



ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION

Working for Love, Hope & Justice

Tuesday, October 3, 2017

ABM responds in times of emergency

ABM has launched two emergency appeals this week seeking to raise funds for thousands of people affected by the eruptions of Manaro Volcano in Vanuatu as well as in support of All Churches Together (ACT) Alliance's emergency relief efforts to assist the many Rohingya refugees fleeing from the increasingly violent situation in Myanmar.

Volcanic ash displaces 8000 people

The Vanuatu Government has ordered a full-scale evacuation of the island of Ambae in the north of the country. The massive Manaro Volcano has been undergoing a series of violent eruptions over recent days, caused by the exposure of a new magma chamber to the atmosphere. The alert level is at Level 4, the second highest level, with flying rocks and volcanic gas being recorded in the immediate 6.5 km vicinity, while hazardous ash falls and acid rains are affecting most of the island.

Approximately 8,000 people have moved to evacuation centres along the coast but will now have to leave the island. The total population of the island is over 10,000. Both the police and the National Disaster Management Office are working to provide the necessary transport to relocate people to the nearby islands of Santo, Pentecost, Malekula and Maewo.

Local authorities and churches are actively involved in assuring community safety, with ABM's partner The Anglican Church of Melanesia providing evacuation shelters and basic provisions at St. Patrick's College, Torgil and Tumsisiro. The Church's headquarters is based on Santo where they can continue to provide relief aid for the evacuees.

There are already challenges from overcrowding in some evacuation centres, where water and sanitation facilities are being stretched beyond capacity. It will be a long road to recovery in terms of food security, as the acid rains have caused extensive damage to household garden crops. In many communities around Vanuatu, subsistence farming is often the primary means of food production, so any disruption to this growth can be devastating for families.

The Provincial operation team for the Penma province, of which the island of Ambae is part, is currently liaising with local business people on the island to assist with food and water supplies for displaced people. However, the situation is now dire with the whole island to be evacuated.

ABM seeks to raise AU\$10,000 and will be working closely with the Anglican Church of Melanesia in Vanuatu, using these funds to ensure essential supplies of food and water are delivered to those in greatest need. Please give a gift at www.abmission.org/donate or phone 1300 302 663.

Fleeing Violence in Myanmar

ABM has launched an appeal in support of All Churches Together (ACT) Alliance's emergency relief efforts to assist the many Rohingya refugees fleeing from the increasingly violent situation in Myanmar.

The Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) is the national mission agency of the Anglican Church of Australia. For over 160 years ABM has been assisting people all over the world to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provide health and education services, improve agricultural practices and strengthen the Church.



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Fundraising Manager, Michael Begaud said, “We are aiming to raise \$20,000 towards the purchase of humanitarian aid supplies. Funding is urgently needed to provide vital medical care, emergency food, clean water, and hygiene and sanitation kits for the victims of this crisis.”

“Please consider donating towards this crisis. Many innocent women and children are suffering, traumatised by war and without the essentials needed for life. Your gift will make a tangible and immediate difference, enabling provisions to be sent to those most in need,” Mr Begaud said.

In March 2017, in response to allegations of significant breaches of human rights, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution to dispatch an independent, international fact-finding mission to establish the facts about alleged human rights violations by military and security forces in Myanmar, in particular in Rakhine State.

However, on the 25th of August 2017 violence flared up against the ethnic Rohingya in Rakhine State in Myanmar.

This latest outbreak of violence followed decades of ethnic tensions and since, 430,000 people have fled Rakhine State into neighbouring Bangladesh in search of safety.

Those fleeing violence have made their way to the Cox’s Bazaar district and join other refugees, bringing the total number of people in need to just over 1 million.

The Government of Bangladesh has kept their borders open to enable people to seek safety and to allow the international community to provide the required humanitarian assistance.

While access is limited, the All Churches Together (ACT) Alliance has long-standing NGO members in the region, who are able to provide lifesaving support those in greatest need. Your gift will make a difference - www.abmission.org/donate or phone 1300 302 663.

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Contact Elizabeth Baker, ABM Media Consultant at media@abm.asn.au for more information.

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