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CLIMATE CHANGE

DON BOSCO RESPONDS

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EMPOWER LIFE! LIVE THE JOY OF TRUE GIVING

Message from the Director

Dear friends,

As humans, we take pride in our technological advancements and how modern conveniences make our lives easier. No doubt, we have made tremendous strides in various aspects of life such as mobile technology, artificial intelligence, space technology, healthcare innovations. However, we still cannot predict climate and its effects accurately.

Just this year, we have faced the unpleasant consequences of many unusual climatic extremes. To begin with, it was extremely cold in parts of north India with heat wave conditions in the south simultaneously. Then it became a vicious summer all over the country with people dying from the heat. Drought conditions spread across the country wreaking havoc for farmers and the monsoon was delayed. When the rains did come, there were floods and landslides.

Kerala had a peculiar misfortune: it faced the worst deluge in a century last monsoon, yet its wells were running dry this year and when the monsoon did land, it flooded the state again, causing massive loss of life and property. Similarly, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab also suffered loss of life and property to different extents because of flooding. Disasters caused by climate change are hitting us repeatedly, the world over.

The Don Bosco network has been active in developmental work in India over the past century, especially in interventions with the young at risk.

Reading the signs and understanding that climate change places children and youth at high risk globally, the Don Bosco network has been proactively working for climate action at various levels; to make real and effective change possible for communities around the world. The Don Bosco network, realizing the need for greater preparedness to effectively respond to the increasingly frequent natural calamities, has begun to train its staff and management across India in disaster preparedness and response.

In this edition, we present the Don Bosco network's interventions during the recent floods in India, and its systematic skilling of staff for effective disaster management. We also present its recent work in creating more global awareness and action about climate change to reduce the risks of natural hazards.

We take this opportunity to thank you, dear Donors, for your warm, humanitarian concern for people in distress. Your generous support made our disaster relief work possible during the Kerala floods and the Gaja cyclone. After the natural calamities we have been through, we are in the process of creating an emergency relief fund to support the vulnerable young in these kinds of circumstances. We seek your liberal support in this endeavor as well.

With best wishes,

Fr. Noel Maddhichetty SDB
Director, Don Bosco Network - South Asia

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Don Bosco in Solidarity

The Don Bosco network reached out in the various flood-affected areas of different states, bringing relief and sustenance to people in distress. A few of the efforts are reported below.

In Kerala

Don Bosco School Kolikadavu, Kannur and Don Bosco Bhavan, Mannuthy were opened as relief camps for the locals who had to evacuate their homes. The relief camps were immediately supplied with food, water, clothes, medicines and blankets. The staff and students of Don Bosco Sultan Bathery collaborated with the district administration to provide relief work, rehabilitation support and other services.

Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society (BREADS), the Don Bosco Planning and Development Office for Kerala and Karnataka, visited and contributed 500 blankets to the Sultan Bathery civil station in Wayanad district in keeping with the one-window distribution plan of the district administration. Don Bosco Sultan Bathery under the able leadership of Fr. Sojan SDB, Vice Principal, Don Bosco College has completed the electrification and repair works of 90 houses in Bathery and Padichira in collaboration with the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB). In joint efforts with the Kerala Interstate Migrants Alliance for Transformation (KISMAT) – a project supported by BREADS, DB Sultan Bathery distributed groceries, cleaning materials, clothes, 1000 bottles of mineral water and infant clothes to 500 flood victims in the tribal colonies and relief camps in Wayanad, Chundakolli, Pulpalli, Kolavalli, and Civil station, Kozhikode. Don Bosco Mampetta reached out to 125 beneficiaries in the flood-affected regions with relief materials, groceries, etc., with the Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Mampetta and BREADS.

Keys to a renewed life

DB Irinjalakuda supported by BREADS Bangalore, completed the construction of three



houses for people affected by the floods of 2018 in Irinjalakuda.

On 22 August 2019, in a function to mark the auspicious occasion, the keys of the new houses were handed over to the beneficiaries by Mr. Jan Resutik- CEO of SAVIO, Slovakia, in the presence of Fr. Mevada Manuel – Rector, DB Irinjalakuda; Fr. Joy Nedumparambil, Executive Director, BREADS; and other dignitaries.

In all, BREADS is coordinating the construction/renovation of 36 houses for identified affected families of the 2018 deluge in Kerala.

In Karnataka

Don Bosco Hassan assembled help for the flood-affected families and people in Virajpet and Chikkamagaluru districts, under the leadership of Fr. Fernandez Dominic Savio SDB. Relief materials were distributed at St. Anne's Church Virajpet to ensure a single-window distribution, benefitting around 100 families affected by the landslides and floods, who had temporarily sheltered at various relief camps. Relief materials included medicines, water, blankets, oil, batteries, candles, clothes and biscuits for each family. In Chikkamagaluru district, gas stoves, utensils, stools were distributed to the families at St. Lourdes church, Magundi. Don Bosco Social Service Society, Devadurga, Raichur district contributed notebooks, pens and bags to 589 children from 18 schools in the district, especially the vulnerable and poor children from government schools.

BREADS will extend its support for repairs and renovation to families with partially damaged houses, especially the economically weaker ones who cannot survive without external help. Fifteen poor families will be selected through Don Bosco partners in consultation with the government, district administration and other NGOs to avoid duplication of benefits. The preliminary study and process of selection has begun.



In Gujarat

The Don Bosco Development Society along with its development partner Roshini Don Bosco helped in the rescue and relief operations of flood victims in Vadodara city. Vadodara was badly hit by heavy downpours and water from the overflowing Vishwamitri river entered several slum localities where different interventions are made by Don Bosco.

An informal survey of the area and the flood situation was done by the staff. With support from Matrix Comsec Pvt. Ltd., the Don Bosco team carried out its flood relief work. The team actively helped victims to transfer to safe areas and distributed basic requirements such as rice, dal, flour, clothes, snacks, biscuits, hair oil, toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, soap, powder, towel etc. Lots of people lost their belongings and some even lost their shelter in the slum. The Don Bosco team continued to work very hard on post-flood care.

Capacity building on Disaster Preparedness

Learning from the recent natural calamities and their impact, the Don Bosco Network (Bosconet) is facilitating capacity building on Disaster Preparedness for all its members (planning and development offices-PDOs) according to region. The training programmes are aligned with the disaster preparedness document, 'Streams of Solidarity' published and released by Don Bosco Mondo at the International PDO Meet in Nairobi, in 2018.

The first training was held on 28 July in Shillong for the Directors and staff of the 3 north-eastern PDO offices: Bosco Integrated Development Society (BIDS)-Shillong, Bosco Reach Out (BRO)-Guwahati and ANMA Integrated Development Association (AIDA)-Dimapur. The training programme saw participation from 28 staff from the PDOs including religious from FMA and SDB sisters' of the 3 provinces. Mr. Bablu Sarkar, State Office-West Bengal, Caritas India, was the resource person for the one-day capacity building programme.



The second training was conducted from 9-10 September in Yercaud for 20 participants from the 5 southern PDOs- Konkan Development Society (KDS)-Panjim, Bosco Seva Kendra (BSK)-Hyderabad, Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society (BREADS)-Bangalore, Strategic Urban Rural Advancement Backing Institute (SURABI)-Chennai, Coordinated Action for Urban, Village Empowerment and Resource Identification (CAUVERI)-Tiruchy; as well as BOSCO from the Delhi province. Facilitated by Mr. John Arokiaraj, State Officer-Chennai, Caritas India and Fr. Noel Maddhichetty, Director, the Don Bosco Network, the 2-day training helped the participants understand the different kinds of crisis situations and the various responses that could be made in those situations.



Youth Aspirations & Climate Urgency - a Don Bosco movement

Don Bosco Green Alliance along with Salesian Missions USA and the Don Bosco Network (DBN) organised a panel discussion on Youth Aspirations & Climate Urgency on 11 July 2019 as a side event to the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York. The HLPF annually evaluates global progress in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); hence, this panel discussion focused on SDG 13 Climate Action and the impact of climate change on young people and their future.

Ambassador of Samoa, Mr. Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia welcomed the gathering. The keynote address was delivered by Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

During the panel discussion moderated by Fr. Savio Silveira, Convener of Don Bosco Green Alliance; talking about rising sea levels caused by climate change, September Kelokelo from Don Bosco Institute, Papua New Guinea, described the drastic impact on small island states like Papua New Guinea. "Climate change is real, and it is happening. With sea waters rising, our dreams are going down the drains. Our islands are in danger, our future is being threatened," she said.

Describing activities taken up by his school, Santiago Corrales from Don Bosco Technical Institute, Panama said: "We don't need laws to get us to act. We feel the urgency and we are responding." He urged the young people to lead the way to action.

"Climate change is impacting crop production, causing flooding and increasing diseases in my country," said Abigail Gyabaa from Don Bosco Youth Network West Africa, Ghana. "Because of the floods, children often have to abandon their schooling," she added.

"The youth of Europe are angry because of the slow response of our governments to the climate crisis," said Rebecca Petz from Don Bosco Youth Net, Germany. Emphasizing the connection between human rights and environmental protection, Petz pointed out that the climate crisis was adding to the refugee crisis and other social issues.

The presentations by the panelists were followed by a very lively open discussion. Several young people in the audience made a passionate appeal for strong and immediate action. Climate change education in schools, promotion of low carbon technologies, stringent taxes on carbon emissions, elimination of single-use plastics, and political engagement by young people to further climate action were some of the suggestions that emerged from the discussion.

Summing up the discussion, the former President of Kiribati, Mr. Teburoro Tito, urged the young people not to lose their passion and commitment. "You feel very strongly today about the climate crisis," said Tito, "don't lose that fire, don't give up that fight."

He further encouraged the young people to come together and demand change from their governments.

Speaking about the side event, Fr. Thomas Pallithanam, the Salesian representative at the UN, said, "It was wonderful that we had four young people from four different continents on the panel. They represented Salesian youth worldwide. Young people today feel the urgency of climate action and other environmental issues, and we Salesians must support them in responding to these challenges. I am glad that Salesian Missions was able to facilitate this event and bring these voices to the UN."

The four young panelists returned to their home countries as 'green ambassadors'. "I now no longer represent just myself, or even my institution, I represent my country," said September Kelokelo. "I now have the responsibility to work for my country and its young people, so that the climate crisis does not destroy their future and their aspirations."



A GRATEFUL HEART : SANGMA TANGMEANA, GOJAPARA



I am Tangmeana Sangma, 21 years old, from Phelbari village, Balijana block, Goalpara district of Assam. At the age of 5, I lost my dad and so my mother took care of me and my two elder brothers by working as an ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) worker for a salary of 1000 per month. Because of my mother's labour, my eldest brother could complete his graduation. My other brother is studying in Darjeeling to become a Salesian priest.

After completing my HSLC from Don Bosco School Gojapara and PUC from Don Bosco Hr. Sec. School, Mendal, I have chosen nursing as my profession. I have joined a nursing college in Bangalore with the support of Don Bosco and with a bank loan. I am in the third and final year of the GNM course. I am planning to do my internship in Kolkata, West Bengal. I have a great desire to work in my own state after gaining a few years' professional experience in other states.

Our family has a small house and a small piece of land for farming. Though my mom has been working very hard to educate us, it was through your kind support and help that

I could complete my studies. My family and I are very grateful for your assistance. It is because of you that I am going to be someone in my life. Thank you so much!!

Donors Speak

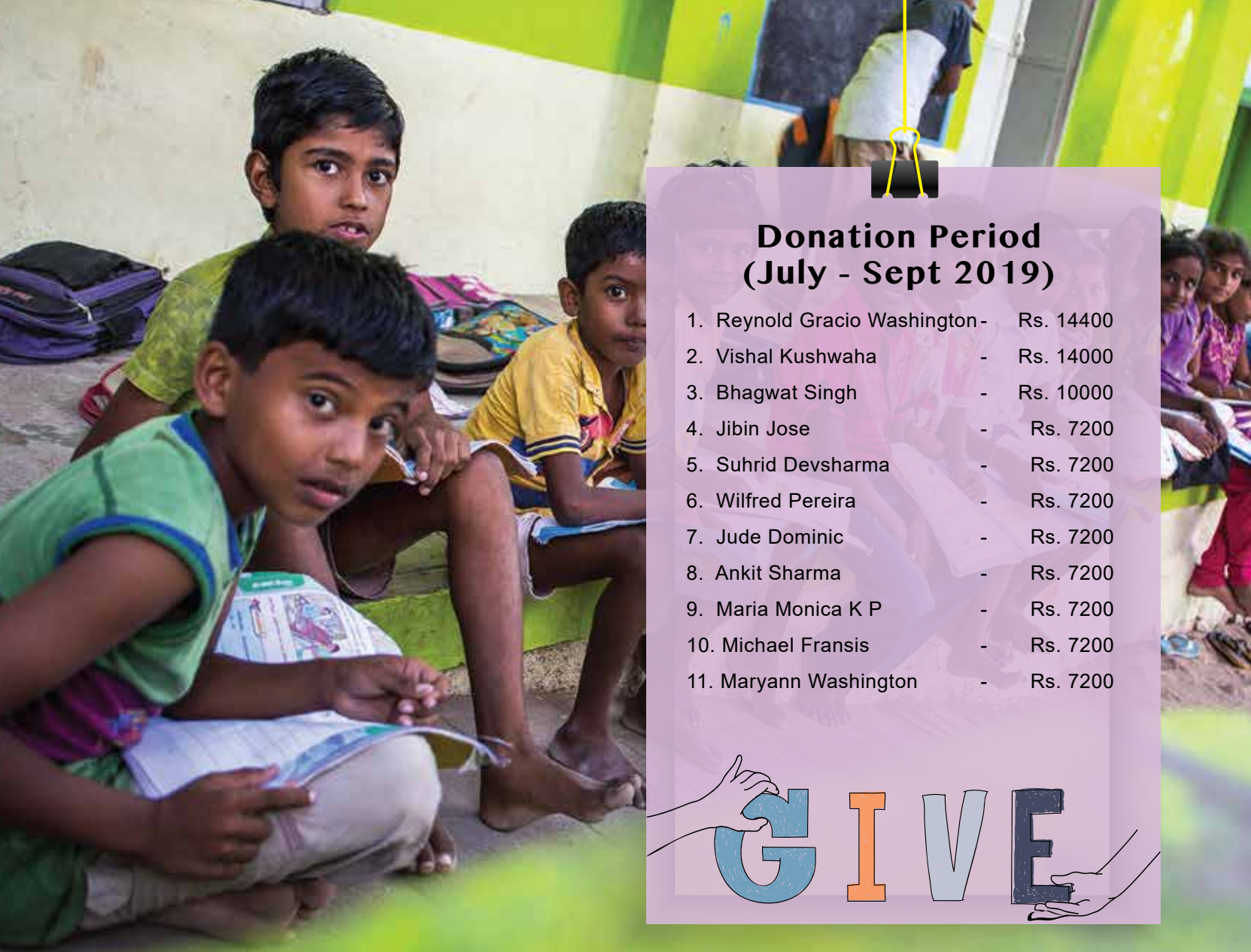
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As we grow older, we realise how kind God has been to us. Our good fortune is a privilege that we must justify by supporting others. Don Bosco is doing God's work and I am grateful to God at being able to support them in a small way.

Suhrid Devsharma

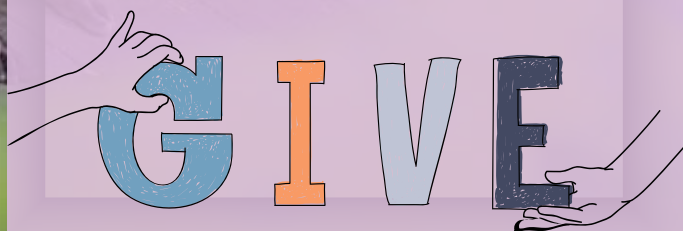
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