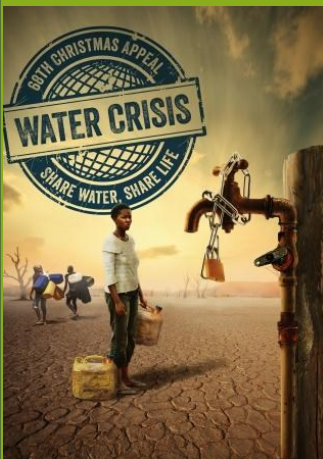


## FOR YOUR DIARY

Thanks for your great support through 2013. Much has happened. Refugees have been helped, Filipinos have received food, shelter and solidarity, our partners have helped people grow gardens and hope. It is work we do together.

The office will be closed from noon 24 December and reopen on 6 January. If an emergency strikes we will be ready to respond.

May the peace of Christ be with you this Christmas and throughout 2014.



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[Action by Churches  
Together](#)

## Share Water, Share Life



Photo: MONLAR

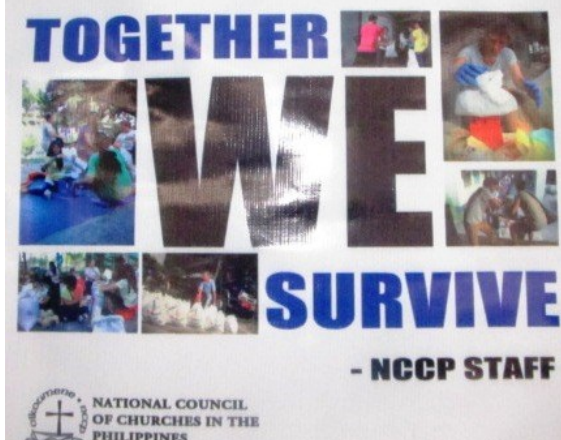
Small farmers like Herath Menike worry about water. She and her family live in Sri Lanka's dry zone where severe drought comes too often. It has been a hard year but it might have been worse if she had not had the benefit of training and support from CWS's partner MONLAR. The family has learnt to conserve the soil and moisture on their three acre farm to grow more food. Determined to earn the money she needs to keep her children in school, Herath works long hours. Her goal is to restart a food production business—something she has done in the past. Selling honey, jams, sweets, milled rice and manioc products will enable her children to have opportunities she did not have. Read her [story](#).

We are grateful to Herath, Lu'isa, Luis, Jane and Mrs Siththamma for sharing their stories in this Appeal. Your donations have helped them. **Please give generously to the [Christmas Appeal](#) so our partners can do what they do so well.**

## South Sudan: Pray for Peace

In response to rising tensions, South Sudan's church leaders issued a [statement](#) in an effort to de-escalate tensions. It concludes, "We are in the season leading up to Christmas. This year's Christmas may not be what we expected, but it is what we have been given and we must accept it as it is. As we celebrate the birth of the Christ-child, let us remember that God is with us, and pray for the strength and courage to bring peace, reconciliation and healing to our new nation." Wadalla from CWS partner the Maridi Service Agency is stuck in Juba but reported that 'today at least is calm'.

Maraming salamat  
po sa mga volunteers at donors!  
Pagpalain ang inyong pakikiisa  
sa mga survivors.



“Thank you to the volunteers and donors. Bless your solidarity with the survivors” Photo: Amie Dural

## Philippines: Help and More

CWS is grateful to the many people who have contributed to the Philippines Typhoon Appeal. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has kindly matched your donations with a \$100,000 grant for the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. From the beginning NCCP has mobilised volunteers to pack and distribute mountains of food on Leyte and Samar. One month after the typhoon hit, they had helped around 75,000 people with food, bedding, mosquito nets and more. After Christmas they will move into shelter and livelihood restoration. They are working closely with ACT Alliance members to make sure help gets to where it is needed.

NCCP reports, “Typhoon Haiyan has not only been the strongest of storms but also one of the cruellest climatic disasters, not only because of the scale of the event, but because it struck at what are mostly the poorest provinces of the Philippines. Life was hard in these places before Haiyan, people were struggling to simply survive, and now it will take many years for them to recover even the little livelihood that they had before. In the islands of Panay, Samar and Leyte two of the main livelihoods, coconut farming and fishing, have been almost totally devastated.”

CWS has also sent money to partner Developers Foundation for shelter repair in Aklan province and to Karapatan, a human rights advocacy group. Over \$212,000 has been sent to date. The uncertainty and loss will affect people for a long time—please keep the Philippines in your prayers.

Read [more](#) about what is happening. Please [give](#).

## Syria: Suffering continues

A hard winter is making life even harder for the many Syrian and Palestinian refugees made homeless by the bitter conflict. ACT Alliance members including DSPR are providing food, water, accommodation assistance, education and more to some of the 8 million people in need in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. With the conflict intensifying, they depend on our help. Please support the [Syria Appeal](#) and pray for peace.

## Bangladesh Workers Rally

Workers formed a human chain on human rights day, December 10 demanding the implementation of International Labour Organisation (ILO) worker protections. Amin the Secretary of CWS partner the National Garment Workers Federation said that while some positive steps had been made by the government it was not enough. With over 5000 factories that employ 4 million people, NGWF continues its campaign for better working conditions and recompense for the families of the Rana Plaza victims. CWS sent \$10,000 in response to its appeal earlier this year.

## We Remember:

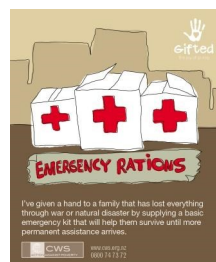
In recent weeks, we have paused to remember Nelson Mandela and Oketi Faletau of Tonga who have passed away. Mandela’s very special contribution has been widely [acknowledged](#) including by Olaf Tveit of the WCC. CWS stood against apartheid and campaigned for a free South Africa. Oketi’s deep concern for her people was expressed in the key role she played in Ama Takiloa. We remember her kindness and care.

## New Internationalist

Each year we take time to endorse our good friends at New Internationalist. Each month they produce a magazine that offers in depth and timely coverage on development and justice issues with an entertaining twist. They also have a fine range of gifts: books, calendars and cards. Take a [look](#).

## Gifted

It’s an emergency—you have forgotten someone on your Christmas list. Send an e-card and your problems will be over. [Gifted](#) gives you choice and a gift worth giving.



## About Update

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