



ELINK

YOUR ACT FOR PEACE SUPPORTER MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2019

SITUATION REPORT: SULAWESI RECOVERING

After a devastating earthquake, your gifts are bringing clean water and shelter to thousands in need in Indonesia

LOVING OUR NEIGHBOURS

You came together through the Christmas Bowl to share our blessings with those in need

VOICES FOR JUSTICE

Advocating for the world's most vulnerable people

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

In war-torn Pakistan, building a just, peaceful society starts with breaking down the barriers to girls' education

SHARING THE SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY

Leaving a lasting legacy for communities in need

ACT FOR PEACE
CONFRONTING INJUSTICE TOGETHER
THROUGH THE **actalliance**

The international aid agency of the
National Council of Churches in Australia

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Act for Peace's local partner, Church World Service, distributes water tubs and hygiene kits in Sidera evacuation camp, Central Sulawesi. An estimated 152,000 people needed immediate water, sanitation and hygiene support due to the earthquake and tsunami.



Church World Service

EMERGENCY UPDATE

SITUATION REPORT: SULAWESI RECOVERING



Map showing the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. Tens of thousands of people lost their homes across Central Sulawesi following the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in September 2018.

After a deadly earthquake and tsunami struck Sulawesi in September, you responded quickly to deliver life-saving supplies. Months later, your gifts continue to bring clean water and shelter to thousands in need.

Over 2,000 people were killed when a 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck Indonesia's Central Sulawesi province in September last year.

As a tsunami devastated everything in its path and landslides took away entire sections of the provincial capital, Palu, people scrambled from their homes. But they found that even the earth beneath their feet offered no stability. A phenomenon known as soil liquefaction dissolved the very foundations of buildings, highways, and airfields, preventing aid workers from accessing the most affected areas.

Hundreds of thousands were in need of emergency assistance. Thankfully, our local partner in Sulawesi, Church World Service, was among the first organisations on the scene. They immediately put into action an emergency response plan to provide urgently needed drinking water and hygiene kits to those affected.

With your help, they have continued working to bring tents, sleeping mats, blankets, solar lamps and mosquito nets to families whose homes have been destroyed or damaged.

Church World Service

Four months on, access to clean drinking water remains a critical issue. Our partner is using a fleet of ten trucks to bring fresh water to around 20,000 people every day, as well as distributing thousands of jerry cans and hundreds of sanitary packs to affected families. 64 emergency latrines have been built in the evacuation camps, with another 36 currently under construction.

Rafia is one survivor who received this support. She says that when the earthquake struck, she and her family fled to an evacuation camp, but without a tent, they were forced to sleep in a graveyard.

With your support, Rafia was given a tarpaulin tent and is receiving clean water every day for cooking and drinking.

Thank you for responding so quickly and generously to our emergency appeal. Your gifts enabled our partner on the ground to deliver life-saving assistance to survivors like Rafia in their darkest hours.

The people of Sulawesi now face the long task of rebuilding their homes, communities, and livelihoods. Together, we will continue to work until families are able to get their lives back on track.



Church World Service

Rafia accesses water supplied by our local partner, Church World Service, by one of its ten trucks delivering clean water to 20,000 people every day.



Church World Service distributes tarpaulins in Karawana village, Central Sulawesi. Our partner has distributed thousands of tarpaulins, sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets, and solar lamps across Central Sulawesi since the earthquake struck.

Church World Service

Loving our Neighbours



Thousands of people across Australia shared God's love through the Christmas Bowl.

As a Christian, Reverend Frank Byatt believed he had a responsibility to share the joy of his Christmas with our brothers and sisters in need. That's why, on Christmas Day in 1949, he placed a Bowl of Remembrance on his dinner table and asked his family to place a generous gift in it to "share your good dinner with hungry children in other lands."

This year, you continued that tradition in your homes, churches, and communities – volunteering your time, organising events, taking up collections and placing bowls on your own Christmas table. By coming together to share God's love, the Christmas Bowl is on track to raise more than \$2.2 million for people in need around the world. Thank you!



Helen Beeby/Act for Peace

To celebrate over sixty years of giving through the Christmas Bowl, Kew East and Habitat Uniting Churches came together for a special Christmas Bowl service. Here, Reverend Bronwyn Daniels and Reverend Joan Wright Howie spoke of the many development programs and emergency appeals that their congregations have supported over so many years.

Many of us still place a Christmas Bowl on our dinner tables in remembrance of our brothers and sisters in need.

Following Frank Byatt's example, children from Epping Uniting Church decorated their own Bowl of Remembrance.



Andy Corkill/Act for Peace



Helen Beeby/Act for Peace

In Frankston, Victoria, Ross Huggard and Kerry Pederick participate in a Christmas Bowl cake stall at High Street Uniting Church.



Act for Peace

St John's Uniting Church in Essendon - where Rev. Frank Byatt served in ministry over sixty years ago - held a Christmas Bowl Launch with a moving performance by a Croatian Choir.



Richard Wainwright/Act for Peace

Shelter from the Storm

By giving through the Christmas Bowl, your gifts are already changing the lives of Rohingya refugees who have lost their villages, their homes, and their loved ones to brutal violence and persecution.

In December, we wrote to you about Ayesha. You may remember that Ayesha fled the bloodshed in Myanmar after her village was attacked in a wave of violence.

She and her husband fled at night through the jungle with their newborn and two young daughters. Their baby fell sick on the long journey to Bangladesh. Tragically, only weeks after escaping Myanmar, Ayesha's baby died.

Ayesha and her family now live in Jamtoli refugee camp, Bangladesh, where they are being supported to live in safety by our partner on the ground, Christian Aid.

Despite the trauma of what she's experienced, Ayesha still faces every day with incredible dignity and resolve.

Your gifts to the Christmas Bowl are providing urgently needed clean water, shelter and medical care to Ayesha, and other women and people like her, while they rebuild their lives.

Thank you for sharing God's love through the Christmas Bowl.

In Jamtoli camp, Bangladesh, your Christmas Bowl gifts are supporting:



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE
Toilets, clean water and secure bathing spaces for women, to protect the health, safety and dignity of families.



SHELTER
Shelter kits containing bamboo, plastic tarps, rope, wire-ties and sandbags, so they can be secured for the coming monsoon season.



HEALTH CLINICS
Seven health clinics in the camp provide vital medical care to more than 1,500 people a day.



CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES
Spaces where children traumatised by violence can play, draw, tell stories, and do other activities to help them heal and learn.



COMMUNITY KITCHENS
Places for women to cook, socialise and tell their stories. After everything they've been through, these safe spaces are vital to women's emotional and mental wellbeing.

ISSUES SPOTLIGHT

VOICES FOR JUSTICE: DEMANDING ACTION ON AID



Janet Cousens,
Act for Peace CEO

Interview with Janet Cousens, Act for Peace CEO

At the Voices for Justice conference, hundreds of Christians came together in Canberra to meet with our politicians and advocate for the world's displaced and disadvantaged people.

Act for Peace is committed to encouraging governments and decision-makers to fulfil their responsibility to protect the world's most vulnerable people. Following the 2018 Voices for Justice conference, we spoke with our Chief Executive Officer, Janet Cousens, about her experience lobbying politicians for a more generous Australian aid budget.

What is Voices for Justice?

"Voices for Justice is an annual event providing Christians the opportunity to join together in Canberra and meet one-on-one with parliamentarians to tell them very simply, and very directly, why we believe Australia should be a generous nation. This year our focus was on

lobbying politicians to act against modern slavery, increase support for disabled people, and to do more for displaced communities around the world."

Why did you go to Voices for Justice?

"Enormous progress has been made on reducing poverty over the last few decades which is great news. However we now have over 68.5 million people displaced globally, climate change is threatening the livelihoods of millions of people, and conflicts continue to proliferate. Today, whilst Australia is the wealthiest nation on earth when measured by median wealth⁽¹⁾, we are reducing our aid budget, and currently rank only 19th amongst aid givers.

At the 2018 Voices for Justice Conference, hundreds of delegates called on politicians to make Australia a world leader in humanitarian aid and development.

Micah Australia





Janet Cousens (right) and other Micah delegates met with Senator Mehreen Faruqi (The Greens) to discuss Australia's humanitarian aid and development budget.

“We are not acting compassionately, as we should be.”

Joining Voices for Justice was an opportunity to show solidarity and work together with a very wide range of Christians who believe that Australia can and should be more generous. Both personally, and as CEO of Act for Peace, I'm committed to seeing Australia return to being a compassionate and generous nation that champions justice for all who are oppressed, marginalised or disadvantaged.”

What did you learn from Voices for Justice?

“Voices for Justice reminded me that those who believe in justice, safety, and dignity for all must continue to raise their voices. Our politicians juggle many conflicting pressures every day. They must be reminded that Australians believe in generosity and in justice for others, and that as a nation we should and can be world leaders in bringing change that is necessary for peace and a world without poverty.”

“Voices for Justice is an opportunity to make use of our privileged position and to speak for those who don't have a voice.”

BE A VOICE FOR JUSTICE!

Join us at the 2019 Voices for Justice conference and help raise a voice on behalf of the world's most vulnerable communities. Sign up to Micah Australia and be the first to receive updates www.micahaustralia.org

Why is it important for Christians, and other compassionate Australians, to come together to speak up for the world's most vulnerable people?

“It's crucial that Christians come together to speak up for the world's most vulnerable. Christ modelled this for us. He was consistently reaching out to the marginalised and the poor. He questioned and broke down barriers to justice, speaking to and for those who did not have a voice, and we are called to do the same. It's essential that we, as Christians, and that other compassionate Australians, speak out for a just world without poverty, where everyone enjoys safety, justice and dignity.”

Why is collective advocacy important?

“Collective advocacy is important because there is power and strength in numbers. 200 people collaborated in Voices for Justice this year – a vast mix of Australians who pooled their talents towards achieving a common vision. Around 90 meetings were held with representatives of Government over two days – our presence was strong, the message was shared, and politicians heard that diverse people across our nation believe in the same thing – that Australia can and should be a leader in aid generosity.”

Voices for Justice is organised by Micah Australia, a movement of Australian Christians raising a powerful voice for justice and a world free from poverty. Act for Peace is a proud supporter of Micah Australia.

1. Credit Suisse. Global Wealth Report 2018.

YOUR GENEROSITY SPANS THE GLOBE

From the Pacific to the Middle East, from Africa to South Asia, you're supporting our local partners to empower communities in crisis.

As a member of the ACT Alliance, we form part of a network of 140 organisations working in over 100 countries around the world. Together, we are able to bring medical care to the sick and injured, support communities battered by disaster, and stand with those facing persecution. Here is a look at how far your generosity reaches.

PREPARING FOR DISASTER IN VANUATU

When your home and livelihood are destroyed, how do you find the strength to start over? You need hope. This is what your support brings to women and families in Vanuatu, who are struggling to stay resilient through worsening natural disasters.

Sharin Vile, Vanuatu Christian Council of Churches, told us: "We experience natural disasters almost every year. By giving to Act for Peace, you are supporting the work of the Vanuatu Christian Council, to ensure that people are trained and prepared to protect themselves when a disaster happens."



EMPOWERING SRI LANKAN REFUGEES IN INDIA

Mrs Rajanathan became a refugee 28 years ago, when she fled the Sri Lankan civil war and sought refuge with her family in India. In 2014 when she fell ill with kidney problems, the doctors told her that she would not be able to walk anymore.

Thankfully, our local partner in India, the Organisation for Eelam Refugees' Rehabilitation (OfERR), was able to provide Mrs Rajanathan with a wheelchair, so she could get around. Now she can fulfil her basic needs, visit her friends, and importantly, go to Church. It's thanks to your support that Mrs Rajanathan is no longer depressed. The wheelchair has filled her life with hope again.

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE IN MYANMAR

Plagued for decades by an oppressive military regime, the people of Myanmar have long been denied their basic rights. Though the military rule has ended, human rights abuses are still committed every day. You fought for justice in Myanmar and empowered people to realise their rights of through a grassroots program run by Act for Peace's local partner, the Myanmar Council of Churches.

Community Organisers worked with people on issues ranging from human trafficking, the use of child soldiers, torture and forced labour. By equipping people with the knowledge, skills and confidence they needed to speak out against abuse, you helped to inspire the community to advocate for change and build a safer future for themselves and their families.



LEARN MORE!

To see how you're making a difference through our local partners around the world, go to: www.actforpeace.org.au/Learn/Where-we-work

TAKING ACTION

TAKING A STAND BY MAKING A SEAT

Daryl, a 17-year-old student from the Central Coast, has made creative use of a school project to raise funds and awareness for Act for Peace's work with refugees.

Daryl was in Year 8 when he read Anh Do's story, *The Happiest Refugee*. It tells how Anh Do and his family fled Vietnam for Australia in a tiny fishing boat.

Daryl was separated from his own family at a young age, so he connected deeply to the loss and displacement that Anh experienced. And he was inspired by Anh's joy and resilience in the face of such difficulty.

"His story inspired me to think about other people and not just myself because other people have done it tougher than me. It made me want to help people have more happiness in their lives."

This year, Daryl had a chance to do just that. His school offers 'The S.E.A.T Project', a program in which students learn about themselves, their communities, and the wider world through engaging in the values of sustainability, education, art, and teamwork; the pillars of the S.E.A.T acronym.

Daryl and his classmates had the task of crafting their own S.E.A.T which would reflect their personal

explorations and their thoughts on the world around them. By reflecting on his own difficult experiences and those of the author Anh Do, Daryl designed and constructed a S.E.A.T representing a refugee boat at sea.

He wanted to make people reflect on the arduous journeys that people like Anh have undertaken. "The rough waves symbolize the challenges they have to face. The sails represent the possibilities of a new future. Just because refugees are trying to escape war and hardship, that doesn't mean they should be treated differently," Daryl said.

After auctioning off his S.E.A.T, Daryl generously gave the proceeds of his work to Act for Peace.

He told us, "I chose Act for Peace because there is too much violence and sadness in the world and they bring happiness to the lives of others."

Asked if he had a message for the people he is helping, Daryl said: "Don't give up on life. Do what you love. Keep your head up high."

Daryl shows his S.E.A.T design reflecting the arduous journeys of refugees in search of peace and protection. He auctioned off his S.E.A.T and gave the proceeds to Act for Peace.



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

In war-torn Pakistan, building a just, peaceful society starts with breaking down the barriers to girls' education. Through your gifts, you're giving girls like Sadia the chance to go to school, escape poverty and create peaceful, productive lives.

Ten-year-old Sadia lives in a village in southern Pakistan with her parents and her brothers and sisters. She's one of the few girls in her entire region who go to school.

Where Sadia lives, many families can't afford the cost of schooling or don't see the value of education for their daughters. On top of this, many teachers are poorly trained and use corporal punishment.

Without an education, these girls are more likely to marry young, miss out on work opportunities, and fall into poverty. But by supporting Act for Peace, you're helping girls like Sadia overcome these barriers.

Through our local partner, Community World Service Asia, your gifts are helping to train female teachers, fund teaching materials and raise awareness with parents about the importance of education for both girls and boys.

It's thanks to your generosity that Sadia has a trained teacher who creates a fun and supportive learning environment. She loves going to school and dreams of one day being a police officer, saying:

"I believe that education is the right of girls as much as it is the right of boys."

Sadia's parents have seen how passionate their daughter is about learning and are determined to keep her in the classroom. Her mother Shanti told us:

At ten years of age, Sadia already has a passion for learning. Her parents earn little income and often struggle to make ends meet, but now Sadia can go to school thanks to the support of our partner Community World Service Asia.

"Sadia's desire is to learn. So we're trying our best to support her so that she can continue her education."

Education is the most powerful tool we have to help communities support themselves and build brighter futures for their children. As Sadia said:

"Schooling helps to develop our knowledge which will benefit our country. We have to study to make our country a better and happy place to live."

With your continued support, we can help girls like Sadia make this dream of a peaceful and just society in Pakistan a reality.



Sadia and her family send their thanks to supporters who make it possible that both girls and boys can enjoy education and training. Sadia's mother says "Sadia's desire is to learn. So we're trying our best to support her so that she can continue her education."

Community World Service Asia/Act for Peace

Rev. Ken Devereux/Devereux Family

YOUR ACTION, YOUR IMPACT

Sharing the Spirit of Generosity

Reverend Ken Devereux explains the meaning behind his parents' decision to remember someone in need with a gift in their Will to Act for Peace



Devereux Family

Reverend Ken Devereux in the Wesley Uniting Church vestry, Perth, holding a Christmas bowl carved by his late father David Frank Devereux.

David and Joy Devereux were married for more than 60 years and had five sons. Throughout their marriage, David and Joy chose to 'live simply' so they could share some of their good fortune with others in their community and around the world.

It was this desire to help those in need that led David and Joy to support Act for Peace during their lifetime, and then to continue that support by leaving a gift in their Will.

Their son Ken, a Uniting Church minister in Western Australia, who now serves as a chaplain

at the Royal Perth Hospital, explains: "My mother was the daughter of a missionary in India and was brought up there. She taught me and my brothers a lot about other cultures."

"As a family of God and the church we were always taught to be open to others. It was that warmth that helped us to be inclusive and accepting."

"Our parents' spirit of generosity and sharing affected and impacted us all significantly."

Ken's father David was a carpenter and roofer. He built their family home in Bayswater, Western Australia, and eventually became an occupational therapy carpenter in hospitals.

"Dad was a very caring man and would often do handyman jobs for widows and other people in the church for free," Ken adds. "He and mum believed strongly in tithing too, not just acquiring for their own benefit. There was a considered process to write Act for Peace into their Wills some time before it was needed."

"Supporting Act for Peace's work had been part of mum and dad's life and they wanted to continue that sense of giving. We were not at all surprised by their bequests and respected that decision," Ken concludes.

"It was a proud moment to acknowledge and share their spirit of generosity which shone through evidently to those who knew them. It was a real privilege to send on those gifts and legacies."



Rev. Ken Devereux/Devereux Family

David and Joy Devereux, married for more than 60 years, shared in a "spirit of generosity."

Ayesha, a Rohingya refugee, holds a bowl outside her shelter in Jamtoli refugee camp where she fled with her family in August 2017. You're supporting Ayesha and her family through your gifts to the Christmas Bowl.

Richard Wainwright/Act for Peace



Remember someone in need in your Will

Throughout our lives, many of us have shared God's love with our brothers and sisters in urgent need around the world through the Christmas Bowl appeal.

You can continue to share God's unconditional love for the world's most vulnerable people long into the future by including a gift to the Christmas Bowl in your Will. Your gift will support local partners around the world to both meet urgent need and create change that lasts; equipping communities affected by conflict and disaster with the skills they need to solve their own problems and get back on their feet - giving them a hand up, not a hand out.

If the time is right for you to consider leaving a gift in your Will, please contact Andy Corkill at acorkill@actforpeace.org.au, or call him on 02 8259 0833. We would be delighted to talk to you confidentially about your continuing support.



Rev. Ken Devereux/Devereux Family

David and Joy Devereux surrounded by their children and grandchildren. Their son, Reverend Ken Devereux, said "Supporting Act for Peace's work had been part of mum and dad's life and they wanted to continue that sense of giving."



Christmas Bowl

Produced by Act for Peace, Locked Bag Q199, QUEEN VICTORIA BUILDING, NSW 1230

FREECALL 1800 025 101 **EMAIL** info@actforpeace.org.au **WEB** actforpeace.org.au

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