



Asia – Oceania:

Heavy damage from natural disasters

In the last few weeks, several countries in Asia and Oceania have been devastated by natural disasters affecting tens of thousands of people who have lost their homes, livelihood, and many family members. These countries are:

Taiwan: Typhoon Morakot

Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia: Typhoons Ketsana and Miranae

Indonesia: Earthquake

India: Floods in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka

Samoa and Tonga: Tsunami



The International Council General has sent emergency funds to some of these countries for the initial urgent help required. The countries need more funding in the coming weeks to continue to provide support once more long-term plans have been drawn up.

We are asking all of you, in Vincentian solidarity and charity to help the poor victims of these disasters by making a donation now

Help us to support the Society!

You can send your donations by cheque to the Confederation's headquarters or by bank transfer to:

Banque CIC- Paris Bac

2 Bd Raspail 75007 Paris, France

IBAN: **FR76 3006 6100 4100 0105 8120 129**

SWIFT : CMCIFRPP

In the name of: Confédération Internationale - Société de St Vincent de Paul

India

In India, the floods in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are really the worst in 100 years.

18 million people and 470 villages were affected. Many houses were swept away and almost all the villages submerged in the flood water. Civil and Military authorities have responded, NGO's have come forward to help the flood victims with their most urgent needs. The Andhra Pradesh Government initially estimated the damage caused by the flood at € 1.7 billion mainly affecting public infrastructure (roads, irrigation, power & communication), agriculture and horticulture, animal and husbandry, fisheries and housing. Sadly, even many of the families helped by the SSVP and some of our members are said to have been victims themselves of this calamities.

The National President reported that they have decided to give immediate aid in the form of food, clothing and utensils to the victims. All the 9 Central Councils in the Andhra Pradesh Region are contributing their services and financial assistance to this urgent cause.

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Philippines



Bro. Salvador G. Silverio, National President of the Philippines reported that typhoon "Ondoy" hit Manila with a historic record rainfall leaving in its wake hundreds of fatalities and thousands of homes under water. The National Council decided to give immediate food assistance to at least 2000 families. CGI approved 5000 euros and Australia donated US\$16,952.00 to help the poor and the victims.

It is sad that even some of our members are said to have been victims themselves of this calamity.

Taiwan

Bro. Jimmy Wu (former Taiwan Central Council President) is coordinating the relief plan for Typhoon Morakot victims in Taiwan. The team is working closely with the CM fathers in Taiwan to help the poor and the needy. CGI has approved 5,000 euros as emergency relief. Hong Kong Central Council decided to donate the September church door collection for Typhoon Morakot victims.

SSVP Taiwan is currently setting up a rehabilitation plan of around 25,200 euros for the post-typhoon re-construction stage. They plan to distribute help to the counties of Nantou, Tai Tung Chiayi, Kaohisung and Ping Tung.

Vietnam

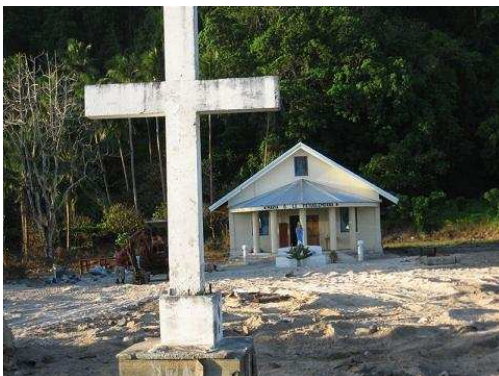
Bro Mai Cam Tuê, Coordinator in Vietnam informed us that typhoon "Ketsana" hit central Vietnam and killed 113 in the coastal provinces of Quang Tri, Huê. The typhoon also damaged the Coastal provinces of Quang Ngai and Danang, causing the collapse of hundreds of houses, breaching river banks, causing flooding and mudslides that affected tens of thousands of houses. The SSVP Vietnam collected 400kg of rice from some friends and local Vincentians to help the victims. However, up to now, they do not have enough support as there are many victims and homeless people.



Indonesia

In Indonesia, Bro. Alfonso Nainggolan, National President reported that SSVP is seeking information from the Diocese of Padang about what the SSVP can do to help the earthquake victims as there is no Society in the Province of West Sumatra.

Oceania: Samoa and Tonga



St. Mary Star of the Sea Church left unscathed while everything around was wiped out

In Oceania, Samoa and Tonga experienced a very serious earthquake and tsunami; as the Society of St Vincent de Paul does not have a very strong presence there, the assistance will be managed by the nearby National Council of New Zealand which has launched an appeal for their Twinned Conferences, to which CGI contributed 10,000 euros to top up the appeal in New Zealand for Samoa and Tonga. Councils and Conferences in New Zealand have excelled once again and responded with the generosity of spirit they are renowned for. The National President, Br Michael Hanrahan says that both the Samoa and Tonga relief projects will be an ongoing commitment for the National Council of New Zealand.



Samoa



The funds will be used to rebuild people's lives and advice will be sought from those working at the coal-face on the best way to proceed. Canterbury Area Council President Keith Norton and his team have loaded two containers with non perishable food items, clothing and towels, kitchenware, sheets. Four containers also left Auckland on the 23 October sponsored by the Polynesian shipping company. Young Adult Vinnies working at the company rallied together and put a proposal to their Executive Manager. Other Young Adults from the region have been working till late at night filling the containers with contributions received from the people of Auckland. St Vincent de Paul representatives will be on hand to coordinate distribution to the most affected areas.

Tonga

Nuiatoputapu, an island 650 kilometres from the mainland was struck by the tsunami. The island has a population of approximately 1500 inhabitants and because the island is so isolated a boat is only able to visit twice a year. Fr Mateo, a Tongan priest based in Newlands, New Zealand is visiting the island this month. He will speak to the local priest on the island and will evaluate the extent of the damage, advising the National Council of New Zealand on the best way to assist and support the relief effort.

*The Vincentians in all these countries need you, your generosity and prayers to help the victims of these disasters!
CGI thanks you in advance for your generous solidarity!*

Europe: « The Mobility project – Golden age taking off! »



On Tuesday 13 October 2009, twenty-five people from all over Europe came together at the CGI offices in Paris for the latest meeting of the European volunteers « Mobility Project » network. This project, supported by a European Union grant, is intended to allow volunteers of 50 plus to gain experience in various European countries, in order to deepen and improve their own understanding of their voluntary work with the poorest people.

A few figures about the project

19 registrations 10 trips completed 5 trips planned 3 non-SVP organisations interested
43 % of the budget allocated by the EU has been spent; : 27 % on exchange trips.

Countries taking part and trips organised...					
Romania	2 visits	3 guests	Belgium		2 guests
Hungary	1 visit	3 guests	Italy	3 visits	
France	3 visits	1 guest	Ireland	1 visit	1 guest
England&Wales		4 guests	Scotland	2 visits	
Germany	1 visit		Spain	1 visit	

Feedback from exchange trips by the volunteers is all very positive. The results of the first evaluation questionnaires show a real desire on the part of those involved to be encouraged by the projects visited in renewing their own actions in the field. The Vincentians also recognise the importance of sharing their good experience and the need to create and weave new contacts among volunteers in order to be more effective for the least fortunate. Most of the participants have never found any problems while organising the trips or during their time in the host country. On the contrary they have often had a wonderful welcome and now want to encourage other retired people to take part in social voluntary work.





For example, two Austrian Vincentians went to Scotland from 6 to 9 September 2009 and were able to visit 3 prisons. Used to working in a prison environment, they asked questions about the organisation and modernisation of Scottish prisons. They were also able to meet and talk to the inmates and discuss the prison conditions, the training they receive for work, and their future plans.

Erwin Derler, Contact for Austria, reports: *«Personally speaking, I have been able to learn a lot from this exchange. I have gained from this experience, learning that it is important to care for the prisoners and also for their family and relations. It is an almost limitless field of work. Last week I spoke to the chaplain at our remand centre Graz who assured me this was also important for Austrian prisoners. He suggested I complete a form to apply as a prison visitor to the Austrian Ministry of Justice. The SVP president of our Regional Council also promised me financial support and promotion for this project throughout Austria*

at the next national meeting in January 2010. »

At this meeting, the Contacts and partners for the project reflected on the benefits and contributions from this project for the Vincentians and for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul as a whole. They also suggested several ideas to ensure the Project continues and why not, they envisioned a « Mobility Project 2! ».

In the meantime, there are still many options available for European Vincentians over 50 who want to renew their work and their projects with people in need. Please visit our webpage: <http://www.ssvpglobal.org/index.php/en/mobility-project.html> or contact marie.grosjean@ozanet.org for further information.



30th Anniversary of « Mains Ouvertes » (Open Hands):



Among the criteria for allocation of EU funding, including openness and collaboration with other associations: the participation of several European Vincentians in the celebration of the 30-year anniversary of the French « Mains Ouvertes » (Open Hands) association from 16 to 18 October 2009 is a good illustration. This association welcomes and supports excluded people: alcoholics, former prisoners, migrants, deprived young people, etc. on the way to human, social and employment reintegration, built around sustainable development. For this, « Open hands » collects items and equipment donated by individuals and companies in the region. Deprived people follow specific training courses so they can then repair, maintain and organise the many items which are then sold at low prices. It now provides employment for 130

people, including 25 paid staff, 60 volunteers and 45 « companions ». Overall, some 3000 people have benefited from help from « Open Hands » since the association's beginnings. It has just opened two more branches in France and very soon at Dakar in Senegal.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was represented by the Board of Management of the Union des Œuvres Françaises, 2 Belgians and 5 Hungarians taking part on behalf of the Mobility Project, and Marie Grosjean of the CGI. Everyone took part in discussions on topics related to « Integration and sustainable development », « Changing outlook for better integration ». They visited warehouses, asked questions of the Chairman and all his team, and although Open Hands is not a religious organisation, a very worthwhile inter-religious dialogue took place between Christians and Muslims.