Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 77th Edition of VIVAT Newsletter!

This issue begins with the stories of two major events at the United Nations recently: Conference on Migration in Marrakech, Morocco, 10-11 December 2018 (p. 2) and Conference on Climate Change (COP24) in Katowice, Poland, 2-15 December, 2018 (p. 3). We also share with you, VIVAT International’s Written Statement submitted the UN Commission on Social Development (CSocD) early November 2018 on the ‘Rights of the marginalized to social protection’ prior to the UNCSocD57 to be held in February 2019 (p. 7).

From national and local levels we received some stories of their best practices. Four stories come from Indonesia. The one is about SSpS Sisters of East Flores initiative of planting mangroves to prevent coastal erosion (p. 3). Another story is about Sr. Genobeba’s participation at An Annual Conference on SDGs in Jakarta (p. 5). The third is about capacity building workshop for VIVAT members held in Sorong, West Papua (p. 6). The fourth is about VIVAT Indonesia’s humanitarian work for the victims of disasters in the country (p. 11).

The Final Statement by the participants of VIVAT Workshop in Tepotzlan, Mexico, is also included in this issue (p. 4). Also included is a Statement made by the SSpS Sisters in solidarity with the victims of the mining dam collapse in Brumadinho, in the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil (p. 10).

Fr. John Dear, a contributor to VIVAT shared with us his story about non-violence March in Washington, D.C. on September 21, 2018 (p. 8). Meanwhile, Fr Roy Thomas, SVD tells us about Janvikas Society receiving “Madhya Pradesh NGO Leadership Award 2018” from the Government of India (p. 9).

This issue ends with the 10th part of introducing Sustainable Development Goals, especially on Goal no. 9 (p.12).

While thanking all the contributors, we continually invite all VIVAT members to share your stories and initiatives as a form of strengthen collaboration.

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After the Marrakesh (Morocco) Conference on Migration on December 10-11, 2018, the United Nations finally approved and adopted the document “Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration” (GCM) at the UN General Assembly taking place in New York on December 19, 2018.

It was a long process. Prior to the conference and approval of the document, the United Nations agencies and other stakeholders had negotiated in order to finalize the document. In July 2018, during the 6th Intergovernmental Negotiations on GCM, for example, VIVAT International interacted with the representatives of Brazil, Canada, Paraguay, South Africa and El Salvador along with two other NGOs. The collective effort of civil society was made visible through frequent meetings taking into consideration the leanings and oppositions by different governments in the hall. It was a joint action to mobilize for people friendly compact, as several civil society organizations, labor movements, migration forums and individuals came together on how to make the best interventions. The civil society went to the representatives and informally placed before them the points such as adopting the principle of non-refoulement that would protect the irregular migrants from forced return to their countries; non-criminalization of migrants, access to services, no detention of children, inclusion of climate refugees and mechanisms for review and follow-up. Though the civil society did not get the desired language as advocated for, there were positive changes. For instance, though the exact word “Nonrefoulement” was removed the concept was kept. VIVAT also joined all the deliberations in lobbying for the language with several meetings outside the sessions during the negotiations and in the drafting of the statements on critical issues.

The last two statements were worked out together under the banner, Civil Society Action Committee. VIVAT also endorsed several other Statements made by other groups on similar lines.

As part of NGO Committee on Migration, VIVAT also contributed to the drafting of a pager, “GCM at a Glance” and a Compendium on “Concrete Policies, Practices and Partnerships to Promote Implementation of the Global Compacts for Migrants and Refugees.” The purpose of this document is to create awareness. The compendium aimed at providing the GCM friendly States with the ready material to speak for country level commitments and actions. It offers certain strategies and actions being undertaken by governments, civil society and other actors to realize the vision of New York Declaration, GCM, Global compact on Refugees (GCR) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). VIVAT also signed the joint civil society statement delivered at Marrakech on 10 December 2018.

Some of the VIVAT members also have signed on.

Throughout the process of GCM negotiations the key debates among the member states were in the areas of differentiation between regular and irregular migrants, between migrants and refugees, applicability of international protection and non-refoulement to migrants, the assertion of sovereignty and opening of borders, and the need of capacity building. The push from the civil society was constantly for human rights, vulnerable population, multilateralism, inclusion of stakeholders and a humanitarian approach. Internal displaced people and mixed migration are two areas that require attention in policies.

On 19 December 2018 the GCM was adopted by the UN General Assembly with 152 countries approving it. (5 against, 12 Abstained, and 24 absent). The implementation is truly a challenge given the animosity that exists. However, it has been a great learning. VIVAT aims to follow up with GCM through Mission Visit advocacy, awareness, integrating GCM into High Level Political Forum 2019 and working with groups for building momentum on follow up.

By Helen Saldanha & Robert Mirsel
THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY!

- A Note from COP 24 in Katowice, Poland
- Students’ Initiative of Planting Mangroves

The Katowice Climate Change Conference was held in Katowice, Poland from 2-15 December 2018, which included the three governing bodies of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement, and the three subsidiary bodies. This conference was attended by over 22,000 participants, including nearly 14,000 government officials, over 7,000 representatives from UN bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society organizations, and 1,500 members of the media. Tasked with delivering a “rule book” for the Paris Agreement, and amid calls for greater ambition to address the climate crisis, the Katowice Climate Change Conference largely delivered, by producing a package that facilitate countries’ efforts to implement the Paris Agreement.

This meeting focused on completing work on the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP), a set of decisions meant to operationalize the Paris Agreement. To this end, parties adopted the Katowice Climate Package, which includes decisions on nearly all of the issues mandated as part of the PAWP, including: on mitigation; further guidance in relation to nationally determined contributions (NDCs), common time frames, and modalities, work programme, and functions under the Paris Agreement of the forum; the global stocktake; and modalities for the periodic assessment of the Technology Mechanism, and setting a new collective quantified goal on finance; on technology: scope of and modalities for the periodic assessment of the Technology Mechanism, and the technology framework; the modalities, procedures, and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support; the global stocktake; and modalities and procedures for the effective operation of the committee to facilitate implementation and promote compliance.

Students’ Initiative of Planting Mangroves at Nurabelen Beach, Larantuka, Indonesia

Mater Inviolata Catholic Middle School in Larantuka, Indonesia, has a unique way to convey its message of caring for the environment. The students (age of 13-15) have been practicing this for the last three years. Luckily they have been successful, so they continue their work.

Mr. Ben Pehan, the headmaster assistant in public relation who has creative ideas in how to extract funds from the society and government. With the full support of the school principal, Sr. Yulia Niron, SSpS, Mr. Pehan motivates his students to not only obtain funding from their own school or ask their parents’ support. Rather, he encourages them to go out - go to the government offices across the town of Larantuka. Students were divided into small groups with one as their coordinator. “We understood that our students’ program is for the greater benefit for our mother earth and in turn, for the human being, so we encourage participation, “assures Sr. Yulia Niron.

Students were divided into small groups with one as their coordinator. “We understood that our students’ program is for the greater benefit for our mother earth and in turn, for the human being, so we encourage participation, “assures Sr. Yulia Niron.

With the simple proposal that they crafted together, they enter each government office, greet the officers and inform them of their intention. And it happened! They came to the vice regent’s office, Mr. Agus Boli. Kids were warmly welcomed and after taking pictures together, they reclined on the vice regent’s official place for the meeting. How students felt proud to be in that special place and had chance to ask for money to finance their environment effort programs directly to the vice regent of East Flores.

They collected an impressive amount of funding and the amount increases each year. Funds are used for purchasing the mangroves, ordering their food, paying the transportation to the location even inviting the local media to cover their activity during the day. Students themselves organized the whole program, including contacting the mangrove center that trees are ready to be planted.

I took part on their recent environment program by planting one thousand mangroves in an environmentally devastated area on December 15, 2018. We chose Nurabelen beach not far from Lewotobi volcano in East Flores. The reason was that spot is very much affected by erosion from waves crashing on the shore. Some villagers had begun to plant mangroves in a small area, but they were not able to continue their task. So we came far from the east and invited the local people to do something for their troubled beach. We were guided by the former village head Mr. Simon to the two places of the beach, and with lots of student and their teachers planting the mangrove tillers on the coastal area of Nurabelen, sub-district of Ilebura Flores East.

While empowering the local people to purchase their 1000 little mangroves, we invited them to protect their beach from sea waves by planting the trees. Planting the mangrove tillers can be done by anyone who cares and at any time possible. Together we can!

Sr. Margareta Ada, SSpS, Larantuka/ VIVAT Indonesia
From November 12 to 16, 2018, 56 participants belonging to 8 Religious Member Congregations of VIVAT International, Lay Associates and a guest member of the Order of the Friars Minor, met in Tepoztlán, Morelos, Mexico, for a national level workshop to know the goals and objectives of VIVAT International.

The workshop addressed issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) by sharing information about particular situations of human dignity, understanding United Nations (UN) systems and mechanisms for Working towards a global community that respects human rights and live fraternally in justice and peace.

From our daily life and personal encounter with our brothers and sisters, we know the grave violations of the fundamental rights suffered by our people in Mexico. From this reality we feel the call to accompany them to be protagonists of their own history and thus, to propose alternatives for a dignified life.

We have the opportunity to make visible and commit ourselves to fight against the situations of injustice in the international arena through VIVAT International that has a consultative status in the UN.

Considering that VIVAT International has a mission to work with people and groups living in poverty, to promote human rights and sustainable development, we recognize its potential to build a better world by working for ecological sustainability, protection of biodiversity, legal interventions in dehumanizing situations and building an alliance to work as a network with other international organizations. We realize that it is an urgent need, that our religious congregations and lay associates join and links hands in collaboration with likeminded networks, to strengthen our commitment and service to our people in our communities, we commit ourselves as members of VIVAT present in Mexico to:

a. Continue working with migrants, against human trafficking, the environment and against land grabbing to promote life and human dignity;

b. Work towards formation of VIVAT Group in Mexico, for advocacy to achieve the goals previously proposed.

The Kingdom of God urges us to work for the most disadvantaged "so that all may have life and have it in fullness" (John 10,10). We place our trust in the working of the Holy Spirit that accompanies us.

Tepoztlán, Morelos, Mexico, November 16, 2018:

The Participants of the Workshop:
- Congregation of the Missionary Servants of the Holy Spirit
- Society of the Divine Word
- Congregation of the Holy Spirit
- Comboni Missionary Sisters
- Sisters of the Holy Cross
- Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo
- Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate
- Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus

Lay Associates of:
- Missionaries of the Divine Word
- Oblate Associates
- Comboni Missionaries
- San Carlos Borromeo
In order to strengthen the consolidation and acceleration of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by all national and regional stakeholders, Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas) held an annual National SDGs 2018 Conference, which was opened by Mr. Just Kalla, the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, and attended by thousands of participants from various parties and regions throughout Indonesia. Participants from various backgrounds such as central government, local government, NGOs and national CSOs, international organizations, field implementers, PHILANTHROPY AND BUSINESS, academics, experts and media. The conference was held for 2 days starting Monday, 17 - Tuesday, December 18 2018 at the Fairmont-Gelora Hotel Bung Karno, Jl. Asia Afrika No.8 Rt 1 / Rw 3, Jakarta Pusat.

This conference was held because Indonesia is one of the countries with a high commitment to implement and achieve the SDGs. Under the coordination of the Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), Indonesia has aligned the SDGs with Nawacita as a national development vision, which is formulated in the 2015-2019 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and development programs and further elaborated in the Government Work Plan annual budget documents. In its implementation, Indonesia upholds the SDGs principles, namely (i) universal development principles, (ii) integration, (iii) no one left behind, and (iv) inclusiveness.

In the Progress Report on the Implementation of the SDGs and the Implementation of the Conference, which was presented by the head of Bappenas as the Coordinator of the Implementation of the SDGs reported that, since the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and until 2017, the Government of Indonesia has prepared and started implementing SDGs all stakeholders. The preparation and implementation of the SDGs is carried out in an inclusive manner involving the government and parliament, philanthropy and business people, community organizations and the media, as well as academics and experts. As one manifestation of Indonesia's commitment in implementing the SDGs, a Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 59 of 2017 concerning Implementation of SDGs has been established as the legal basis for implementing SDGs in Indonesia. Furthermore, Ministerial Regulation (Permen) and Ministerial Decree (Kepmen) PPN / Head of Bappenas have been stipulated as technical regulations for implementing TPB / SDGs. This has underpinned the establishment of the National Coordination Team for the implementation of the TPB / SDGs, the compilation of the 2017-2019 National Action Plan (RAN) SDGs, the compilation of the 2017-2030 SDGs Roadmap, as well as the mandatory preparation of Regional Action Plans (RAD) in all regions.

The SDGs Annual Conference is also intended to provide input to policy makers to implement development programs better in achieving SDGs 2030 targets.

This implementation is carried out by the Ministry of PPN / Bappenas as an institution designated as the coordinator of implementing SDGs in Indonesia by involving all stakeholders.

The intent and purpose of the SDGs Annual Conference in general is to consolidate and communicate the achievement of SDGs with all parties both at national and regional levels, as well as other parties at regional and global levels and provide input to policy makers to implement development programs better in achieving SDGs 2030 targets.

The specific objectives of the SDGs Annual Conference are:
1. To discuss the issues and lessons learned in implementing SDGs at the Asia Pacific Regional level.
2. To encourage multi-stakeholders to implement the SDGs as a movement at the local level;
3. To increase the involvement of the business sector, philanthropy, and community organizations in the implementation of the SDGs;
4. To speed up the achievement of SDGs based on the results of research and innovation; and
5. to formulate new financing innovations to support the implementation of SDGs in Indonesia.

By Sr. Genobeba Amaral, SSps
VIVAT Indonesia
The Leadership of SVD - Ende Province held an ongoing formation workshop for SVD confreres and partner missionaries who are working in Papua and Ambon, at Remu, Sorong, in West Papua, from 7th till 12th May, 2018. 26 SVDs, 4 SSpS Sisters, and 5 partner missionaries from various parishes participated in it.

The workshop was held because of the special social and economic context of Papua and Ambon, which are underdeveloped when compared with other parts of Indonesia. Moreover, it is repeatedly said that the people of these areas, in particular the original inhabitants of Papua, are facing problems regarding the violation of their human rights.

Essentially, this workshop was part of a renewal program of our life and work as religious missionaries in the context of a society that is facing many challenges. Understanding the struggles of the community is the locus of the pastoral context of the mission. This necessitates the identification of problems they are facing in their context.

Therefore, social analysis is a needed dimension. The pastoral methodology of See, Judge & Act, was used in the workshop. Firstly, there was an identification and analysis of the problems of the community. Secondly, the results of the identification and analysis were reviewed in light of the Word of God. The basic question was asked, “What does God want missionaries and religious to do?” Thirdly, a concrete pastoral response was agreed upon.

“This wasn’t just an explanation of social analysis, but rather a hands-on approach to doing social analysis. This resulted in an evaluation of our pastoral work. For me, the process was very good and of great value,” said Fr. Marianus Koba Toyo, SVD, one of the workshop participants.

Fr. Lukas Jua SVD, the SVD-IDE Provincial, and the SSpS-Java Provincial, Sr. Odilia, SSpS, gave input and also took part in the process of the workshop which was chaired by Fr. Hubert Thomas, SVD. In addition to giving input regarding the pastoral context of the districts of Sorong and Manokwari, and the pastoral priorities of the Diocese of Dorong-Manokwari, Bishop Hilarion Datus Lega, also participated in the daily discussion, reflections and prayers.

The SSpS and SVDs from the district of Jayapura focussed on the pastoral works that are given priority there, namely the efforts to make Papua malaria-free in the near future. Meanwhile in Merauke, a more systematic approach to providing a stable food supply was discussed. In the area of Teluk Bintuni, the people are facing a massive ecological disaster, with the destruction of their native forests. Our missionaries have taken an active role in trying to protect the environment. In Ambon, the SVDs are supporting local business projects which are trying to lift people out of poverty. Raising the low standard of education has become a focus of attention for both SVDs and SSpS.

What will be achieved? The creation of private and communal property and respect for the personal dignity of humanity. “I hope that the Papuan people will be able to stand up for themselves, to take control of their destiny and their rights as befitting people who have been created by God and who live in this place,” said Sr. Odilia, SSpS, the Provincial of the SSpS Jawa Province, who is Papuan by birth. As a child, she experienced the violence and death which were inflicted on the Papuan people. She said, “I have needed 30 years to overcome, to heal the trauma which I experienced as a child.”

The workshop took place in a fraternal environment, and each participant supported one another. Fr. Alan Nasraya, SVD, the Rector of SVD-Sorong, was assisted by parishioners of St. Peter’s Parish, Remu, Sorong, in taking care of the logistics and accommodations. Fr. Gorgonius Gema Guntur, SVD, Rector of SVD-Jayapura, coordinated the sessions of the workshop.

By Eman Embu, SVD
JPIC Coordinator of SVD - Ende Province/
VIVAT Indonesia
“Addressing Inequalities and Challenges to Social Inclusion through Fiscal, Wage, and Social Protection Policies”

Written Statement by VIVAT International at the UN CSocD, 57th Session

Prior to the 57th Session of the United Nations Commission for Social development, VIVAT International submitted a written Statement addressing the rights of the people in rural and suburban areas, people with disabilities, and people with HIV/AIDS to social protection. Following was is the whole statement:

Introduction
Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25th, 2015, efforts have been made by all stakeholders to implement and make this development agenda come true for all people and the planet. The motto “Leave no one behind” seems to be powerful enough to push everyone forward. A lot of progress has been made during these past three years, as reported and shared through voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at High Level Political Forum sessions since 2016. The UN Report of 2018 also gives us the hope that by 2030 this Agenda will work in every country and region (See: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018).

However gaps remain and many are still being left behind. People in rural and suburban slum areas, people with HIV/AIDS, persons with disabilities, and persons with mental health problems are the most vulnerable ones to be uncounted in the development process.

Inequalities and Challenges
People in rural and suburban slum areas tend to be ignored and neglected in government programs and have less access to public services such as health care, free basic education, electricity and public transportation, safe drinking water and sanitation. Many people in rural areas are also excluded from government statistics which results in being excluded from access to social benefits. In some countries, multinational corporations and governments have grabbed the lands and territories of the people in rural areas for mining, plantations, or electric dams, without any compensation; this situation has resulted in the increase in poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. Finally, children of poor families in rural and suburban slums areas are often vulnerable by being victims of cheap labor, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and violence.

Persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and persons with mental health disabilities are among those most maltreated in society. They are discriminated against in education, health care, access to public services, and social protection. These peoples’ voices also tend to be ignored; their participation and contribution in the political, economic and socio-cultural affairs and development process are not recognized in many societies. In some societies persons of these kinds are labeled and stigmatized as a burden for their families and society as a whole. It is often found that persons with disabilities are underpaid and discriminated against from access to certain jobs and prestigious positions in their work places which then results in extreme poverty and vulnerability among these people and a potential violation of their basic human rights (https://workspirited.com/discrimination-against-disabled-people-in-workplace).

Sustainable Development Goals and Social Protection
The Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, is a 15 year development agenda by all and for all. In relation to eradication of poverty, Goal 1, target 1. 3 calls for the governments to implement nationally and locally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors. It also calls for the achievement of a substantial coverage of the poor both in rural, suburban, and rural areas and the vulnerable, including the persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers and persons with mental health problems.

Meanwhile, Goal number 1, target 1.4 calls for the governments to ensure that all people especially the poor and the vulnerable, have access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, natural resources and inheritance. All of these are based on the 6 essential elements: dignity, people, prosperity, our planet, justice, and partnership.

Recommendations:
VIVAT International calls upon Member States to:

1. Provide fiscal policies that include the fulfillment and the protection of the rights of the suburban and rural people to food, education, health care, electricity, water and sanitation, and public transportation/infrastructure.
2. Provide fiscal policies for the medical care and health education of the persons with HIV/AIDS;
3. Provide fiscal policies that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems to have access to facilities and public services.
4. Establish national minimum wage policies that ensure the fulfillment of the basic needs (housing, food, clothing, education, health and recreation) of rural and suburban people.
5. Ensure and enact laws and policies that protect and respect persons with disabilities from discrimination, abuse and exploitation.
6. Create more job opportunities for the persons with disabilities.
7. Provide insurance policies that include the suburban, rural, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, and persons with mental health problems.
Risking Arrest at the White House

In the face of our ever-widening fascism, our steady assault on the poor, the earth, and the remnants of democracy, friends and I decided to up our ante and wage nonviolence with a modest, public Gandhian satyagraha campaign on the White House itself.

It began Friday afternoon, September 21st, in a church center in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of D.C., where we held a nonviolence training session followed by an evening panel discussion on the power and methodology of Gandhian/Kingian nonviolence through grassroots movements.

On Saturday morning, September 22nd, we gathered at 9 a.m. at the feet of the Dr. King statue near the Jefferson Memorial Tidal Basin to hear speakers call for a return to Dr. King’s wisdom of nonviolence. The rain had stopped and the water was beautifully calm. A large blue heron kept vigil at one end, and a tall white egret on another. Overhead, a flock of Canadian geese circled periodically over the statue and then landed back in the water. A U.S. military helicopter also circled overhead.

With Kit Evans Ford and George Martin as emcees, Lisa Sharon Harper of Freedom Network and 350.org urged us to break through our despair, numbness and paralysis, as Dr. King did, to protect Mother Earth. Ken Butigan outlined the strength of active organized nonviolence, as demonstrated by Dr. King, and I said it was time for all of us to rise to the occasion, and become mature champions of justice, peace and creation, that it was time for us to strive for the level of creative nonviolence modeled by Dr. King.

Then we set off. We lined up two by two, and walked off in silence, like Gandhi on the Salt March, like Thich Nhat Hanh in a Plum Village walking meditation, like Jesus on the road to civil disobedience in Jerusalem.

At the Lincoln Memorial, we knelt down in silence for a minute, as Dr. King did during the Birmingham marches. Thousands of tourists stopped to watch us, confused or curious. Each one of us held a blue sign with a Gandhi or King quote or calls such as “Abolish war, poverty, racism, nuclear weapons and environmental destruction! We want a culture of nonviolence!”

We walked, past the reflecting pool, down the sidewalk along the black stone walls of the Vietnam memorial, past the names of the war dead. A park ranger started yelling at us and taking our peace signs, but one of our peacekeepers calmed her down. Most people seemed to understand and nod their heads in quiet appreciation.

Along Constitutional Avenue and 17th Street, we took another knee, trying to stay centered in our pledge for open, heartfelt nonviolence.

Then we reached Pennsylvania Avenue and walked to Lafayette Park. With a perfect blue sky overhead and a cool breeze blowing, we stood amidst the circus of thousands of tourists, tour groups, mimes, speakers, singers and police. We lined up holding our signs facing the White House and continued our peace vigil.

Then, ten of us walked right up to the White House fence, turned our backs, and held up our signs to the thousands of tourists. We had crossed the line into the no-protest zone. The police eventually approached, cleared an area around us on the sidewalk, and told us we would soon be arrested if we did not disperse. We thanked them and stayed put.

So began our stand off, or our stand for peace. Nearly two hours later, we were still there, and realized that, in fact, the police were not going to arrest us. We ended our witness, gathered in a circle for a closing prayer, and promised one another to keep building up the Campaign Nonviolence movement of nonviolent resistance.

Our action was part of our Campaign Nonviolence National Week of Action, which registered 2668 events, marches and actions across the U.S. in all fifty states and 24 nations. Wilmington, Delaware had over 100 events. St. Paul/Minn. had ten events, including a gathering of thousands for peace. Little Rock, Memphis and Raleigh had scores of events. Throughout the week of Sept. 15-24, 2018, tens of thousands of people connected the dots between racism, poverty, greed, war, nuclear weapons and environmental destruction, and called for justice and a new culture of nonviolence. (To see the list of events, click here; you can also watch a film of the DC event on Youtube.)

By Fr. John Dear
Contributor to VIVAT International// Also posted on Waging Nonviolence
India:

Janvikas Receives "Madhya Pradesh NGO Leadership Awards 2018"

Janvikas Society received "Madhya Pradesh NGO Leadership Awards 2018" on 1st June 2018 at Pride Hotel and Convention Centre, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India.

Fr. Roy, the Director of Janvikas received the award during the function. It was organized by Dr. R.L. Bhatia, Founder, World CSR Day and World Sustainability Foundation.

The award was in recognition of the contribution the NGO has made in empowering the marginalized people especially the waste pickers and domestic workers in the major cities of Indore and Bhopal in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Janvikas also takes lead in organizing and networking with different NGOs in the city to respond to various social issues through ‘Alliance of NGOs’.

This is the fifth award that Janvikas Society receives during the past 17 years of its existence in Indore. Janvikas (means ‘Development of People’) was started in the year 2001 as an initiative of the Society of the Divine Word, India Central (INC) Province.

Ministry among Rag Pickers

With a population of 3.27 million, Indore is the most populous industrial city of Madhya Pradesh with a considerable chunk of population living in the 599 notified slums. Indore city generates over 1000 metric tons of waste everyday of which 20% are collected and managed by rag pickers. Indore has over 5000 rag pickers, most of whom are women who live on the waste picked up from the streets to make their living. Most of the women are introduced to the work at a young age by their families or neighbour and gradually turn into an independent worker when they become older. After collecting the waste, they segregate the collected waste into different categories and sell it to the local or outside wholesaler and come back home in the evening. Throughout the day they carry a load of 20-40 kg on their back and travel up to 15 kms in the city. This hard labour enables them to earn 50-70 rupees (Euro 1) per day in normal situation.

Youth Clubs:

Youth are the most vulnerable sections of the society especially in slums who need constant assistance and guidance at their adolescent age. Janvikas organizes youth in the slums and gives rise to Youth Clubs to make them responsible citizens for social change. Through youth clubs, members are provided with leadership training, career guidance, development of communication skills etc. The members of the youth club meet every month to discuss the issues pertaining to youth and take up issues of the particular slum and try to solve them. The youth organizes free eye check-up camps for the elderly, plant trees on World Environment Day, celebrate World AIDS day etc.

Healing Ministry

Women and children in the slums who are engaged in Rag Picking are exposed to hazardous life situations as they deal with all kinds of waste materials (plastic, paper, metal, glass etc). They also face the problem of non-accessibility to medical facilities and are unable to afford the expensive medical treatment. Janvikas provides medical assistance to such people in the slums through regular medical camps with the help of a professional doctor and medicines are provided free of cost.

Vocational Training Program

Unemployment is one of the major problems faced by people in the city of Indore. In order to equip women and youth with additional skills to get them employed, Janvikas initiated several vocational training programs like, training in Tailoring and Embroidery, Driving, Spoken English, Welding, Carpentry, courses on Assistant Beauty Therapist, Assistant Electrician etc. The trained women and youth either start business on their own or get employed. More than 500 students are trained every year at Janvikas.

The role of Janvikas is to facilitate this process of empowerment of the waste picking women, domestic workers and other unorganized labourers, youth and children. The process of empowering these women and children who are the last, least and the lost of the society are being continued so that they may live a dignified life and be empowered to stand on their feet.

—

Fr. Roy Thomas SVD, Director, Janvikas Society, Indore/ VIVAT India
Solidarity and Indignation Note

A Statement by the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit in North Brazil Province on Dam Breaking Tragedy in Brumadinho, Minas Gerais, Brazil

We Missionaries Servants of the Holy Spirit (Brazil North Province) express our solidarity with the families of the victims and the residents of Brumadinho-MG who suffer as a result of the tragedy that occurred on January 25 with the rupture of the dam of the mining company Vale in the Mine Feijão.

We are following through the newscasts the process of searching for survivors and asking God to help rescue those still alive and give strength and courage to all those who have lost their loved ones and their homes.

We are deeply sorry that another tragedy of such great proportions occurred only three years after what happened in Mariana. As it is a recurrence, the responsibility of the mining company and the authorities who have not taken the necessary steps to prevent this from happening is even greater.

We know that in Brazil there are a large number of large dams of mining tailings, only 450 of them in Minas Gerais. This means a great risk to the population and the environment, and if measures to control and preserve these dams are not made, we will have many other tragedies in the future, which is unacceptable.

Therefore, we reject the disregard of those responsible and the government for the issue of dams and human lives that are at risk in the case of criminal accidents like Brumadinho and Mariana and we appeal to all people of good will to:

- be attentive to the measures that must be taken in relation to the dams and affected families;
- exercise our right as citizens to demand the necessary care for the environment and safety measures in mining areas;
- that the interests of economic exploitation are not placed above human life and the integrity of Creation.

Committed to the proposal of Jesus Christ so that "all have life in abundance", we want to collaborate so that the new generations have a better future.

Sent by: Sr. Maria Percila Vieira, SSpS - BRN Provincial Coordinator and President of the Trinitas Institute.
Humanitarian Assistance to the Victims of Natural Disasters in Indonesia

In the second half 2018, a series of natural disasters struck some parts of Indonesia: earthquakes on Lombok Island of NTB Province on July 29th, 2018, a series of earthquakes followed by tsunami in Central Celebes Province on September 28th, 2018, and tsunami at Sunda Strait that hit Banten, West Java and South Sumatra Provinces on December 22nd, 2018. All of these tragedies have killed thousands of people and left other thousands in desperate situation.

In response to these tragedies, the SVD, SSpS and SCJ Provinces in Indonesia which are also Member Congregations of VIVAT Indonesia and Timor Leste took some humanitarian actions to lessen the suffering and burden of the victims through emergency activities. Since October 2018 the VIVAT Indonesia secretariat which includes some VIVAT members of the three Congregations has been directly involved in coordinating emergency assistance for the victims of the earthquakes and tsunami in Donggala, Central Celebes and of the Sunda Strait tsunami. The source of funding to support this emergency response is dependent on the contribution of the three Congregations in Indonesia and Timor Leste, of the SVD and SSpS Generalate in Rome, and of the local donors.

Earthquake in Lombok

On August 5th, 2018 an earthquake of 7.0 magnitude struck Lombok Island, of NTB Province. This earthquake caused a lot of damages and was claimed to bring many casualties. In response to this disaster, the VIVAT Indonesia Foundation through the JPIC Commission of SSpS of Java Province took some emergency actions by providing free health services, distributing logistics in the form of blankets, ready meals, baby needs, and building 24 temporary shelters/houses called hunian sementara (huntara).

Sunda Strait Tsunami and Our Response

The tsunami that occurred in Sunda-Banten Strait on December 22nd, 2018 was triggered by the volcano eruption of Anak Krakatau Mount. The tsunami wave hit the coastal area along the coast of Anyer, Pandeglang, Serang, Banten and Lampung. As an initial response from VIVAT Indonesia & JPIC SVD-SSpS of Java Province, a team visited the disaster places and did some assessments of the tsunami-affected residences in Kecamatan Sumur Village, Pandegling Regency, of Banten Province on December 27-29, 2018. Besides an initial assessments, the team brought in a small contribution in the form of kitchen equipment (eg. gas stoves, plates, sardines, coffee and tarp). This initial contribution was the entry point for contact and acquaintance with affected refugee residents and local volunteers of the "Rumah Madu Post" who became VIVAT-JPIC partners in the field.

The other response by VIVAT-JPIC SVD-SSpS Team was done on January 14-16, 2019. On this occasion the team brought along some assistance such as school supplies; books, pens, uniforms, shoes and working tools (carpentry).

Earthquake in Donggala, Central Celebes

On September 28, 2018, earthquake, tsunami and liquefaction hit Palu, Sigi and Donggala. This disaster brought many to death and loss of assets. Responding to this natural disaster, VIVAT Indonesia Foundation and JPIC-SSpS Indo-Leste took the initiative to provide humanitarian aid, helping the victims in Palu, Sigi and Donggala who were affected by this disaster. Before carrying out this mission, VIVAT Indonesia—JPIC SVD and SSps Indo-Leste team made an assessment in four (4) affected villages in Sindue Tombusabora Subdistrict on 16-23 October 2018. These four villages later became priority areas for VIVAT Indonesia—JPIC SVD-SSpS Indo-Leste in helping the affected communities by distributing logistics to the families in each community. The distribution of logistics was based on the data received from the 4 villages. The urgent needs for residents of these villages were rice, tents and mats. In total, VIVAT Indonesia-JPIC SVD-SSpS Indo-Leste distributed 39,510 kg rice, of which each family got 30 kg of rice, 400 tarpaulin sheets and 50 sheets of mat. In early January 2019 the volunteer s of VIVAT Indonesia-JPIC SVD-SSpS returned to the field in order to continue provide humanitarian aid.
SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Investment in infrastructure and innovation are crucial drivers of economic growth and development. … Bridging this digital divide is crucial to ensure equal access to information and knowledge, as well as foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

TARGETS OF SDG 9

• Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all

• Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries

• Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets

• By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities

• Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending

• Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

• Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for…industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.

• Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.

FACTS AND FIGURES

United Nations Development Programme (UNPD) gives us some figure and facts about the achievements in 2018 as follows (http://www.unpd.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-9-industry-innovation-and-infrastructures/targets.html):

• About 2.6 billion people in the developing world are facing difficulties in accessing electricity full time.

• 2.5 billion people worldwide lack access to basic sanitation and almost 800 million people lack access to water, many hundreds of millions of them in Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia.

• 1-1.5 billion people do not have access to reliable phone services.

• For many African countries, particularly the lower-income countries, the existent constraints regarding infrastructure affect firm productivity by around 40 per cent.

• Manufacturing is an important employer, accounting for around 470 million jobs worldwide in 2000 – or around 16 per cent of the world’s workforce of 2.9 billion. In 2018, it is estimated that there were more than half a billion jobs in manufacturing.

• Small and medium-sized enterprises make up over 90 per cent of business worldwide and account for between 50-60 per cent of employment.

• In countries where data are available, the number of people employed in renewable energy sectors is presently around 2.3 million. Because of strong rising interest in energy alternatives, the possible total employment for renewables by 2030 is 20 million jobs.

• In developing countries, barely 30 per cent of agricultural production undergoes industrial processing. In high-income countries, 98 per cent is processed. This suggests that there are great opportunities for developing countries in agribusiness.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 8-9 April: Economic and Social Council, Youth Forum, New York.

UN Calendar of International Days:

February:
1 : World Cancer Day
11 : International Day of Women and Girls in Science
20 : World Day of Social Justice
21 : International Mother Language Day

March:
1 : Zero Discrimination Day
3 : World Wildlife Day
8 : International Women’s Day
20 : International Day of Happiness
22 : World Water Day

April:
2 : World Autism Day
6 : International Day of Sport for Development & Peace
7 : International World Health Day
22 : Earth Day
25 : World Malaria Day
26 : World Intellectual Property Day