

Keeping in touch

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

OVERSEAS AID INCORPORATED

May 2014

EMERGENCY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Excerpts from a letter from Sr Mary Stevens after Typhoon Haiyan

On November 8, 2013 the super typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) devastated much of the island of Leyte in the Philippines. The typhoon also struck the Bantayan Islands North of Cebu causing widespread damage. Yolanda was the strongest typhoon ever to make landfall. I left Sydney on December 10 to join with our OLSH Sisters in the Philippines in travelling to the devastated areas to bring relief goods. My time in Tacloben city and Eastern Samar especially Guiuan was a heart-wrenching experience. One needed to see the reality to believe the destruction and devastation. Small houses were washed away, livelihoods destroyed, whole communities obliterated in the space of five or six hours.



The people talked not so much of the typhoon but of the tsunami – the three storm surges that followed in Yolanda's wake. It was not the strength of the wind, but walls of water that caused so much devastation and so many deaths in Tacloben.

Guiuan was the first place to be hit by the typhoon and was nearly totally destroyed. Like Tacloben, this place had no running water, electricity, limited fresh food, poor toilet facilities etc. However, greater effort to clean up the town was evident here. A 'cash for work program' was set up giving unemployed locals the opportunity to clear the debris from the streets in return for a government prescribed minimum wage.

We spent many hours making up bags of household goods to be delivered to the poorest



barrios. One day we would visit the barrio captains to organize our visit for the next day ... this made for smooth operation in handing out the goods. One place we came to were just beginning a ceremony to remember the forty days since the death of their people by the typhoon (a tradition of the Filipino culture) and we were invited to attend. So many orphaned children were present....what does one say in these times? I hugged them close and told them that God and we loved them.

The sheer complexity of organizing relief effort in a disaster zone such as this can feel almost impossible. However, I've learned over the years that one trait of the Filipino is their courageous resilience and indomitable faith and hope. Despite all they suffered and lost these people can still smile, reach out to help each other, hope for a better future, thank God that they are still alive and give their dead into the hands of a loving Father in heaven. Everywhere I travelled I saw written up: "WE WILL RISE AGAIN...THANK YOU FOR HELPING US."

Thank you to all those countries and peoples who sent monetary aid and personnel. Aid works, aid saves lives, it protects the vulnerable and helps to get communities back on their feet but in a situation like this it needs to be ongoing. I suspect that it will take years before these cities/towns/villages are rebuilt and sustainable livelihood adequately restored.

Sr Mary Stevens fdnsc

Note: OLSH Overseas Aid sent AUD45000 to the Philippines between November and January for Emergency relief. Much of this came from the Natolis and their contacts.



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MEMBER

The Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Incorporated is a member of the Australian Council of International Development (ACFID). Their Code of Conduct requires members to meet high standards of corporate governance, public accountability and financial management.

www.acfid.asn.au

**Gifts of \$2 or more
are tax deductible**

Recent Projects

Nzhelele Clinic in South Africa.

Both buildings needed painting, new guttering and down pipes, aluminium window frames, some new glass and mosquito screens. Plumbing also needed attention. Ron Knolder (Sr Marilyn Knolder's brother who was volunteering in South Africa) loved working with the local men and proved to be a great supervisor. He was also indispensable as the one to take the vehicle to town to purchase anything that was needed. Ladders for the high roofing were constructed on site as nothing could be purchased to do the job. An Irish volunteer electrician assisted

Ron to procure all the materials required for the jobs to be done and then did all the electrical work on site. Buildings were sand-papered down, regrouted, taped ready for painting and then coats were applied while cementing work was completed to provide disability access. The guttering proved to be difficult as the shape was hexagonal and the corners difficult. Workers learnt on the spot some general handyman skills. There is a huge challenge when the mission is isolated from hardware stores and professional tradesmen. *Sr Christine Martin fdnsc*



Staff Housing at St G Training School

We had local workers to do the building and a plumbing company to help with the plumbing. We have a local electrician. We would have liked the second house completed and the shed, but when I was away from the building site work slowed down and we have not achieved all the building. The wet season also hindered work because the area is flooded and workers were unable to collect sand for the concreting.



Satellite Schools in South Sudan

A three-block classroom built communally by Paloic School children and parents was successfully roofed with the roof standing securely on steel posts well grounded in a solid foundation. We were also able to seal the mud blocks so that now the building is totally weather proof.

At Paloic your funding also roofed a school office, walls of which are of burnt blocks. At Paloi we have over 400 children feasting and delighting in their first ever permanent structure. Their learning space, now so attractive, enables the children to now study and be taught throughout all weathers. Deep, deep gratitude from this community. On your behalf I accepted the goat and cooked it worthily!!!!!!

Sr Rita Grunke fdnsc

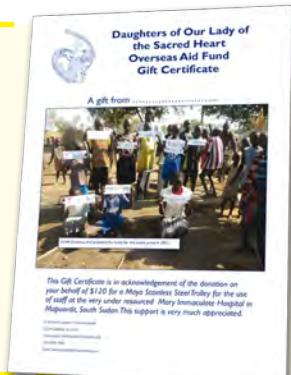


GIFT CERTIFICATES

Gift Certificates are available for those who wish to use their donation as a gift for others.

Use a form printable from the website or, alternatively, contact OLSH Overseas Aid on 02 9663 3599.

Gift Certificates can be for any amount and any region.



Gerard's Healthworker in Veifa'a PNG

Indirectly all the people of PNG are benefitting from this project as we have doubled student intake and so need to double tutorial staff. With more staff we can better train the health worker students. Staff are well-accommodated, teaching materials and food supplies are secure. There is less strain on existing staff, leading to higher morale and a happier training school.

Sr Marlene Dewar fdnsc



From the other side of the desk....

I am sitting in an air conditioned office in Sydney, Australia, working on my computer; I can hear the noise of traffic outside and the ringing of phones inside. It is a normal day with a variety of tasks to complete, people to greet, meetings to attend, phone calls to make. It is very different from living and working in Mapuordit, South Sudan from where I returned towards the end of last year. In Mapuordit, in a typical day we will be with the poor, the blind, the leper; in our schools, parish and hospital and within the community, we will hear many sounds such as the cows mooing, drums beating, children singing and women pumping water, we will be challenged by the simplicity of the people and we will do all we can to respond to their great needs. There is something very humbling, nourishing and sustaining in the simplicity of the people and the lifestyle. I feel greatly blessed to have spent these past years with the people of Mapuordit.

Since I have returned to Australia, I have seen OLSH OSA from the inside and I am so deeply grateful to you the many, many generous donors who allow us (in the field) to empower the poor through your donations.

I am conscious that all that we have achieved in Mapuordit and I know the same can be said for our missions throughout the world, is only possible because of your continued, generous support.

Deep gratitude to each one of you.

Sr Philippa Murphy fdnsc



Would you like to make a bequest in your will to OLSH Overseas Aid?

If you would like to include the work of our Mission in your will, we will gladly advise your solicitor of the specific terms of the bequest. Alternately, Michael O'Dea AM of Carroll and O'Dea Lawyers, would be happy to advise you at no cost. He may be contacted directly at 02 9291 7104.

Or would you like to request mourners at your loved one's funeral to donate to OLSH Overseas Aid in lieu of flowers? Both these things can make a significant difference to the way we can help the people in need.

The OLSH Overseas Aid Incorporated Annual General Meeting was held 29 April 2014 and copies of the 2013 Annual Report are available on the website. If you would like a hard copy please contact the office. See details below.

UNITED NATIONS POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda has released its report to the UN Secretary General on possibilities for the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Five transformative shifts should drive the new agenda, providing the framework to the proposed goals. These transformative shifts are to:

1. **Leave no one behind.**
2. **Put sustainable development at the core.**
3. **Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth.**
4. **Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all.**
5. **Forge a new global partnership.**

The goals proposed are universal in nature and follow a fifteen year lifespan. The twelve goals the Panel has recommended are:

1. **End poverty**
2. **Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality**
3. **Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning**
4. **Ensure Healthy Lives**
5. **Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition**
6. **Achieve Universal Access to Water and Sanitation**
7. **Secure Sustainable Energy**
8. **Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Equitable Growth**
9. **Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably**
10. **Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions**
11. **Ensure Stable and Peaceful Societies**
12. **Create a Global Enabling Environment and Catalyse Long-Term Finance**

Issues of particular interest to ACFID members include peace, climate change, cities (ensuring a new agenda is relevant for poverty in the context of urbanisation), young people and women and girls.

However, ACFID would like to see a more integrated approach on disability and disaster risk reduction and resilience than the Panel has outlined in its report. While the panel has stated their attempt to address inequality of opportunity in the proposed goals, a focus on inequality could be more strongly incorporated in a final framework.

For more information on the report, please visit the website: <http://www.post2015hlp.org/>