  
Remark: North Korea

#### **15. CLOSING REMARKS**

- ◆ The recent nutritional survey jointly carried out by the DPRK Government, UNICEF and WFP, indicates that the proportion of young children underweight had dropped from 61 percent in 1998 to 21 percent in 2002; wasting, or acute malnutrition, fell from 16 percent to 9 percent, and stunting, or chronic malnutrition, was down from 62 percent to 42 percent. Although there is considerable improvement, the underweight rate is still high and the stunting rate very high.
- ◆ The problems the DPRK is facing are beyond what aid agencies like Caritas can do, but future efforts should include three main components: **humanitarian aid, support for long-term development, and peace building and reconciliation initiatives**. The next Caritas DPRK Country Group meeting plans to map out a strategy for the next 3 years.
- ◆ Humanitarian crises in many other parts of the world, the slowdown in the global economy and increased political tensions on the Korean peninsula are affecting the aid programs for North Korea. Contributions are decreasing but reality for the average North Korean remains harsh and the struggle for survival continues.

**PLEASE CONTINUE SUPPORTING CARITAS' WORK IN NORTH KOREA!**

Hong Kong, April 2003/kz

Appendix I: SOA 15/2002 - List of projects

Appendix II: Map (see: [www.relief.web.int](http://www.relief.web.int) - Map Center)