

Volunteer Voice Newsletter #11

5th December 2020

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES - NORTHERN IRELAND

Fourteen Trócaire volunteers in different parts of Northern Ireland are actively selling this year. This includes two volunteers (Maeve Mellon and Jo Wilson) who are not selling in their parishes but in the school where they work and amongst family/friends.

All the volunteers are being very helpful and creative this year to contribute to the campaign, keeping in line with Covid restrictions. We wish them all good luck and to stay safe and well this Christmas.



Volunteer John Monaghan, collected a cheque for £1,300 from pupils at St Joseph's PS, Carryduff. This was their collection for Lent 2020.

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"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" ~ Aesop

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VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES - GIFTS CAMPAIGN

From Kenya to Killarney, from Somalia to Cobh, the past few weeks have been busy in the Cork Centre as we all work hard to promote this year's Christmas Gifts of Love Campaign.

Volunteers from Kerry and Cork are getting ready to display posters, distribute brochures and sell gifts and Christmas Cards in their parish once the Churches re-open in December.

Terrific trees, nutritious school lunches, essential soaps and quarantine kits are just some of the items available for families in communities we support this Christmas. There is something for everyone's pocket. Trócaire Christmas cards are also available – €5 for a pack of 12.

Contact us at corkcentre@trocaire.org to support the appeal.



Olivia and Dáire Fahy from Carrigaline helped to launch the Christmas gifts campaign in Cork.

Volunteers Sue McDonough and Joan Wright are supporting the Franciscan Friary in Killarney to promote and sell this year's gifts.

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VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES - GIFTS CAMPAIGN

Zoom training sessions: We held 3 training sessions with the Galway, Limerick and Leinster teams and were delighted to have volunteers joining the calls from other regions and Mark McMahon from the Belfast office joined us at one of them too.

One of the sessions is saved on our Volunteer Vimeo page that you can find at this link: <https://vimeo.com/485879068> (check with us for the password).



Gaeilge Amháin

Public group · 14.1K members

About Discussion Members Events Media Files

Bertie Ó Hainmhire
10 November at 16:23 · 🌐

A chairde,

Tá a fhios ag cuid againn is dócha go bhfuil mise ag obair go deonach leis an gcartanacht TRÓCAIRE ón uair a d'éirigh mé as an obair i 2017. Tá mé ag déanamh iarracht iad a mhealladh i dtreo na Gaeilge de réir a chéile. Tá siad breá sásta cuidiú liom nuair is féidir leo ach tá piosa fada le dul fós.

Tá póstaer leis seo a bhaineann leis na bronnantais Nollag. Bheinn fíor-bhuíoch díbh ach an scéal a scaipeadh, ní raibh aon fheachtas ceart againn ag an gCarghas i mbliana mar bhí gach scoil agus teach pobail dúnta. Tá an Nollaig ag teacht anois agus gach rud dúnta arís. Beimid ag dul go snaidhm an rópa an uair seo mar táimid ag iarraidh cabhrú le pobail ar fud an domhain atá bualaithe le dearbhbhochtaineacht agus anois le Covid19.

Míle buíochas as aon chúnamh.



Volunteers have been busy promoting the gifts online by sharing Trócaire's posts or creating their own posts. They are also busy putting up posters and leaflets in their local community and spreading the words in creative ways.



Granagh Community News

23 November at 22:12 · 🌐

Help by buying a Trocaire Christmas Gift. www.trocaire.org



Trocaire

23 November at 18:26 · 🌐

"Before we had access to clean water, I didn't understand about the dangers of drinking surface water, there was no information out here to tell me otherwise..... See more"



TROCAIRE.ORG

The Gift of Water in drought affected Borana | Trócaire M

Learn More

Left are two examples of Facebook posts by our Galway and Limerick volunteers to promote the Gifts campaign

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"Life's most persistent and urgent question is ... What are you doing for others?" ~ Martin Luther King Jr.

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VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES - WEBINARS

14 October: Twenty members of the newly formed campaigns group met to discuss their work and get an update from Joanne McGarry and Jeannie McCann on the overseas aid budget.



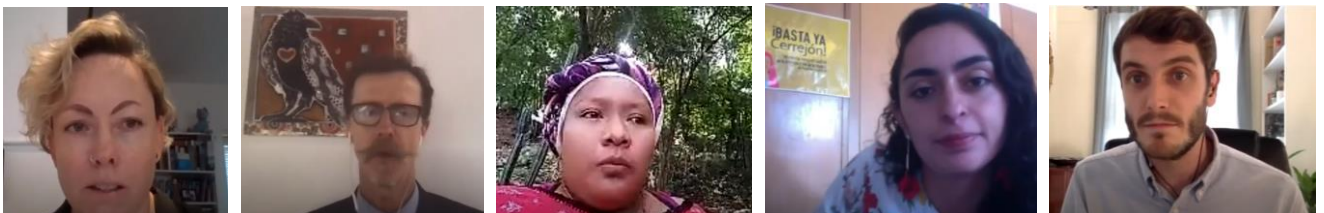
28 October: UN Treaty Negotiations side event with CAFOD, Christian Aid and their Colombian partners, “Digging Deeper: Mining in Colombia and the urgent need for a UN Treaty”

The event featured Siobhan Curran (Trócaire), David Boyd (UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment), Mónica López (La Gran Parada Wayuu community (Colombia)), Luisa Rodríguez Gaitán (CINEP/PPP (Colombia)) and Conor O’Neill (Christian Aid Ireland).

At the event, we heard testimony from indigenous communities affected by the Cerrejón Ltd mining operations in Colombia and civil society organisations on the impact of business activities and how a legally binding instrument could regulate and mitigate the negative impacts on their rights and the environment.

Recording available to watch on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rl3mAZ9yDAU>



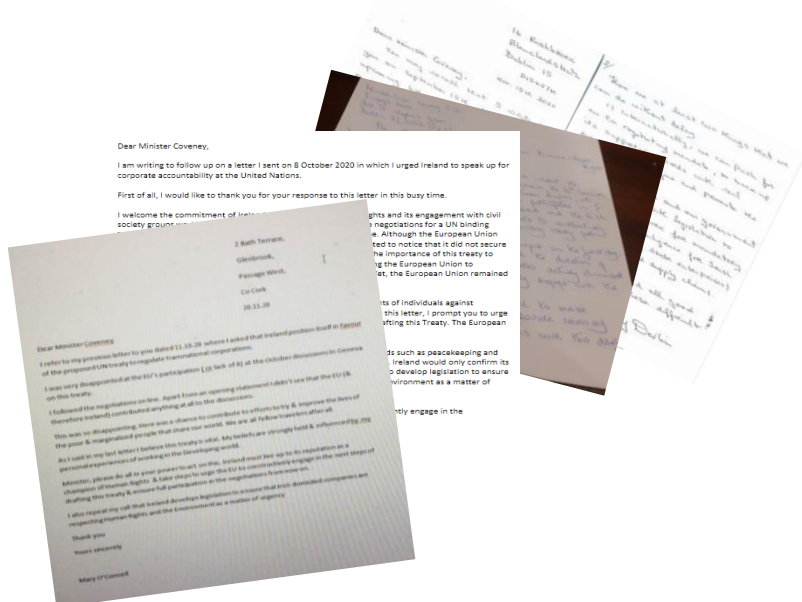
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“We rise by lifting others” ~ Robert Ingersoll

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UN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS BRIEFING SESSION

Siobhán Curran from Trócaire's Policy team joined the Campaigns Group Meeting on Wednesday 11th November via Zoom. 22 volunteers were present. Siobhán gave the group a recap on the Business & Human Rights campaign, she briefed us on the recent Treaty negotiations in Geneva and shared the next steps for the campaign. The session ended with a Q&A. Really great and informative discussion was had with the group and Siobhán.



The campaigns group volunteers are now busy writing their second letter to Minister Coveney on the subject.

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UN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS



An **International Treaty on Business & Human Rights** would demand:

- Human rights are always prioritised over profit
- Power given to communities to enable them to stand up against exploitation
- Provision of a global set of rules for international businesses
- Strong legal protection given against foreign companies.

The concentration of power of corporations has brought us to a point of chronic crisis, where corporate crimes against both people and the planet remain in impunity.

Why such **impunity**?

1) Because victims face huge legal obstacles

-> Where harm is done, courts often aren't willing or able to hold businesses to account

-> Where parent companies are based, corporations benefit from legal gaps and hide behind complex corporate structures to escape liability

2) Because of the power imbalances involved

-> Companies often have immense funds whereas victims have very limited resources. Legal cases can go on for decades

-> Those who speak up against corporate abuse are increasingly intimidated, shamed, even attacked or killed

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

MARY O'REGAN IN LIMERICK



My name is Mary O'Regan from Granagh in Co.

Limerick and I have been volunteering since 2018. After reading a note in our Church newsletter, where Trócaire was looking for volunteers, I felt I could easily promote their activities.

I happen to be PRO with our local Development Association and Drama group and contribute weekly notes to our local paper, our Facebook & Web page. I was always able to promote charitable activities, especially any involving the poor in underdeveloped countries.

I have done a number of Church talks & a primary school talk. I had great plans to increase these, this year, but Covid intervened. In May, I helped out at the annual collection of Trócaire Boxes and we collected just under €5,000. I usually do a Trócaire display for Lent and Christmas and this year, I was delighted to be able to do a display for the Season of Creation.

Last Christmas, I decided to try selling the gifts in our local churches of Granagh/Ballingarry, with the support of our parish priest. I actually ran out of cards and had to take orders for the following week. I was amazed to sell a total of €1,517, people are so generous. I think these gifts are so practical, not too expensive and people connect easily with the idea.

I feel it is important to continue to do whatever I can as the inequality gap widens. The West gets richer, the poor become poorer and their plight is easily forgotten about. Climate change is unfairly taking its toll on these communities. My parents definitely influenced me in appreciating how privileged I was & to always remember the less well-off.

I think Covid should have opened our eyes...!! Over the Summer months, I spent lots of time outside & it struck me how lucky we are to be living in Ireland. Most of us have plenty of everything - food, clothes, water, shelter, shoes, handbags etc etc !!! We need a lot less than we have, to survive and be happy.

As St.Oscar Romero said "Aspire not to have more, but to be more."

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

TRICIA AND EMMET DEVLIN IN LEINSTER



Since arriving in Ireland from New Zealand in 2000 Tricia and Emmet Devlin lived initially in Dublin and now in Kildare. During this time, they have been involved in canvassing for elections.

In 2009 they began volunteering with Trócaire, Emmet doing Mass talks and Tricia in schools. They have assisted at Bloom Festivals, National Ploughing Championships and Fleadh Cheol as well as supporting the Christmas gifts campaign. They supported many campaigns including the Divestment campaign.

Until March 2020 they regularly attended “Fridays for Future” demonstrations at the Dáil until the Covid19 pandemic curtailed public meetings.

Last November, Tricia joined an international protest in solidarity with southern hemisphere countries affected by climate change. This action involved a three day fast in front of the Dáil.

As personal gestures to reduce CO2 emissions, Tricia and Emmet have installed solar panels on their roof and replaced their oil burner with a heat pump for central and a hot water cylinder heating. In addition, they have switched their electricity supplier to Community Power, a Tipperary based company which generates its power using wind turbines. In effect the energy they use is totally fossil free. These changes have been possible through personal savings and the generous grants provided by the government.

Volunteering with Trócaire, characterised by the excellent support their staff provide to their volunteers, has been a significant part of their life in Ireland.

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“As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands – one for helping yourself, and one for helping others” ~ Audrey Hepburn

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JIM CREMIN



Long-serving Cork volunteer, Jim Cremin passed away in early November after a brief illness.

Jim was a valued member of our volunteer group in Cork since 2014. He had an enormous interest in helping poorer communities when he was teaching in Coláiste an Chríost Rí, Turners Cross, Cork. He was then involved in supporting our development education project, Pamoja Kwa Haki - Together for Human Rights - a Transition Year Human Rights Module.

Jim was involved in so much volunteering these past number of years from speaking about Trócaire's work at Masses during Lent and Advent, to visiting schools to engage young minds on justice matters, to meeting with our now Taoiseach Micheál Martin to lobby him on climate justice and our work in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He travelled to see our work in Sierre Leone, collected cheques in schools and through the GAA, wrote and shared his poetry, helped to facilitate volunteer training sessions, participated in Cork Climate Action Group on our behalf and represented us at UCC events. Nothing was ever too much trouble for Jim. He would do anything, even at short notice.

Jim was very moved by the stories he heard and the meetings he participated in last October when he visited the UN in Geneva with Siobhan, Jeannie and other volunteers for the talks on securing a UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights. Below is a poem he wrote about the Brumadhino mining dam tragedy in Brazil, which caused severe environmental damage to the local community in 2019.

Rest in peace Jim. You are missed more than you will ever know.

Brumadhino (for my Trócaire friends) - by Jim Cremin

This is a place where no birds sing, nor rivers flow.

*A place of open gold mine sores and tamboured walls of stone that block our waters path.
Once rivers were our roads, the sky our roof, animal marks our map, the stars our only guide.*

And there was early morning warmth, and our babies woke us.

And evening song and drum sounds in our trees and laughter sparked our fires.

Now our ancestral ghosts quietly walk our forest paths.

Around our hills the echo of our cries, still waiting to be heard, outside our place, amongst the Nations.

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“What is the essence of life? To serve others and do good.” ~ Aristotle

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INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

International Volunteer Day was designated by the United Nations on 5th December 1985 as an international observance day to celebrate the power and potential of volunteerism.

This day offers an opportunity for volunteer organisations and individual volunteers to make their contributions visible – at local, national and international levels. It is also viewed as a unique chance for volunteers and organisations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values, and to promote their work.

The act of volunteering is found in all cultures, languages, and religions. Each year, hundreds of millions of people volunteer their time and skills to help make the world a better place. When they volunteer, they help to improve the lives of others. And when they volunteer, they also gain a greater sense of belonging to their communities.

It feels so satisfying to be a small voice for people around the world. I would highly recommend being a volunteer for Trócaire. It is so fulfilling and personally rewarding.
– Mary O’Sullivan

I have learned so much in my time as a volunteer [...] there are so many ways to get involved. I look forward to the next eight years.
– Teresa Hill

It’s life-affirming to spend time with like-minded people. There are so many good things I could say about Trócaire and about the people who work there. – Tony Devlin

What I appreciate particularly about Trócaire is the fact that there is a space for everyone.
– Abosede Grace Ogunsanya



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“Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mould the present into a future of which we can all be proud” ~ Helen Dyer

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INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

Thank you to each and everyone of you for your amazing commitment. Here is our little tribute to you all. Go raibh maith agaibh!



“Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless”

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GIFTS CAMPAIGN - NEW COVID-19 GIFTS

Gift of a Crisis Resilience Kit - €300

What if you had to deal with poverty, hunger or humanitarian crises this Christmas, on top of the COVID-19 pandemic? Right now, there are places where children, women, and men are being brought to the brink by this very scenario. You can help. Whether it's survival shelters for people fleeing violence in DR Congo, or meals and medical supplies after a sudden shock like the blast in Beirut, your urgent Gift of a Crisis Resilience Kit gives families what they need to make it through the toughest of times.



Crisis Resilience Kit

The people your generosity supports understand resilience. Every day they face incredible challenges.



Quarantine Care Kit

People all over the world are having to self-isolate due to Covid-19.

Gift of a Quarantine Care Kit - €150

Imagine that two weeks of Covid-19 quarantine meant food would run out, and you'd be cut off from friends, family, and the outside world. This is the tragic reality for loving families in Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries. Help provide vital supplies to last sixteen full days for a family in quarantine, including staple foods, phone credits, and real relief.

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CHRISTMAS APPEAL - COVID19 AND HUNGER

This year the Christmas appeal focuses on the very relevant topic of the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and hunger.

Unfortunately today the harsh reality is that the number of people facing hunger this Christmas has doubled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Therefore, Trócaire's Christmas Appeal asks people in Ireland to help the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities and families who are facing into many more months of hunger, as COVID-19 continues to devastate their ability to earn money and produce food.

Long term impacts of COVID-19 will be felt more in poorer countries due to worsening poverty and hunger.

Trócaire is responding to the COVID-19 crisis in every country we work in:

- Providing clean water, soap and hand-washing facilities
- Distributing quarantine care kits for people in isolation
- Distributing public health messaging
- Direct medical support for people in Somalia affected by the virus

Please share Trócaire's social media posts between now and Christmas.
Thanks.



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"One of the greatest gifts you can give is your time"

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CONTENT FOR YOUR LOCAL NEWSLETTER

Local newsletter article - Gifts

This Christmas, Trócaire will deliver life-saving support to thousands of families across the developing world. As well as supporting people living through conflict and natural disasters, Trócaire has launched a special appeal to support families who have not been able to grow food or earn money due to Covid-19.

Please consider supporting this vital work this Christmas. You can purchase one of 17 special gifts for families, or else make a general donation to the Trócaire Christmas Appeal. Trócaire's Christmas Gifts range allows you to buy goats, chickens, water and many more vital items. This year, there is a special Quarantine Care Kit Gift. By buying this Gift you are providing vital daily care to families who have to isolate due to Covid-19.

Please visit trocaire.org to make a donation or buy a gift.



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Promote: put up posters, share videos, photos, posts on social media, talk to family/friends/work colleagues about the gifts, ask your local parish to promote on their newsletter, website, Facebook page, speaking at mass, make a display with the gift of soap or a quarantine care kit hamper, and many more ideas.



YOUR LOCAL CONTACT

Cork/Kerry: Janet Twomey – janet.twomey@trocaire.org

Northern Ireland: Roisin O'Hara – roisin.ohara@trocaire.org

Dublin/ North Leinster and Galway/Limerick: Marie-Anne Michel – marieanne.michel@trocaire.org

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