



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2019**

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**TOGETHER,  
BUILDING A FAIR  
AND FRATERNAL  
WORLD**

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# THE URGENT AND IMPERATIVE NEED FOR THE FULL ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION OF OUR WORLD

**A**t the time of writing, the world is gripped by an unprecedented health crisis that is shining a particularly harsh light on social inequalities, the shortcomings of our globalised economies and the impact of our lifestyles on the future of the planet. It is now five years since the *Laudato si'* encyclical sounded the alert and called for the full ecological transition of our world. *"Everything is closely interrelated"*. In these most exceptional times, our commitment to transforming society with input from its most vulnerable members to build a fair and fraternal world makes more sense than ever. As do the four changes that we want to bring about: ensuring that the knowledge of the most vulnerable in society is recognised and shared, ensuring that everyone has access to effective rights, contributing to new sustainable development models and encouraging, as the Gospel inspires us to do, cooperation between communities of different cultures and religions to facilitate a profound change in our societies.

At the end of 2019, as the *Gilets Jaunes* protest movement was emerging in France, our delegations hosted more than 150 discussions to gather and assimilate the views of the most insecure (*"Everything discussed there must be fed back"*). In spite of the hardship and precarity of their daily lives, those who engaged with these discussions told us of their genuine eagerness to contribute to public debate, expressing very strong demands for social justice as inequalities deepen, and impressive aspirations for a stronger social fabric, fraternity and sharing.

Their many proposals contribute direction and meaning to the initiatives we implemented throughout 2019 to help rebuild the social fabric at regional level, create new paid and unpaid work that help to give the poorest in society back their dignity and the power to act, renovate unsanitary housing and bring forward proposals for redesigning our social protection systems. The feedback from these discussions also highlights a very high level of demand for meaning: tackling the things that separate us, and caring for those that connect us, beginning with the planet we call home, and which feeds us.

The serious global crisis triggered by the pandemic poses major new challenges in terms of our presence among the most vulnerable in society, whether in France or in the world's poorest countries, the push back against inequality and the uprating of our social protection systems. These challenges cannot successfully be met without greater solidarity at every level of our society, between the countries of Europe and with the rest of the world, or without each of us recognising the fragile nature of life and accepting this vulnerability as a valuable guide to rethinking our individual and collective lifestyles. As we write these words during the period of national lockdown, we are filled with joy at the new forms of solidarity that are now being invented on a daily basis to make fraternity a reality and to rely on spiritual resources when physical contact is no longer possible. It is also clear that, like the virus, concern for the most vulnerable in our world knows no borders. ■

**Véronique Fayet**  
National President

**Vincent Destival**  
Executive Director

**Hervé Perrot**  
Chaplain General

# THEY ARE SECOURS CATHOLIQUE

**“BERNARD  
“OFFER APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS  
AND SUPPORT”.**



The move from the Crédit Mutuel de Bretagne bank to Secours Catholique wasn't such a big step for Bernard. During his time as head of social and solidarity economy at

the bank, he got to know Secours Catholique well, and on his retirement was offered the opportunity to manage the microcredit activity for the department of Finistère delegation. The idea immediately appealed to the early retiree. *“I really couldn't see myself sitting in a chair watching TV, flipping through the papers or reading books.”* For the households he now helps, budgeting is a real headache *“because their income is either very low or irregular.”* It's a reality that his former professional setting does not take sufficient account of. *“People who have problems with banks are all too often assumed to be incapable of managing their money”,* says Bernard. *“So they're not trusted and find themselves excluded from the system when all we actually need to offer them are appropriate conditions and support.”*

**“AURÉLIE  
“WE'RE SEEN,  
BUT NOT HEARD”.**



Aurélie's role in the National Council for Policies to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion (CNLE) is to bring the realities of life experienced by the most vulnerable in society to the attention of the State. Originally from Cameroon, this mother

of four is one of the two Secours Catholique representatives on this national body. Insecure accommodation, poorly paid and undervalued odd jobs, prejudice... these are issues that she and the people she speaks for know from personal experience. *“Governments see property from a technocratic perspective”,* she says. *“We are on the front line when it comes to dealing face to face with the reality of social insecurity. We are the voice of those with no voice. Not that we are invisible, because we are seen, but because we voice, but they don't hear us.”*

**“MARYVONNE  
“THESE OUTSIDERS MAKE ME HAPPY  
AND HELP ME IN MY LIFE”.**



It was ten years ago, when she was with a charity that helps women sex workers, that Maryvonne discovered the Sortie du bois (Out of the Woods) project set up by Secours Catholique to re-house the people living rough in the Bois de Vincennes on the eastern edge

of Paris. *“Back then, people were living in converted garden sheds, one of which was occupied by a couple called Monique and Thierry. They sat me down in their home and offered me coffee. I immediately felt good. I thought to myself: ‘These are the people I belong with’.”* Since then, Maryvonne has come back once or twice a week to walk the woodland paths and catch up on the latest news about those who live there. *“They don't ask us for anything tangible. Just information, somewhere they can get medical treatment or clothes. And someone to listen. They're people with real loyalty, and people whose stories are now interwoven with mine. These outsiders make me happy and help me in my life.”*



**“ NADIA**

**“THIS COMMITMENT HAS GIVEN ME BACK MY SELF-CONFIDENCE”.**



Ma P'tite Échoppe opened in the Paris region at the beginning of 2019, with support from Secours Catholique. This new type of local shop operated by working members offers high-quality products at prices its customers can afford. Nadia, a mother of four who arrived from Morocco at the age of 14, has been one of them since the shop first opened. She even helped to develop the project concept at a time when financial problems had led her to use the former Secours Catholique solidarity grocery shop in the same community. *“I was there at the very beginning. There weren't many of us, and it was only after we opened that volunteers came forward”.* Today, Nadia runs cookery workshops and works in the purchasing department. *“I need this commitment”, she says. “It takes me out of my daily routine, gives me space and has given me back my self-confidence”.*

**“ BRICE**

**“I HOPE MY CHILDREN WILL HAVE BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS”.**



Brice Mackosso has spent 20 years fighting to improve his country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. He entered the seminary at the age of 14 and finally qualified as a lawyer after *“falling in love”* with the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. In 1997, he founded the first Congo Justice and Peace Commission, followed in 2003 by the Congolese branch of Publish What You Pay, with support from Secours Catholique. Despite his fight paying off as oil revenues finally began to flow into the national coffers, they were not flowing out again to help the country develop. So in 2014, Brice asked Secours Catholique to launch the international Let's Turn the Page campaign which advocates democracy and political change. *“I'm optimistic, but realistic: I know I'm never going to see things like high-speed rail in the Congo. But I hope at least that my children will have better living conditions”.*

**“ LYNDIA**

**“I FEEL LIKE I RECOGNISE MYSELF IN THESE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOW EXPERIENCING WHAT I'VE BEEN THROUGH”.**



Every Wednesday afternoon, Lynda welcomes the people who knock on the door of Secours Catholique in Roubaix. For this mother, who arrived from Algeria in 2014 with her husband and two children, it's no small thing to find herself on the other side of that door. *“I feel like I recognise myself in these people who are now experiencing what I've been through”.* What she means by that is a lengthy official and legal process to gradually sort out the situation of the family, obtain residency permits and work permits, find decent accommodation, and start dreaming of a house of their own. Today, Lynda is beginning a training course, her husband has been able to resume his career as a mechanic on a permanent contract of employment, and both children are doing well at school. The eldest wants to be a lawyer. So perhaps one day she, like her mother, will be able to help those experiencing difficulties she knows well.

# 2019 RETRO- SPECTIVE



4 MARCH

Secours Catholique publishes a summary of the 800 pages of verbatim accounts and proposals from vulnerable people and volunteers gathered from the 150 discussions hosted throughout France between December 2018 and January 2019.



5 FEBRUARY

Ma P'tite Échoppe opens in Antony near Paris with support from Secours Catholique. This superb local shop offers high-quality products at prices its customers can afford.



8 APRIL

Secours Catholique marks International Roma Day with its publication of *Les Oubliés du bidonville de la Butte* (The Forgotten Community of the Butte), an immersive web documentary about the daily lives of those who live in the Méry-sur-Oise camp, near Paris.

## AND ALSO...

**JANUARY** The National Coordination Committee (CAN) of Secours Catholique-Caritas France holds its first meeting of the year in the Morbihan region to work on the issue of shared governance. **MARCH** *Révolution fraternelle, Le cri des pauvres* (Fraternal revolution, the cry of the poor) by Secours Catholique President Véronique Fayet is published by Editions Indigène, which hit the headlines as publisher of Stéphane Hessel's bestseller *Indignez-vous!* (Time for Outrage!). – The Young Team hosts its first weekend project management training course for Young Caritas members keen to launch events. **APRIL** Secours Catholique President Véronique Fayet attends the strategy committee meeting of the interfaith youth movement Coexister. **MAY** Ahead of this weekend of European elections, Secours Catholique publishes its expectations and recommendations, calling on politicians and the public to work together to build a Europe of social solidarity. **JUNE** Secours Catholique takes part in the demonstration held by TZCLD (*Territoire Zéro Chômeur de Longue Durée* - Zero Long-Term Unemployment Region) to convince public authorities of the need to continue this programme. – The Let's Turn the Page collective, the international citizens' movement for democratic government in Africa, coordinated by Secours Catholique, holds its first annual general meeting in Niger, attended by 50 representatives from 13 African and European countries. **JULY** Volunteer week at the Cité Saint-Pierre de Lourdes for Young Caritas members in the Seine-et-Marne and Seine-Saint-Denis areas. **AUGUST** Secours Catholique monitors the adoption in Geneva of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate



**24 SEPTEMBER**

Secours Catholique holds a press conference to accompany publication of its illustrated report *Exilés, dublinés, maltraités* charting the consequences of the EU Dublin Regulation on the lives of migrants in France.



**1 OCTOBER**

Married, father of two and grandfather Vincent Destival (59) joins Secours Catholique as its new Executive Director.



**2-13 DECEMBER**

Secours Catholique attends COP25 in Madrid, and deplores the lack of political courage to tackle climate issues, the repeated blocking of climate initiatives by Australia, Brazil, Saudi Arabia and the USA, and the culpable complicity of France.

Change (IPCC) report on climate change and land. **SEPTEMBER** Secours Catholique joins with the Alerte collective to participate in the national consultation process around proposals to merge all the minimum social benefits to introduce a universal income benefit (*Revenu Universel d'Activité* or RUA). **OCTOBER** At the Pan-Amazon Synod in Rome, the delegation from French Guiana speaks for Secours Catholique-Caritas France in its advocacy to halt extractive industry and mining projects now underway in French Guiana. - The French government marks EU Anti-Trafficking Day by launching its second national plan to combat human trafficking. - As leader of a major peace building programme, Secours Catholique hosts a workshop in conjunction with Colombian stakeholders in Bogotá to develop this programme for presentation to the French Development Agency (AFD) in 2020. **NOVEMBER** Secours Catholique joins with around 40 members of the worldwide network of prison chaplains in attending the meeting hosted in Rome by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. - An earthquake destroys and damages a number of buildings in the village of Le Teil in the Ardèche region of France. The local Secours Catholique teams action their post-disaster mission to provide long-term support for the victims. **DECEMBER** As part of raising awareness of human rights violations suffered by migrants at the internal borders of Europe, Secours Catholique attends an on-site inter-charity initiative, and holds a press conference in Paris.



# DEBATING SOLIDARITY AND ECOLOGY

As early as December 2018, as the anger of *Gilets Jaunes* protesters coalesced around the effects of the carbon tax, Secours Catholique-Caritas France was hosting debates all over France to make sure that the voices of the poorest in society could also be heard. In total, there were more than 150 debates, and the many ambitious proposals that emerged from them reinforce our belief that there can be no ecological transition without social justice, and no social justice without ecological transition.

Secours Catholique did not wait for the launch of the French government's Great National Debate before asking its teams to make the words and pleas of the poorest in society heard as early as December 2018. In just a few weeks at the beginning of 2019, around 150 debates were hosted in sixty French departments, giving more than 3,000 underprivileged people and Secours Catholique volunteers the opportunity to contribute their visions and proposals. Much of the success achieved by these debates was thanks to their simplicity. They sought to answer just two questions: what relation, if any, is the anger expressed by the *Gilets Jaunes* protesters relevant to our daily experience? And what key local and national proposals do we want to bring forward to make progress towards

a fair, sustainable and fraternal society in which everyone has the opportunity to live with dignity? And there were just two instructions: listen to what people are saying until they finish speaking, and transcribe their contributions word for word. *"It wasn't only those people we support who contributed their views, but also our volunteers, many of whom live on very small pensions"*, says Head of Action and Advocacy France-Europe Jean Merckaert. *"The result was some magical moments during which people really listened to what each other had to say, and realised that they were not alone in the problems they face, and that those problems were not of their own making"*.

A summary of the 800 pages of verbatim accounts was published at the beginning of March, following validation and prioritisation of the proposals by involving contributors to the debates. Although some of

these proposals are consistent with those made by the government at the end of the Great National Debate, particularly in terms of democracy, reconciling basic needs and the climate imperative, they are generally much more ambitious. Whereas the government is looking for technical solutions to deliver the ecological transition, the poorest in society are calling for an end to hyper-consumerism and the waste culture. Whereas the government wants to treat public finances as an exercise in accountancy - reducing public spending to lower taxes - they talk about justice and stress the need for a decent income for everyone. Whereas the government treats the organisational structure of the State as an exercise in management - fewer levels to reduce the cost of public services - they are committed to respect for fundamental rights, putting people first and local

**“THE MOST VULNERABLE ARE NOT EXCLUDED FROM SOCIETY, BUT THEY DO FEEL THAT ECOLOGY IS AN ISSUE FOR THE WEALTHY.”**

access to social and health services.

Debaters also highlight issues that the government has chosen to overlook (the housing shortage, excessively systematic imprisonment, etc.), and address the need for private sector regulation, diverting finance away from speculation and towards the ecological transition and inclusion in the banking system, and more effective sharing of wealth within companies. Ultimately, the obsession that emerges from these debates is one of purpose and direction: tackling the things that separate us and caring for those that connect us, beginning with the planet we call home. *"Although the latter issue - that of environmental protection - was not one that emerged in the observations made by our debaters, many of the proposals that followed relate to it. The most vulnerable are not excluded from society, but they do feel that ecology is an issue for the wealthy, and that the fact they cannot afford*





ELODIE FERRIOT / SCCF

to make their contribution or respond to pleas to go organic is another form of violence”.

## “RETHINKING THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION/ SOCIAL JUSTICE NEXUS”

*“If we were to learn only one thing from the Gilets Jaunes movement and our own debates, it would have to be that we need to think about this: we need to think about the ecological transition/social justice nexus. We at Secours Catholique are convinced of this truth, which is why at the same time as publishing our summary, we joined the Pacte du pouvoir de vivre (Power to Live Pact): this coalition of 19 associations and trade unions has identified eight priority issues and a hundred proposals on which the government was obliged to take a position”.* When Parliament returned at the end of August 2019, the Prime Minister met with coalition representatives, and agreed to engage in a form of consultation around five of these eight priority issues, including the Maison France Service one-stop shops for public services, and the need to push back against domestic fuel poverty. Working alongside a number of associations, including the Climate Action Network (Réseau action climat), Oxfam France and ATD Fourth World, Secours Catholique is also involved in two other advocacy initiatives. The first demands a fair carbon tax, i.e. one

that includes sectors that are currently exempt, such as polluting companies and transport options, and is based on a redistribution mechanism that would benefit the poorest and most car-dependent households. *“The government has misinterpreted what emerged from the Great National Debate, which is in line with what those who took part in the Secours Catholique debates told us. Its understanding was that people wanted lower taxes, when in reality they were asking for fairer taxes. The same applies to the carbon tax. The government withdrew it, despite the fact that people weren’t against eco-taxes as such, but rather against the way they were imposed”.*

The second advocacy initiative was implemented to coincide with the European elections and Parliamentary debate of the finance bill. Its aim was to propose a European carbon budget linked to a social impact indicator that would make it possible to assess the obligations of member states towards the most vulnerable in society. For France, the proposal focused on a green budget that would reflect inequalities, so that the impact of the bill could be measured for every penny of income and every category of the population. *“These proposals were made in the context of the latest tax measures and the increase in the Prime d’Activité (employment bonus) benefit, which have been demonstrated by research studies to boost the purchasing power of all but the poorest 10% of the population”.* They have clearly been taken on board, since the Minister for Social Affairs and Health and National Assembly member Stella Dupont issued a positioning statement in August 2019 announcing the launch of consultation on this subject.

As part of addressing these joint ecological and social justice issues in 2019, Secours Catholique joined the Pacte pour la transition écologique (Pact for Ecological Transition), which includes thousands of private individuals in preparing a programme of 32 proposals to be promoted in the run-up to the municipal elections. *“We gave our support to this process, and many members of our delegations joined the 2,000+ groups that were formed as a result”.*

At the end of the Great National Debate, the government drew lots to select those who would take part in consultations around how the ecological transition could be achieved. This Citizens’ Climate Conference meets regularly, and invites experts to provide members with input and advice. Secours Catholique spoke at the first meeting on the subject of ‘Caring for our planet and its people’: a theme that sums up our concerns, our actions, and the expectations of those we help on a daily basis. ■

# ADVOCACY

## AND ACTION INITIATIVES IN FRANCE, AT A GLANCE



### POOR HOUSING

Secours Catholique-Caritas France does not stop at urging public authorities to deliver on their commitments to build more social housing and renovate 'thermal sieves' (energy-hungry homes that leak heat); it also takes practical action on both these issues.

During 2019, our AIS (Social Housing Agency) began its work by identifying homeless families and providing them with a permanent roof over their heads. Also during the year, we entered into a 'social impact' contract with the French State and the Réseau éco habitat (eco-housing network) under which the aim is to renovate 200 homes in the Hauts-de-France region by 2024.

We also continued to take action and advocate for unconditional access to emergency accommodation and effective implementation of the right of individuals to be housed. ■



### WELCOMING

### FOREIGNERS AND ASSERTING THEIR RIGHTS

During the third and final year of the global Caritas network Global Migration Campaign, Secours Catholique-Caritas France focused on four areas: European advocacy, promoting the rights of unaccompanied minors, consulting on effective access to basic services, and changing the way we look at migrants. We also continued our inter-association work at the internal borders of Europe. We worked during the year with our 3,000 French-language learning volunteers to review our practices. Lastly, we are delighted with two particular advocacy victories: securing a reduction in taxes on residence permits, and ensuring free access to the call centre when making appointments with prefecture administrative offices. ■



## EMPLOYMENT AND THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

In 2019, our Employment and Solidarity Economy department refocused on mobility, food, clothing and employment. The combination of microcredit and the Solidarauto garage network has allowed us to help 3,500 families to achieve long-term mobility. We also developed the setting up of local solidarity shops and shared gardens that give people the opportunity to grow sustainable food and develop their own skills. Our clothing activity was also refocused during the year. Entrusting the employment aspects to our partner Tissons la solidarité (Let's weave solidarity) has allowed us to develop charity shops as channels for building social relationships at local level. Lastly, we continued our advocacy in favour of extending the Zero Long-Term Unemployed Region (TZCLD) experiment, and supported the development of new legal frameworks known as 'valued activities', which encourage the empowerment of long-term jobseekers. ■



## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Still closely involved in the 'Ensemble contre la traite des êtres humains' (United Against Human Trafficking) collective of associations, Secours Catholique-Caritas France coordinated the authoring of an issue of the Episcopal Document to raise among members of the Catholic Church awareness of the realities of human trafficking. 2019 also saw the adoption of a second national anti-trafficking plan, which we had previously been calling for. We are continuing to demand that the necessary human and financial resources are allocated to implementation of this plan. ■



## JUSTICE AND PRISON

2019 saw the culmination of a long process of investigation and analysis conducted at the initiative of Secours Catholique-Caritas France and Caritas Germany over a two-year period in prisons in ten European countries. Based on the findings of this investigation, we have informed the Council of Europe and the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development of our advocacy to promote the empowerment of prisoners. We have also made a series of recommendations: protecting the dignity of prisoners and giving them the opportunity to reveal their capabilities, strengthening their links with society, and promoting sentencing alternatives to imprisonment. ■

## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES



Expanding the Maisons des Familles (Family House) network run in partnership with the Apprentis d'Auteuil was central to the work of the Secours Catholique Family Support department in 2019. A benchmark framework setting out their goals, missions and values has been prepared, accompanied by consultation with the Caisse nationale des allocations familiales (National Family Benefits Fund) to ensure their long-term future. During the year, we also continued our advocacy initiatives around the right to holidays and, in view of the increasing number of senior citizens visiting our drop-in centres, we also conducted a survey to identify initiatives that would help them become less isolated and less vulnerable. ■



# PROMOTING RECOGNITION OF EVERYONE'S KNOWLEDGE

**THOSE IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS** and/or excluded from mainstream society understand their daily realities and needs better than anyone else. Their expertise, which remains underappreciated, and their involvement in the decisions that affect their lives are fundamental to achieving the Secours Catholique-Caritas France aspiration of facilitating social transformation. This is the reason why each of our actions and advocacy campaigns, whether in France or abroad, is based on everyone's knowledge, beginning with the people and groups we support. So one-third of the National Coordination Committee (CAN) formed in 2018 are people with direct experience of social vulnerability. The committee met twice in 2019, including a full-day meeting with members of our Board of Directors (see p. 51). Our considerations and thoughts are also guided and informed by those who live, or have lived, in poverty and now contribute to our magazine *L'Apostrophe*, which published its first two issues in 2019. The same individuals also took part in the 'Comprendre les dimensions de la pauvreté' (Understanding the Dimensions of Poverty) research project conducted in partnership with ATD Fourth World. Lastly, we conducted a survey among those indigenous peoples of Asia and Latin America who have been most successful in protecting and conserving the natural environments in which they live, with the intention of drawing inspiration from their ancestral knowledge and practices.



ELODIE PERRIOT / SCCF

## WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYONE IN FRANCE

### WRITING AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EMPOWERMENT

In the knowledge that writing is an important part of empowering people excluded from society and/or living in particularly vulnerable conditions, Secours Catholique-Caritas France has launched national training courses in the skills required to lead and coordinate writing workshops. These training opportu-

nities and the success of our magazine *L'Apostrophe* have helped the spread of this type of leadership. Many writing groups have been set up in Marseille, Roubaix, Paris, Créteil and Quimper, in Normandy, in Savoie and in Picardy. Free from prejudice, these groups give everyone the opportunity to express their own creativity through words, images and even their body language when reading aloud. They have only one rule: to listen and build relationships with others. Although publication is not the primary purpose of these writing workshops, groups are free to submit articles to *L'Apostrophe* or be asked to reflect on the topic chosen by the magazine. All contributions are validated and published in the appropriate sections of the magazine by its editorial committee, whose members also have personal experience of living in vulnerable circumstances. Articles are then returned to the groups that wrote them for final checking and validation.



#### DELEGATION PROJECT

**IN QUIMPER**, the local writing group created its Les Écrivales events in 2019. On two occasions during the summer, group members met in venues other than the Secours Catholique solidarity café to give themselves more time for discussion and writing. Les Écrivales are structured to allow its members to transition from verbal to written expression, and then return to the spoken word by reading the final text out loud. *"When the act of writing is the catalyst for meeting others, sharing ideas, thinking about society from different perspectives and communicating outside the group, it becomes not only a social act, but also a political act"*, says Solen, joint leader of Les Écrivales and joint editor of *L'Apostrophe*. ■

### THE MAISONS DES FAMILLES NETWORK ENTERS A NEW PHASE

The 'Maisons des Familles' concept was created ten years ago in Grenoble with the aim of offering vulnerable families access to a free living space with kitchen, living room and playroom; a real 'home' in which they can listen, share and support each other. Today, there are 17 throughout France, including the Toulouse



XAVIER SCHWEBEL / SCCF

facility opened in 2019. Some are managed by Secours Catholique-Caritas France and others in partnership with Apprentis d'Auteuil, but all share the same mission of providing a living space in which to promote, share

and enrich the experience of parenting and create educational alliances. During the year, work began on preparing a benchmark framework setting out the goals, missions and values of the Maisons des Familles network, accompanied by consultation with the Caisse nationale des allocations familiales (National Family Benefits Fund) to ensure their long-term future.



### DELEGATION PROJECT

#### “LET’S TALK ABOUT MY RIGHTS!”

In 2019, the thirtieth anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the French Défenseur des droits (Defender of Rights) launched the major national consultation 'Let's talk about my rights!', to which more than 2,200 children and teenagers contributed thanks to the involvement of 50 associations. These included the Côtes-d'Armor delegation of Secours Catholique-Caritas France, which gave a voice to some of the most vulnerable children who, together with their parents, use the 'L'escale des familles' day centre and the 'Pause toit' temporary accommodation service. The consultation gave them the opportunity to talk about the poverty they experience and the rights they are denied, and to express their opinion about the issues that concern them. It also allowed centre volunteers to offer parents information about the rights of their children. ■

### EUROPEAN ADVOCACY FOR PRISONER EMPOWERMENT

2019 saw the culmination of a long process of investigation and analysis conducted at the initiative of Secours Catholique-Caritas France and Caritas Germany over a two-year period in prisons in ten European countries. This study has revealed that the need for self-determination for prisoners and those subject to legal supervision is a recurrent, cross-cultural common denominator, notwithstanding the differences between the penal systems of member states. It also supports the findings of other research projects that personal responsibility and self-determination are far more effective than the restricted methods traditionally used in prisons, that they can be applied without compromising the objectives of the prison system, and that they facilitate successful future re-integration into society. Based on all these findings,



and using the European Prison Rules (EPR) as our common legal framework, we are working to raise awareness in the Council of Europe and the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development through advocacy with the relevant public authorities, prison institutions and social service agencies. Our three main recommendations are: to support prisoners by protecting their dignity and giving them the opportunity to reveal their capabilities, to strengthen their links with society in ways that allow them to become more involved in community life, and to promote sentencing alternatives to prison that are much more effective in terms of social reintegration.

### ANIMATION IS A TOOL FOR ADVOCACY

If prisoners are to regain a positive role in society, they must be able to make their own choices and take responsibility for their actions. This is the central message of the animation produced by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in 2019 to present the findings of the survey it conducted in prisons in ten European countries. Directed by Paul Dandrel, this short video animation deliberately has no commentary so that it is understandable in every country, and features the anti-hero Ghinion, who in seeking to find his role in life is tempted to risk breaking the rules to overcome obstacles in his way. Arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned, he slowly loses all faith in himself and others. But before long, he meets volunteers who help him take back control of his life and find his own way to empowerment through self-determination.

### PARTNERSHIP WITH CHURCH SERVICES WORKING IN PRISONS

On 7 and 8 November 2019, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development hosted a meeting in Rome with around 40 members of the global network of prison chaplains, which works with 11 million prisoners worldwide. Secours Catholique-Caritas France attended the meeting. It provided us with an excellent opportunity to present the results of the survey we conducted in ten prisons in Europe, to screen the animation we produced to present its results, and publicise our advocacy in favour of measures that encourage prisoner self-determination. *"You can't talk about repaying a debt to society in a prison with no windows. You can't expect people to make an effort without an horizon. No one can change their lives*

*without seeing an horizon."* It was in these terms that the Pope addressed participants in a lengthy presentation that could easily provide the draft of an encyclical of the type we are calling for.

### STATISTICAL REPORT ON POVERTY, AND ESPECIALLY MIGRANT POVERTY

The 'Statistical Report on the State of Poverty in France' published by Secours Catholique-Caritas France has provided the benchmark for decades. The latest report presented to political leaders and the media at the time of its publication on 7 November 2019 is based on the observation of more than 72,000 real-life situations and the 1,347,500 people who used our reception centres throughout France in 2018. This new edition, which highlights a rise in the number of increasingly vulnerable undocumented migrants arriving in our reception centres, is accompanied by an analysis of the current situation of migrants in France and worldwide. These findings are then illustrated by contributions from our partners working in those countries that are the points of departure and transit for migrants, and accompanied by proposals for enabling these people to live dignified lives.



STEVEN WASSENAAR / SCCF

## UNDERSTANDING THE DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

While the fact remains that poverty is multidimensional, it is most frequently measured solely on the basis of its financial aspect, even today. This fact was the basis for the ATD Fourth World and Oxford University participatory research programme conducted in six countries (Bangladesh, Bolivia, USA, France, UK and Tanzania), which identified eight dimensions of poverty, based on its findings regarding the lives of the people who actually live in poverty. In partnership with ATD Fourth World, the 3 Cities Sociocultural Centre in Poitiers and the Catholic University of Paris, Secours Catholique-Caritas France contributed to the report, with particular emphasis on those aspects of the research that relate directly to France. Membership of the team was divided equally between people with personal experience of poverty, professionals working with vulnerable individuals, and researchers contributing their academic knowledge. The French report was published in October 2019, although the full report had been released in May at a symposium at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It was submitted to the French government's interministerial delegation on combating poverty and the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition. It forms part of a wider advocacy

for the creation of new poverty indicators that would facilitate the development of more effective national and international policies.

## GREEN ADVOCACY BY YOUNG CARITAS IN FRENCH GUIANA

Four years ago, the overseas delegations of Secours Catholique-Caritas France launched the 'Défi Jeunes Outre-mer' (Youth Challenge Overseas) to develop local and national advocacy initiatives with the members of Young Caritas. It was during one of the training seminars hosted as part of the challenge programme that the Young Caritas members in French Guiana chose their advocacy theme for 2019. Their 'S'engager ensemble vert' (Going Green Together) initiative was structured into three stages. The first was to distribute a questionnaire designed to measure the real environmental behaviour of people and their ability to take positive action. The second was to run a video competition enabling individuals to express their personal vision of environmental issues. The third and last stage was to set up a practical initiative that involved people helped by the 'Relais drogue solidarité' substance abuse support charity in a clean-up of Broken Chains beach, whose memorial remembers the many victims of slavery. ■



STEVEN WASSENAAR / SCCF

## THE ABSURDITY OF THE DUBLIN REGULATION IN WORDS AND PICTURES

The EU legislation known as the Dublin Regulation requires that asylum applications made by exiles are processed by the EU member state through which they entered. The result is that many people wishing to remain in France, but prevented from applying for asylum, live for months on end in great administrative, social and psychological uncertainty. Published on 24 September 2019, the illustrated report *Exilés, dublinés, maltraités* (Exiled, Dublined, Mistreated) highlights these dramatic situations to demonstrate the absurdity of the system. It was produced by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in collaboration with a dozen people who are (or have been) involved in the Dublin procedure and cartoonist Camille Ulrich. Designed as a tool for questioning public opinion and the authorities, the report was sent to 150 Members of the French Parliament and to French Members of the European Parliament to provide arguments and recommendations in favour of reforming the application of this law. ■

## WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYONE IN THE WORLD



XAVIER SCHWEBEL / SCCF

### THE FIRST-EVER STUDY OF ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE IN ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

For many years, Secours Catholique-Caritas France has been working through its partners in Asia and Latin America to promote the rights of indigenous communities. The idea of conducting a joint research project to study the involvement of these peoples in the sustainable management of land and resources first emerged at the 2017 PanAmazonian Social Forum. Conducted in 2019, the aim of this research is to inform consultation and discussion around our support practices and contribute to our international advocacy around the issue of climate change, and especially as members of the Climate Land Ambition and Rights Alliance (CLARA). Between July and October, two teams - accompanied by our local partners - visited a number of indigenous communities in Peru, Bolivia, Vietnam, Myanmar, India and Bangladesh to identify inspirational practices with the potential to contribute to our ecological transition. An exceptionally rich body of data was gathered. Those data confirm our instincts, but also reveal tensions related to global upheaval and the pull of cities for younger generations. The study will be finalised during 2020. It has already strengthened the relationships we have with our partners, and expanded our knowledge of the communities whose interests we promote.

### SUCCESSFUL EMPOWERMENT OF AFRICAN CARITAS ORGANISATIONS

2019 marked the end of the second phase of an ambitious programme of Institutional Development and Organisational Strengthening (DIRO). Launched in 2011 by Secours Catholique-Caritas France with support from the French Development Agency (AFD), its aim is to help African Caritas organisations to become more autonomous and efficient in their fight against poverty. The programme has already been run successfully by 14 of the 46 members of Caritas Africa. The review conducted in 2019 shows that these organisations have become more professional, work better as a network, are more effective in their fight against poverty, and have raised their profile regionally and internationally. Today, the African Caritas organisations are central to this programme and its benefits. In future, they will pilot it. This handover to Caritas Africa is the central challenge for the third phase of our DIRO programme. It will be spread over three years and will involve 18 Caritas organisations, 4 of them new (2 English-speaking and 2 Portuguese-speaking). The ultimate goal is for all African Caritas organisations to achieve not only strategic autonomy (in terms of self-determination and the ability to set their own missions and priorities), but also financial autonomy by raising their own funds. ■



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR TEAMS

## IN THE SHARING GARDEN AT BELLEVILLE-EN-BEAUJOLAIS



It's a June morning in one of the community gardens created by Secours Catholique du Rhône: a strip of rich alluvial soil between a business park and the river. Local gardeners are coming together for a training course in permaculture. "We live in subsidised low-rent housing", explains Tahar, who is originally from Oran. "So the garden gives us the chance to work outdoors. It really makes you feel good. I come here two or three times a week after work".

## DROPPING IN FOR A CHAT AT THE RAINBOW HOUSE IN GIVORS



The Secours Catholique Maison arc-en-Ciel (Rainbow House) is in Givors, a town hit hard by industrial decline to the south of Lyon. Its red tile roof and four walls are surrounded by a garden that grows seasonal vegetables. The house doesn't look like much, but the atmosphere is welcoming with a very family feel. "I come here every Tuesday to chat, have coffee and help prepare meals", says Hayat, a single Algerian woman with no children. "You meet different people here. We also go on outings together".

## STREET TOURS BY YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN ANGERS



Three times a week, students in Angers go out to meet homeless people on street tours organised by Secours Catholique. On this particular evening, they come across Olivier, Yann, Jean-Baptiste and Joao, who are preparing to spend the night sleeping rough, and bring a little warmth into their homeless lives. "These young people give up their own time and make the effort to come out to meet us", says Jean-Baptiste. "We have a laugh together. It's a good feeling".

## 'CARITAS EXPRESS' ON THE ISLAND OF LA RÉUNION



These 45 committed young people took up the challenge of the 'Caritas Express' familiarisation course on the island of La Réunion. Some of them live here, others have travelled from Mauritius, Madagascar and the mainland to cover 218 kilometres on foot and by bus over in three days with the sole aim of getting to know each other and the different cultures, religions and ways of life that coexist on the island.

## CHATS AND SPIRITUALITY WITH THE WALKERS OF ANTONY



People who use the drop-in centre at Antony in the Hauts-de-Seine region regularly get together for a 20-kilometre forest walk with the ultimate aim of perhaps one day setting out on the pilgrim's route to Santiago de Compostela. But each of these walks is an escape from everyday life in its own right: *"Walking clears your head of all the worries you might have"*, says Eve. *"Like where to sleep, where to eat... all the hassles of everyday life"*.

## SUCCESSFUL INTERCULTURALITY IN FRANCHE-COMTÉ

Many Franche-Comté residents have reached out to meet refugees, whether as part of the 'Humanitarian Corridor' campaign, a sponsorship initiative, a personal welcome or French language lessons... They marked the publication of the Secours Catholique Statistical Report with a selfie to capture the happiness of the experience. All of them agree: *"It's something that has really opened my mind to these issues, and the same goes for my whole family"*.

## FRATERNITY, SPIRITUALITY AND FRIENDSHIP AT COTIGNAC IN THE VAR REGION OF FRANCE

*"We're going to give you our daily weather forecast"*, announce the members of the Place et Parole des Personnes en situation de Précarité en Provence Verte group from the stage. Better known under the name of 5PV, this self-help group of vulnerable individuals meets every month, invited by the Var delegation of Secours Catholique to share the word of God and talk about their lives and hopes, as well as the latest good and bad news.



# FACILITATING ACCESS TO BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

**FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW**, Secours Catholique-Caritas France has focused its initiatives, aid and training on providing continual support for the basic human rights of the most vulnerable in society, because this a major issue for social transformation. In 2019, this same priority inspired our advocacy initiatives and participation in government-organised consultations: guaranteeing a decent minimum income for all with no strings attached, long-term housing and solutions that provide access to employment. But we do not limit ourselves simply to challenging central government on these issues; we are taking them forward ourselves through our support for the TZCLD (Zero Long-Term Unemployed Region) project and by developing new forms of employment - known as valued activities - to enable long-term jobseekers to take back control of their lives. We are also playing our part in finding housing solutions for homeless people through our Social Housing Agency (AIS) and in cooperation with the Eco-housing network (Réseau éco habitat) to help renovate the 'thermal sieves' (energy-hungry homes that leak heat) in which so many vulnerable people live. We are doing the same elsewhere in the world by networking our partners to help ensure that the rights of migrants are respected in countries of transit and arrival, and that migrants have the access to basic services promised by those countries that have signed the Marrakech Pact. Lastly, we continue to take forward our longstanding initiatives to promote the land rights of indigenous peoples in Asia and the Americas, uphold peace in Colombia and promote democratic elections in Africa.





C. HARGREAVES / SCDF

## ACCESSING YOUR RIGHTS IN FRANCE

### ACCESSING THE RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT

#### PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT INTEGRATION SERVICE

The Public Employment Integration Service (Service Public de l'Insertion or SPI) was one of the reform projects announced by the French government in September 2018. Its origin lies in the realisation that there were major inequalities between the administrative departments of France in terms of help for jobseekers. It set the goal of ensuring that jobseekers were offered at least one employment support solution within a month. To achieve it, central government signed contracts with the departmental councils traditionally responsible for the integration service. While agreeing that the principle of helping people quickly is a good one, Secours Catholique-Caritas France and the Alerte collective insist on the need for the SPI to adapt to the pace of individuals. A clear distinction must be made between the time needed for guidance, which must be significantly shortened, and the time needed to put in place the necessary personal support, which can be longer where the decision is

made to involve individuals in preparing their own employment plans. In common with our stance on the RUA universal income benefit, we reject the practice of making rights subject to conditions, and would rather see a personalised and caring form of support focused squarely on individuals, their capabilities and their plans. We recommend the introduction of a 'career path guide' to act as a link between all those involved in the employment integration process and ensure that individuals do not drop out of it. We also reiterate the need to address all the other issues that unemployed individuals may have to cope with, from housing to healthcare and debt.

#### VALUED ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE PEOPLE BACK INTO WORK

In addition to the employment support initiatives implemented by individual delegations, we have made a very significant contribution to the strategy to combat poverty. The consultation on 'valued activities', which began in 2017 at the instigation of Secours Catholique-Caritas France delegations with the aim of identifying a legal framework for activities



to be offered to jobseekers, continues. Conducted in partnership with several delegations and partners, it has identified seven potential frameworks, which were presented to 23 interested delegations in March 2019. The ultimate aim is to define those forms of activity that contribute most to helping people back into work and developing their ability to act in their own interest, at the same time as reviewing and assessing experiments that have been carried out over many years, such as the Épinal Youth Workshops. Six projects are currently being tested, including a service exchange network with a complementary 'Accorderie' type currency in Franche-Comté, a pop-up cooperative in Charentes, a system to assess skills through the career opportunities available in the Cité Saint-Pierre, the Citizen Commitment Account (Compte d'Engagement Citoyen) for a group of jobseekers in Paris, and the creation of Community Centre and Solidarity Activities Organisations (Organismes d'Accueil Communautaires et d'Activités Solidaires or OACAS) in partnership with other stakeholders in Côtes-d'Armor and Lille.

#### CAMPAIGNING FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE TZCLD PROJECT

In 2019, the challenge for the Zero Long-Term Unemployed Region (TZCLD) experiment supported from the start by Secours Catholique-Caritas France alongside ATD Fourth World was to expand the scheme to include new areas, and extend it in the ten authorised areas where it has resulted in the creation of 11 new companies and 742 new jobs. On 18 June, we took part in the event hosted by the TZCLD association

(of which we are founder members) to impress upon the relevant public authorities the need to continue this programme, as Emmanuel Macron had announced when he presented his strategy for combating poverty. However, in 2019, the Social Affairs Inspectorate (IGAS) - the body responsible for assessing the financial aspects of this experiment - recommended that before any time or geographic extension was granted, the goals and practical processes of this initiative should be adjusted to bring it closer to the initial principle of paying for itself. Secours Catholique then contributed to the drafting of a counter-report for submission to the Minister for Employment. The challenge was to assess the return on investment for areas implementing the scheme, not only in financial terms, but also in terms of people's wellbeing and revitalisation as a result of employment. We are also working with a consulting firm specialising in occupational psycho-sociology to monitor how these new companies are inventing new ways of working, new management relationships, and new models for social dialogue and cooperation.

#### MOBILITY AS A LEVER FOR ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

The freedom provided by mobility, especially in the regions, is an important lever not only for access to employment, but also for family life and social life.



#### DELEGATION PROJECT

##### GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE A 'LICENCE TO SUCCEED'

In rural areas and communities on the periphery of urban centres, such as Saint-Chamond, a town with a population of 35,000 near Saint-Etienne, mobility is an important lever for access not only to employment, but also to social and cultural life. The Loire delegation of Secours Catholique-Caritas France is well aware of this fact, and is already closely involved in community mobility initiatives. As part of helping young jobseekers, it launched a supervised driving project in February 2019 alongside the Mission Locale du Gier Pilat, a charity that supports young people with training and employment guidance. Those joining the scheme must have already received 20 hours of instruction with a driving school, and are supervised by volunteers known as 'driving sponsors' until they obtain their driving licence, in much the same way as the French 'conduite accompagnée' accompanied driving scheme. *"I see myself as very much a parent taking their own son or daughter for driving practice", says one of the sponsors. "No dual controls, just an extra mirror for rear view visibility!"*



CHRISTOPHE HARGOUES / SCCF

Secours Catholique-Caritas France supports the millions of French people in 'mobility poverty' today by using microloans to help them buy a car; in fact, the primary purpose of microcredit today is to fund mobility. In 2019, we also continued our work alongside the Solidarauto federation, whose network now includes eight garages around the country, with the addition of two new centres in Nice and Le Puy-en-Velay during the year. Working through its network, the Solidarauto federation has helped 3,500 families to solve their mobility problems (car repair, rental or sale) affordably, since personal microloan repayments are very low. The innovative and research work it carries out gives us the basis for our national advocacy campaign in favour of universal access to mobility and treating the ecological transition as a social justice issue. Other mobility solutions now being developed in some of our delegations include community taxi initiatives and the community service provision agreements entered into with Renault dealerships in Aquitaine during 2019.

## A DECENT INCOME

### ADVOCACY FOR A GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED

At the end of 2018, the French government announced its plan to roll out its national anti-poverty strategy in 2019. This much-awaited measure has been slow to have any effect, since other measures, such as the unemployment benefit reform, have actually exacerbated inequalities and risked hundreds of thousands of people falling into the minimum level of social benefits. In response to the government's focus on finance, which results in less protection for people, Secours Catholique-Caritas France combined forces with the Solidarity-Based Social Protection (Pour une Protection Sociale Solidaire<sup>1</sup>) and Alerte collectives. We participated jointly with Alerte in the National consultation process that began on 1 September 2019, where our main focus was the introduction of the RUA universal income benefit intended to standardise the various minimum levels of social benefit:

1 This collective was formed in 2018 with Secours Catholique-Caritas France, Aequitaz, the Federation of French Social and Sociocultural Centres and the French Accorderies service exchange network.

RSA, AAH, Aspa, ASS<sup>2</sup> etc. (with the exception of ADA<sup>3</sup>). Together with Alerte, we advocate a guaranteed minimum level of income equivalent to approximately 50% of average income, i.e. €857, since the current RSA payment of €565 is not sufficient for people

to extract themselves from extreme poverty or live in decent circumstances. We are opposed to there being any strings attached to this minimum income in terms of any obligation to seek or find work, because every report on poverty demon-

strates the fact that the more protected people feel, the more able they are to look positively towards their own future. We are also calling for the RUA to be extended to include under-25s who are neither students nor in work, and for foreigners to be able to receive this benefit more quickly than is currently the case. At the same time, we recommend a higher level of support for people and a right-to-work policy based on the principle that everyone is employable, as has been clearly demonstrated by the TZCLD experiment.

### CONSULTATION ON CARE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND THEIR RIGHT TO A DECENT INCOME

Over recent years, we have seen a continual increase in the number of senior citizens visiting Secours Catholique-Caritas France centres. Isolated and living on very small pensions, which the reform of the CSG social security surcharge has helped to erode a little in some cases, many expressed their dismay during the debates hosted by Secours Catholique-Caritas France at the time of the Gilets Jaunes protests. To respond more effectively to the growing levels of poverty among senior citizens, we conducted a survey in 2019 to identify those delegations that have developed initiatives solely for the elderly or intergenerational initiatives, to share their practices and questions, and work with them to construct a frame of reference that could prove useful to our teams. This survey is consistent with our advocacy work alongside the Mona-Lisa association to address the issue of isolation for senior citizens and to promote the case for a minimum pension level that would allow them to live in dignity.

2 Working income support, Adult disability allowance, Old age support allowance and Special support allowance.

3 Asylum seeker's allowance.

**“OVER RECENT YEARS, WE HAVE SEEN A CONTINUAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SENIOR CITIZENS VISITING SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE CENTRES.”**



## ADVOCATING DECENT HOUSING FOR ALL A SOCIAL HOUSING AGENCY CO-CONSTRUCTED WITH THOSE LIVING IN SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

Created in 2018 by Secours Catholique-Caritas France to fight back against substandard housing, the AIS social housing agency expanded in 2019. Ten households have been identified by the Paris Region delegations as eligible for the scheme, and three of those have found permanent homes, one in the 8<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* of Paris, and the other two in the Hauts-de-Seine. To achieve this outcome, the agency staff of social work and property management professionals approached owners of vacant homes who were willing to set the level of rent to reflect the income of the household. The agency is also supported by other parts of the Caritas network, as well as by donations from major donors.

Its purpose is to offer each household the most suitable housing, which is why the process begins with their needs. So as soon as the owner of a property matching those needs is identified, the agency takes charge from introducing the scheme to the owner to the point where the tenant moves into the property.

### CONSULTATION ON REFUGEE HOSTING

In 2017, Secours Catholique-Caritas France was involved in the Humanitarian Corridors scheme that set out to work with French Ministries for the Interior and Foreign Affairs to enable volunteer groups to provide accommodation for particularly vulnerable refugee families from Lebanon. As this scheme approaches its

end, we have sought to learn lessons from it, and published a report in May 2019 based on feedback from the refugees concerned and their host collectives. Since then, we have continued this consultation on refugee hosting in partnership with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), the French Conference of Bishops (CEF) and the Protestant Mutual Aid Federation (FEP). The aim is to host regional one-day events to promote networking, set benchmarks, identify points for vigilance and the main principles to be respected, and develop common tools and advocacy initiatives.

### ADVOCACY AND TOOLS FOR DOMICILIATION

Domiciliation is a service that local authorities or joint-authority social action centres (CCAS/Cias) are required to offer people with links to the local area, but who do not have a permanent address at which they can receive the postal communication necessary to obtain the rights to which they are entitled. But in practice, some CCAS/Cias centres fail to live up to this obligation, due to lack of resources or political will. So as a member of an advocacy campaign conducted with the Federation of Solidarity Stakeholders (FAS), Dom'Asile, Emmaus France, Aides and Rom'Europe, Secours Catholique-Caritas France therefore demanded that the 2020 Finance Act should include a measure dedicated to funding domiciliation via CCAS/Cias centres. In 2019, we also published a domiciliation guide for use by our teams who offer domiciliation to people who are illegally denied this right or who have connection with a particular lo-



cality. This toolbox includes legal reference points, practical information sheets, training resources and our position paper on this issue. It also provides a reminder that domiciliation at Secours Catholique is not only a postal address service, but also a way of meeting people and helping them to access their legal rights.

### RENOVATION OF THERMAL SIEVES

Prior to introduction of the 'Ma prim rénov' (My first renovation) scheme announced for 1 January 2020, and in connection with the 'Rénovons !' (Let's Renovate!) scheme run by promoters of energy-efficient housing improvements, such as the Abbé-Pierre Foundation and the Cler-Réseau pour la Transition Énergétique, Secours Catholique-Caritas France engaged in an advocacy campaign during 2019 to remind people of the ecological impact of poor housing and the disproportionate cost of energy for low-income households. Given that buildings are responsible for around 20% of all greenhouse gas emissions, and that energy is the second most common reason why people approach Secours Catholique for assistance with unpaid bills, there is an urgent need to renovate the so-called 'thermal sieves', the term used in France to describe energy-hungry homes that leak heat. This issue is not only about the health and comfort of those who live in these homes, but also about hard economics. In the knowledge that 80% of people in fuel poverty are tenants, we are calling for incentives to be accompanied by binding measures. We are therefore advocating a ban on renting homes with thermal efficiency ratings of F and G, and the introduction of tax incentives and financial aid, with nothing to pay for the poorest owners.

### SIGNATURE OF A 'SOCIAL IMPACT' CONTRACT WITH THE ECO-HOUSING NETWORK

Secours Catholique-Caritas France is calling on public authorities to take responsibility for renovating all thermal sieves, but it is also an active stakeholder in the process. It has entered into a three-way 'social impact' contract with the French State (via the National Housing Agency - ANAH) and the Eco-Housing Network (Réseau éco habitat). Under the terms of this contract, the State agrees to reimburse the Eco-Housing Network for the cost of providing social support for households if the network fulfils

the objectives set out in the contract: the renovation of 200 housing units for vulnerable households in the Hauts-de-France region by 2024. We are contracted to advance part of the sum involved to the Eco-Housing Network and to work via our delegations to identify eligible households that will receive support from our volunteers. Negotiated in 2019, the agreement is expected to be signed in 2020 at a ceremony attended by the French Minister for Housing. In addition to the 200 renovations, the challenge is to demonstrate that, provided sufficient resources are available, it is possible to successfully renovate thermal sieves for very small-scale owners (especially those in rural areas), particularly if residual charges are limited and social support is provided. Under the present circumstances, the subsidies available are not taken up due to a lack of trust between families, institutions and businesses. The aim of these social impact contracts is to carry out experimental projects with a view to spinning off the project if the experiment proves successful.

### ADVOCATING FOR A RESPECTFUL AND UNCONDITIONAL WELCOME FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

'Putting an end to the inhumane condition of vagrancy and camps in France' is the title and challenge of the manifesto launched in June 2019 by more than a hundred associations, federations and citizens' groups, including Secours Catholique-Caritas France. Pointing the finger directly at the State circular requesting the departmental integrated reception and orientation services (Siao) to provide the French Office for Immigration and Integration (Ofii) with information about the administrative status of asylum seekers, raising fears of reductions in entitlement to emergency accommodation, the co-signatories deplore violations of the principle of unconditionality and its consequences: an alarming increase in the number of people, women, families and unaccompanied minors living on the streets, in squats, shanty towns or camps in undignified sanitary and social conditions. In response to the downgrading of reception and accommodation policies, the co-signatories call for a strong, national, inter-ministerial (health, housing and interior ministry) response backed by immediate measures to be implemented in conjunction with local authorities.

“ENERGY IS THE SECOND MOST COMMON REASON WHY PEOPLE APPROACH SECOURS CATHOLIQUE FOR ASSISTANCE WITH UNPAID BILLS.”





CHRISTOPHE HARGOUES / SCCF

## WORKING FOR A HEALTHY DIET

### ADVOCACY FOR DIGNIFIED ACCESS TO FOOD

In 2019, dignified access to food was central to the work of Secours Catholique-Caritas France. One year after introduction of the EGalim law and its impact on contract catering, we have joined with other solidarity, environmental and agricultural organisations to demand the serving of sustainable food in school canteens, healthcare facilities, company restaurants, etc.

Together with the Nicolas-Hulot Foundation, we have suggested that an investment premium should accompany these changes. In 2019, we joined the Pour une autre PAC (For Another CAP) movement, and have been working with fellow members on advocating the construction of more inclusive food systems. Lastly, we have put forward the outlines of a plan to provide dignified access to food that places the vulnerable firmly at the centre of these initiatives. These points were made as part of several contributions to national debates and meetings, including the debate on food policy recommendations promoted by the Climate Action Network, a presentation on the links between health and food poverty at the Fabrique des Territoires meeting, and a Jardins de Cocagne meeting on third-place solidarity food provision.

## WORKING FOR THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS

### MOUNTING A COORDINATED DEFENCE OF MIGRANTS AT EUROPE'S INTERNAL BORDERS

The fairly systematic violations of the migrant rights seen on the French/Italian border prompted several associations, including Secours Catholique-Caritas France, to join forces and create the Internal Border Stakeholders Coordination (Coordination des Acteurs aux Frontières Intérieures or CAFI) group. That was back in 2017. Since then, as European and French immigration policies have become tighter and the situation at European borders has become worse, CAFI has extended its action to include the full length of the French/British coastline, and has prepared an initial status report on the situation on the French/Spanish border. The situations observed on the ground have led the group to call for the setting up of a parliamentary commission of inquiry into the issue of basic human rights violations involving migrants at France's internal borders. An open letter to members of the French parliament on the subject was published on 29 September 2019. It marked the starting point of a public campaign that really took off when inter-association action was taken at the three internal borders on 4 December 2019 to coincide with the press conference hosted the same day in Paris by the heads of all CAFI member associations.

## CONSULTATION AND ADVOCACY AROUND FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNING

With around 3,000 volunteers, Learning French (Apprentissage Du Français or ADF) is the primary Secours Catholique-Caritas France support programme for migrants, although practices varied widely from one team to another, as revealed by the review conducted between 2016 and 2018. So in 2019, work began at national level on co-constructing our vision of ADF by developing the advocacy dimension and inter-association partnership initiatives. At the same time as this internal consultation, and as part of the French For All (Le Français Pour Tous) collective of Cimade, the Radya network, the Federation of Social Centres (Fédération des centres sociaux), Germae and Fasti, we are advocating for a different policy for French learning on the basis of its potential for encouraging autonomy, interaction and active participation in social life. In preparation for the 2020 municipal elections, the collective has launched a project to analyse requirements that are currently not covered, beginning with the cities of Paris and

Poitiers. After several regional meetings, a week of national action was held in December 2019 to demand that local councillors implement the proposals put forward by the collective.

## WORKING FOR THE RIGHT OF PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

### UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Together with the Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd (Notre-Dame de Charité du Bon Pasteur) and a number of other associations and institutions, Secours Catholique-Caritas France has coordinated the process of writing an issue of the *Episcopal Document* entitled Human Exploitation and Human Trafficking. Action based on Understanding (Exploitation et traite des êtres humains. Comprendre pour Agir). Distributed in dioceses and parishes, this booklet invites readers to consider the many forms of trafficking (forced labour, forced begging, forced crime, domestic slavery, prostitution, forced marriage, etc.) to become familiar with the stakeholders involved and take action through the expression of support and advocacy. Its publication in October 2019 was the subject of a meeting at the French Conference of Bishops. Delegates were impressed by the personal accounts given by victims and members of those associations and institutions that provide them with support, analyse trafficking and seek solutions.

### ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION PLAN

For three years now, Secours Catholique-Caritas France has worked as a member and coordinator of the Together Against Human Trafficking (Ensemble contre la traite des êtres humains) collective, calling for the adoption of a second national human trafficking prevention action plan. The plan was finally announced on 18 October 2019, EU Anti-Trafficking Day. Covering the period from 2019 to 2021 marks a step forward inasmuch as it recognises the existence of trafficking in France and all the forms it can take. However, we are disappointed by the lack of a precise timetable and budget, both of which jeopardise implementation of measures that are nevertheless moving in the right direction, such as protection for trafficked minors. We are therefore continuing with our advocacy initiatives and demanding that the necessary human and finan-

## RIGHTS RESTORED

### THE BATTLE FOR LOWER TAXES ON RESIDENCY PERMITS IS WON!

As soon as the Collomb bill was introduced at the beginning of 2018, Secours Catholique-Caritas France led a major advocacy campaign in favour of lower taxes on residency permits for foreigners. A great many delegations have lobbied their members of parliament on this issue, and have invited them to come and see the realities of migrant life for themselves. This initial action led to the commitment announced in spring 2019 by Stella Dupont, LREM Member for Maine-et-Loire as a result of a specific parliamentary report to which we made a major contribution, and to the creation of an ad-hoc committee, which sat from January to March, and which heard submissions from ourselves. The committee continued its work in the autumn, with meetings between Véronique Fayet and key individuals, such as the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, the Chairman of the LREM group in the National Assembly and the Chairman of the Finance Committee. We can expect this combined action and advocacy campaign to begin delivering positive results from early 2020. In fact, the finance bill for 2020 makes provision for an overall reduction in the taxes applied to residency permits. This outcome is a very real success against a background of generally regressive changes in the way France welcomes foreigners.

### ASSOCIATIONS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS SCORE A VICTORY OVER OFII

At the beginning of 2018, the French Office for Immigration and Integration (Ofii) introduced a multilingual phone service to make it easier for asylum seekers to make appointments with the prefectures of the Ile-de-France region. Having seen that only 22% of claimants managed to speak to someone on their first call, several associations, including Secours Catholique-Caritas France, brought the issue before the Administrative Court in February 2019, which issued a court order compelling Ofii to increase the number of call centre staff. Despite this increase in staff, the system continued to cause problems (including the need for asylum seekers to have access to a phone, long and costly call waiting times, and the impossibility of making an appointment), preventing people from obtaining the documentation necessary to comply with national legislation and apply for asylum. Together with associations including Cimade, Gisti, JRS France, Utopia 56 and 23 asylum seekers, we lodged an appeal with the Administrative Court. In its order of 26 November, the court referred specifically to the fact that this call centre is an obstacle to the filing of refugee asylum claims, ordering Ofii to register all such applications within ten days, make calls free of charge, and ordering the police service to make more appointments available.

cial resources are put in place to create a genuine and effective mechanism for welcoming, identifying and supporting victims, to promote real pathways out of trafficking and equal access to rights for all victims, to improve and extend training and to develop prevention initiatives.

## OTHER RIGHTS

### ACCESS TO HOLIDAYS FOR ALL... A SOCIAL IMPERATIVE

Even today, half of all French people, including 3 million children, have no annual holiday. And yet holidays play a major role in our quality of life and family relationships. In creating social bonds and promoting a sense of belonging, they are a real and effective lever for personal development. With this conviction in mind, Secours Catholique-Caritas France draws on its own funds, support from the

National Family Benefits Fund and grants from the National Holiday Voucher Agency (Agence nationale des chèques-vacances) to offer holidays to more than a thousand families and isolated adults each year. The total amount devoted to this purpose in 2019 was €461,500, but this is not enough to allow everyone to exercise their right to a holiday. Which is why we continue to engage in advocacy work alongside thirty associations as part of the Holidays, Let's make Solidarity a Reality (Vacances, ensemble faisons vivre la solidarité!) collective, which led to a meeting at the National Assembly on 21 June 2019 with Christelle Dubos, Secretary of State to the Minister for Solidarity and Health. Under the title Access to holidays for all... a social emergency (L'accès aux vacances pour tous, une urgence sociale), this meeting provided the opportunity to discuss the issues involved and the political responses required. ■

# ACCESSING YOUR RIGHTS WORLDWIDE

## THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS

### ADVOCATING IN FAVOUR OF A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS

Secours Catholique-Caritas France has for several years expressed itself in favour of the right to migrate and effective access to basic human rights for migrants at every stage of their journeys, with particular focus on those who do not have effective protection, as is currently the case for environmental migrants. Forced to leave their home countries temporarily or permanently as a result of rising sea levels, agricultural production compromised by rising soil salinity levels, drought, or environmental damage caused by extractive industries, these migrants have no legal framework to ensure their protection. Consistent with the warning issued by Pope Francis in his *Laudato si'* encyclical, we conducted an 18-month investigation to gain a clearer understanding of the circumstances that force these population groups to leave home. When the investigation was complete at the end of 2019, its results were analysed and published along with a position paper in early 2020. The published outcomes are informed by the expertise of our researchers, politicians and other NGOs, but also and primarily, the experiences of our international partners and national network.

The published documents confirm our assumptions regarding the need to conserve our environment, protect vulnerable people, continue the process of advocating to ensure that the basic human rights of environmental migrants are respected.

### THE NEW PHASE IN THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR HUMAN MOBILITY

The new phase of the Regional Programme for Human Mobility (PRMH) to be managed administratively and financially by Secours Catholique-Caritas France has its roots in the tragedies suffered by millions of migrants on both sides of the Mediterranean, and the renewed appeal of Pope Francis<sup>1</sup> to “welcome, protect, promote and integrate” these people. Stepped up in 2019/2020, this programme continues the work carried out by Caritas Europe and Caritas Africa over more than three years to support migrants and facilitate their access to rights at every stage of their journeys. In Africa, this work has involved Caritas in Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, and in Europe, Secours Catholique and Caritas in Spain, Italy and Germany. To deliver this mission, we recruited a coordinator to redefine the outlines of the programme to better reflect realities

<sup>1</sup> Speaking on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 27 May 2019.



FRANÇOIS RAMEL / SCOF

on the ground. We also monitor legislative changes in transit and destination countries, as well as engaging in advocacy and research. In 2019, we initiated a study to look more closely at unaccompanied minors from Guinea, who account for the majority of unaccompanied minors hosted by many of the Caritas members of this programme, and gain a clear understanding of their migration challenges. This study provided the opportunity for our Middle Eastern, North African and French teams to pool their knowledge and expertise of these issues.

### ADVOCACY FOR BETTER MIGRANT ACCESS TO RIGHTS AND SERVICES IN MOROCCO

As a key crossroads in the routes taken by migrants heading for Europe, Morocco introduced a National Immigration and Asylum Strategy (SNIA) in 2013, which has made it possible to regularise the situation of many people, and improve their access to public services in the country. But because it primarily targets legal migrants and those wishing to integrate into Moroccan society, this new strategy exacerbates the vulnerability of people in transit, who live in makeshift accommodation along the border

and in cities. These camps are supported as part of the Integration, Liaison and Assistance Support (Soutien à l'intégration, liaison et accompagnement - Sila) project funded by Secours Catholique-Caritas France. Launched on 1 January 2019, this two-year project continues the fieldwork conducted by Caritas Morocco over the past 15 years. It is intended to cover the basic needs of those living in border areas, and facilitate their access to public services. The skills available to those partners working towards this goal by promoting the rights of migrants at regional level are being increased to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the assistance they provide. Particular attention is focused on protecting unaccompanied foreign minors in Morocco.

### THE RIGHT TO PEACE AND DEMOCRACY EMPOWERING THE LET'S TURN THE PAGE COLLECTIVE

Launched in 2014, Let's Turn the Page is an international grassroots movement coordinated by Secours Catholique-Caritas France and involving some 250 organisations in Africa and Europe. Its action is based on non-violent citizen involvement, institutional advocacy and raising public and governmental awareness of the issues around good democratic governance and respect for individual freedoms. 2019 was a decisive year in ensuring the long-term future of this collective, which structured itself into a more formal movement during the year in order to coordinate actions more effectively, and extend its work beyond purely election periods. Hosted in Niger during July, its first international general assembly was attended by 50 representatives from 13 African and European countries. The European and ten African national coalitions also held their general assemblies during the year, with each developing its own local and international action plan. Working in partnership with Concerted Action for Human Rights (Agir ensemble pour les droits de l'homme), Let's Turn the Page has received funding from the Voice initiative funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which it will use to protect activists and support prisoners, as well as their families. Let's turn the Page was also involved in the high-level summit on limiting periods of office hosted by the National Democratic Institute. It was at this event that the President of Niger indicated that he would step down after two terms. A few months later, a similar announcement was made in Côte d'Ivoire, underlining the relevance and effectiveness of grassroots action by Let's Turn





XAVIER SCHWABEL / SCOF

the Page. Secours Catholique will continue to support the movement in coming years as it achieves full autonomy, while continuing to work closely with it and ensuring its ongoing protection.

#### A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO PEACE IN COLOMBIA

Secours Catholique-Caritas France has been advocating and taking action for peace in Colombia for many years, particularly as a member of the France-Colombia Solidarity network whose members include fifteen French organisations. The consistency and coherence of our commitment led to us being appointed in 2019 as lead partner of a multi-stakeholder project to be presented to the French Development Agency in 2020. The aim of this project is to build peace in the rural communities of Colombia by promoting a political culture of dialogue, and then to consolidate that work over time by creating a lasting partnership between France and Colombia. In October 2019, we held an initial on-site workshop to co-construct the programme alongside all its other stakeholders, which include representatives of the indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. This workshop also gave us the opportunity to visit the Chocó department in the north-west of the country, which has a particularly bad record of violence against civil society

leaders. We were accompanied on this two-day visit by the French Ambassador to Colombia, which allowed us to introduce the work being done by our partners as a result of long-term commitment, and the initiatives they have implemented to resolve the structural issues at the root of the conflict: inequality, infringement of land rights, land grabbing and illegal crop cultivation.

Also during 2019, we were able to provide further encouragement to two of our Colombian partners working on the same process of transition to alternative models of citizen participation and development, one at national level and the other in the Magdalena River Basin.

#### THE RIGHT TO LAND

##### FRENCH GUIANA JOINS THE AMAZONIA ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

Protecting the Amazonian rainforest and the rights of its indigenous peoples has long been a priority of the Latin America and Caribbean division of Secours Catholique-Caritas France. Seizing the double opportunity presented by the Pan-Amazonian Synod in October and preparations ahead of the 2020 Pan-American Social Forum (Fospa), we were able to facilitate contact between our delegation in

French Guiana and these two major events. The first practical step in this relationship was made during a visit to French Guiana at the beginning of the year, involving members of our Board of Directors, the Latin America and Caribbean division and our partner the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM). Welcomed by the bishop and member of parliament for French Guiana, as well as representatives of the Amerindian and Businengue population groups, the mission of this visit was to bring the different communities together so that they can express their shared challenges, hopes and proposals. The attendance of the French Guiana delegation at the Synod held between 6 to 27 October in Rome allowed the voice of France to be heard through our advocacy campaign against the extractive industries, and particularly the work being done with the Or de Question collective, which calls for the permanent cessation of ongoing gold mining operations in French Guiana. This relationship boosts the coherence of our actions in France and internationally, and will allow us to expand our practical support for the indigenous peoples of these regions.

## **SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE**

### **MEPS PROMISE TO RESIST THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY LOBBY**

The lessons of the 2008 financial crash have quickly been forgotten. Ten years on, little or nothing has changed in the financial system. The rules introduced to limit risk have been abandoned, delayed or watered down as a result of pressure from the 1,700 lobbyists who promote the interests of banks, investment funds and insurance companies over the general interest. To return the financial industry to its public service mission, Secours Catholique-Caritas France had brought forward proposals for reform in its 2018 report entitled 'Mettre la finance au service de l'intérêt général' (A Financial Industry that Serves the General Interest). We continued our advocacy during the European Parliamentary elections of 2019 by campaigning alongside the Change Finance coalition to persuade candidates to give a public commitment to resisting the financial industry lobby in favour of building a stable, fair and sustainable financial system. They were invited to sign a letter of commitment to limit the interactions of financial lobbyists, to give greater voice to alternative views on financial reforms, and to apply strict

rules on conflicts of interest within all institutions of the European Union. A total of 500 Parliamentary candidates signed the letter, including 78 who currently sit in the European Parliament. The collective will be monitoring these commitments to ensure that they are kept.

### **OPEN LETTER TO CHRISTINE LAGARDE REQUESTING THE 'GREENING' OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK**

On 28 November 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France joined with 102 French and European experts and 61 other organisations, including the Climate Action Network, the CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labour) and the Nicolas-Hulot Foundation in signing an open letter to Christine Lagarde published in six European daily newspapers. The newly appointed President of the European Central Bank (ECB) was urged to take concrete action on combating climate change as soon as she took office. Encouraging her to overcome the opposition of certain members of the ECB Executive Board, the signatories reminded Christine Lagarde of the measures required: phasing out highly polluting assets from portfolios, disinvesting from coal-related assets and applying climate criteria when assessing assets eligible for monetary transactions. They also reminded the President that as a European institution, the ECB is legally bound to comply fully with the Paris climate agreement. The letter also encouraged MEPs to send a clear message to this effect at the first parliamentary appearance of the President. And it seems that the message was heard: Following a meeting with the signatory organisations, Christine Lagarde told MEPs that the revision of the ECB mandate would address these issues, and would hold a public consultation. ■

# A CAMPAIGN TO CHANGE THE WAY WE LOOK AT MIGRANTS

In September 2017, the Pope initiated the international 'Share the Path' campaign on migration. Since then, Secours Catholique-Caritas France, its teams and partners in countries of migrant departure and transit have indeed travelled this path together to meet each other. The act of doing so has given us a clearer understanding of the issues around global migration.

## ISSUE 1: THE OBSTACLES TO MIGRATION PUT IN PLACE BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

The obstacles to exercising the right of asylum in Europe are the Dublin Regulation, which prevents people from applying for asylum in the European country of their choice, and the policy of externalising migrant reception outside the borders of the EU. The 2019 European elections gave us the opportunity to deplore these policies designed to keep migrants at arm's length, and to take our messages directly to candidates, the general public and our own network.

### AN INFORMATION KIT DETAILING THE CHALLENGES

An information and fact sheet kit was developed in conjunction with our partners in Niger and Morocco, as well as exiles and students at Sciences Po in Paris. It included position papers on the Dublin Regulation and outsourcing policies, as well as videos on the European elections, and fact sheets.

### THE STOP DUBLIN! CAMPAIGN

To alert the general public to the violent effects of the Dublin Regulation for exiles, Secours Catholique has joined the European Stop Dublin! campaign in its capacity as a member of the French Right of Asylum Coordination organisation (Coordination française du droit d'asile - CFDA). Its goal in doing so is to

raise voter awareness and call on future MEPs to give a commitment to ceasing enforcement of this regulation. The campaign culminated in the social media campaign launched on 25 May immediately before the European elections.

### THE 'EXILED, DUBLINED, MISTREATED' REPORT

Part report, part narrative, this document witnesses the effects of the Dublin Regulation on the lives of migrants in France. It was the subject of a press conference held on 24 September.

## ISSUE 2: THE PROTECTION OF UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Although international law requires nation states to protect children and young adults, a significant proportion of unaccompanied minors are living in pitiless exile and receive no protection from the countries they pass through. The situation has reached such a pitch in France that Secours Catholique set up a dedicated national working group on unaccompanied minors in 2019. Given the issues involved, not only in terms of migration policy, but even more importantly, in terms of child protection, the group is run by the Reception and Rights of Foreigners and Family Solidarity departments.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THREE YEARS OF CAMPAIGNING



### SHARING THE PATH IN NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE

As part of the Learning Meetings programme for French teams and international partners of Secours Catholique, Nouvelle-Aquitaine welcomed four members of Caritas Morocco in 2019. During their one-week stay, the four Moroccan guests from the delegations of the region joined a group of fifteen migrants, volunteers and delegation employees that toured the region together meeting the local teams of Secours Catholique, and their counterparts in other associations that take care of, and support, migrants. From French language lessons to sponsorships and countryside discovery trips, everyone involved came away with plenty of new ideas, practices and experiences, as well as happy memories of an experience shared.

### PUSHING BACK AGAINST A PIECE OF LEGISLATION PREJUDICIAL TO UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Secours Catholique, Unicef, Cimade, Médecins du Monde and Médecins Sans Frontières have all been involved together since the very first discussions around the French Asylum and Immigration bill, and were united in their opposition to the draft government decree requiring the registration of unaccompanied minors. The reason is that any register compiled for a purpose other than simply protecting these vulnerable young people may give the authorities an opportunity to have them deported without a youth court judge having the opportunity to rule on their situation, thereby seriously violating their basic human rights.

### ADVOCACY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF BONE TESTS

In common with all organisations working to protect the rights of unaccompanied minors and the French Human Rights Defender, the French National Consultative Committee on Human Rights (CNCDH) and other entities from the medical world (the National Academy of Medicine, the Public Health Council, the National Consultative Committee on Ethics, etc.), Secours Catholique has spoken out against the use of bone tests to determine the age of young migrants seeking protection. Since these tests are unreliable and constitute an assault on the protection and rights of vulnerable minors, we have called for their total ban and supported the priority preliminary ruling on constitutionality (QPC) application made by Médecins du Monde.

### ISSUE 3: EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES FOR ALL MIGRANTS

Ensuring safe access to basic services for all migrants is one of the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration adopted by the UN at the end of 2018. However, the text stops short of defining the scope of these 'basic services', leaving room for interpretation by every nation state. Which is why Secours Catholique has

given its commitment to monitoring how each country implements the Compact objectives. Our delegations were invited to join in a citizen action campaign formed to determine what these 'basic services' should be, and they could be accessed in reality by migrants in France.

### ISSUE 4: RAISING AWARENESS OF MIGRANTS AND CHANGING THE WAY WE SEE THEM

Increasing levels of fear and even rejection of migrants exiled from their homes are clear to see even in the Christian community. Secours Catholique has been working with CCFD-Terre solidaire, the National Pastoral Service for Migrants (Service national de la pastorale des migrants) and JRS France to understand the reasons for this inward withdrawal and address the issues around migration calmly and dispassionately.

### A GUIDE THAT INVITES A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

The educational guide *Migrants: inviter à un changement de regard* (Migrants: inviting change of perspective) was developed from the outcomes of research conducted with More in Common and Ifop, which groups Catholics on the basis of their perceptions, attitudes and level of commitment to migrants. It then addresses the questions and fears of each group with a series of pre-prepared messages.

### HIGHLIGHTING THE SUBJECT OF MIGRANTS IN OUR STATISTICAL REPORT

Secours Catholique chose to focus its 2019 statistical report on the subject of migrants. This report uses data and contributions from our partners in migrant departure and transit countries to provide a valuable snapshot of the situation of migrants in France and worldwide.

### THE #ICIETVIVANT PUBLIC CAMPAIGN

The #IciEtVivant (#HereAndAlive) the campaign was launched on social media to coincide with World Day of Migrants and Refugees. (See also page 52). ■



# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**THE GILETS JAUNES MOVEMENT**, which continued its programme of direct action during 2019, has highlighted glaring inequalities between regions in terms of culture, demographics, social provision, economy and infrastructures. Secours Catholique-Caritas France has long been aware of the social injustice that is marginalising certain regions and the most vulnerable people who live in them. Secours Catholique-Caritas France favours social change at local level, which is one of the central strengths of its plan and its wider approach. In 2019, we began to see the first practical actions implemented throughout France by our teams and the people they help. Some of our longstanding initiatives, such as material assistance, have been targeted to align with necessary regional development goals. Community food shops, communal gardens and other community retail outlets are opening in the departments of France, and also act as spaces for rebuilding social connections re-empowering people to take control of their daily lives. In the poorest regions of the world, regional development is based not only on agroecology, which offers the best-possible response to climate change and the risks of food insecurity it generates, but also on the social and solidarity economy. In 2019, we continued to support projects that promote this ecological and economic transition, with particular focus on the countries of the Sahel and very remote regions of Eastern Europe.



GAEL MERBAOL / SCGF

## SUPPORTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FRANCE

### INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE LOCAL SOCIAL CHANGE

In 2018, Secours Catholique-Caritas France launched a major project to give vulnerable individuals and groups a greater opportunity to effect social change in their area. Throughout the first year of the project, Empowerment for Local Social Change (Animation pour le changement social local - ACSL) sessions were held all over France. And from the beginning of 2019, those delegations trained in its approach began to identify areas in which to implement this educational initiative with local residents. These may be new areas where our teams would like to become more involved and meet with local people to identify joint initiatives, or they may be areas where we already have a presence with teams or groups who would like to develop existing initiatives based on the needs of individuals.

In either case, the process involves an in-depth diagnostic analysis of the area and meetings with local people to bring people together around the idea of transformative social change. The process begins with small-scale projects suggested by local people around issues such as education, the environment, food, health or housing. The ultimate goal is to grow these projects, and build the impetus to the point where other local stakeholders not necessarily involved in social issues can also become involved.

To support these initiatives in 2019, we formed a regional coordination structure that delegations can use to help each other, share training or communication tools and/or identify stakeholders already active in facilitating local change. At national level, we hosted two forums to give delegations the opportunity to learn about the experiences of other regions and to interact on a wider range of issues.

### SHOPS AS A CHANNEL FOR LOCAL SOCIAL CONTACT

In 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France concluded a new skills sponsorship agreement with Orange to analyse its clothing-related activities. The results showed that charity shops now represent the bulk of our clothing activity: accounting for 12% of our volunteers, welcoming 1 million customers, attracting around 200,000 clothing donors and generating revenue of €4 million. Our policy in this sector has gradually changed over time: initially focused on employment through Let's Weave Solidarity (Tissons la solidarité), which now boasts 70 social enterprises

and employment integration projects, that focus has now shifted towards the opening of charity shops, which also help deliver our commitment to regional and local regeneration. Three-quarters of the shops we opened between 2015 and 2018 are in rural areas where they provide a focus for local social contact. In the same way as social enterprise garages and local shops, these charity shops are opened in partnership with local business stakeholders who take care of the technical and logistics issues, leaving our volunteers free to concentrate on the social opportunities created.



### DELEGATION PROJECT

#### INITIATIVES FROM A GROUP OF MUMS IN LES CORNILLETES

When the Loir-et-Cher delegation launched its local social change movement, it chose a new area: Les Cornillettes, a working-class community in the city of Blois. The proposal was quickly taken up by a group of mums met by delegation staff through the Help with Homework initiative set up by the Blois City Council as part of its Success in Education project at the end of 2018. They initially formed 'Pause maman' (Mums' Break), which then became L'Oasis, a meeting, sharing, leisure and mutual support space. Then came their first community initiatives, beginning with children's activities such as an Easter egg hunt, making an Advent calendar tree and Halloween make-up sessions, followed by Neighbours Days, shared meals at Christmas and the beginning of the holiday season, and a project related to the municipal elections. Now though, the group is considering some more ambitious projects, including raising awareness of school bullying through children's drama, forming a children's choir to perform and reinforce social links in retirement homes, holding a flea market and taking part in the Blois

Carnival. The mums of the group have talked publicly about their journey so far and their plans for the future on RCF (French Christian Radio), but also at the region's ACSL day, and at the one-day event hosted at the head office of Secours Catholique in Paris.

#### DISCOVERING THE POWER TO ACT IN NAILLOUX

A long-term approach to social change has been initiated in Nailloux, a small rural town in the Haute-Garonne region of France, by the Secours Catholique team based in Villefranche-de-Lauragais 12 kilometres away. People from Nailloux use its drop-in centre for the various forms of financial and material aid it provides. The coordinator and volunteers saw this as an opportunity to get them talking about their town and its problems so that they could identify issues and actions on which action could be focused. During these meetings and discussions, one particular issue emerged: despite the fact that the town has many sports clubs, the families who used the drop-in centre weren't able to use them. "We'd like to have places where we can do activities with our children and meet each other". This

was the trigger for the first two projects: parent and child workshops and coffee mornings for the adults. Contact is also gradually being made with other local stakeholders, including the Maison des Solidarités (MDS), a local arts association, Les sans/100 savoirs, which offers activities that are open to all, an associate of ATD Fourth World, the mayor and the public services centre.

Ideas are coming together and plans are taking shape: they include creating a community vegetable garden with Les Incroyables Comestibles, wellness and craft workshops, a second-hand shop and a community space. Some people want to explore ideas around mobility and links with schools, while others have contributed to CCAS working groups on employment and mobility. People are discovering that they have everything it takes to implement initiatives that improve their daily lives. "I went to talk to the town hall and Secours Populaire, and it turns out that they also have a room I could use to offer workshop sessions with other people". And the way institutions look at them is also changing, because they are no longer seen only as people with problems, but also as people with ideas. ■



### FROM FOOD AID TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2019, food aid remained the main form of aid sought by vulnerable people from Secours Catholique-Caritas France, if only in the form of breakfast served in our daytime drop-in centres. In line with our long-standing advocacy for dignified access to food, we are responding to this demand by opening more and more local community shops and shared gardens. This was the case in 50% of our delegations in 2019. These forms of aid go far beyond simply distributing food, and give people the resources they need to meet their own needs by applying their own skills and knowledge. These projects are also part of a wider commitment to regional cooperation, because they involve small-scale local producers. Also in 2019, we formed a partnership with the Vrac association, which develops bulk purchasing groups in priority inner-city communities, with particular emphasis on Lyon, Strasbourg, Paris, Bordeaux and Toulouse. This innovative project allows a much larger number of people to access high-quality organic and fair trade products at low prices as a result of lower



XAVIER SCHWEBEL / SCOF

intermediate costs (short supply chains) and unnecessary expenditure on things like packaging. This approach to dealing with vulnerability is based on collective and local initiatives, and gives people access to a sustainable form of consumption that leads to a new relationship with health and self-image. ■

## SUPPORTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORLDWIDE

### RESETTLEMENT OF DISPLACED POPULATION GROUPS IN MYANMAR

The war between Kachin separatist groups and the Myanmar army has resulted in the displacement of 110,000 people, 90,000 of whom are still living in refugee camps today. Over the years, these population groups have become dependent on humanitarian aid that is now drying up, while everything they once owned in their home villages - their fields, tools, livestock, houses, etc. - has been either abandoned or stolen. The relative political stability that has recently been restored by a regularly renewed ceasefire has sparked a strong desire to return, which is highly controversial in terms of security.

Our partner organisation is the first to have supported the resettlement of these people. The first phase of the project, which ended in 2019, involved ten villages and included not only repairing houses

and building shelters, but also reviving livelihoods through the purchase of agricultural machinery and seeds, the formation of village committees to decide on which directions to take, and forming self-help groups operating on the tontine principle of investment. By the end of 2019, 500 households had been able to resume their former lives. The next phase of the project should see them regaining their economic independence as well.

### DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN POOR REGIONS OF ARMENIA

In the mountainous rural areas of Shirak, Lori and Gegharkunick in Armenia, prospects for the future are so bleak that many young people are choosing migration, and joining the 15,000 to 20,000 people who leave this country every year. Developing employment opportu-



ELODIE PERRIOT / SOCF

nities to slow down the rate of departure among young people is therefore the challenge of the new phase of the programme supported by Secours Catholique-Caritas France, which began at the end of 2018. The aim is to build bridges between communities, local authorities and businesses, kick-start socio-economic development mechanisms in which vocational train-

ing leads on to internships, and launch small business projects in sectors such as tourism, agriculture and agribusiness. From setting up guest houses to organising women's cooperatives producing herbal teas or cheese, the project involves creating an entire social and solidarity economy, which is easier than it once was since the political context here is favourable to such develop-

### TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT ONE OF EIGHT COUNTRIES IN THE SAHEL NOW UNDERGOING AN AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

The Sahel is one of the regions of the world most affected by climate change and the food and social challenges it brings with it. In 2018, Secours Catholique-Caritas France launched a regional programme to promote agroecology in eight countries. Training, research-led experimentation and networking between Caritas and other expert organisations are all complementary actions that intensify the specific sustainable development projects implemented by Caritas. The resulting programme allows Caritas in the Sahel to improve its support for farmers' organisations in the various pilot project zones, as is the case with this group of 65 women market gardeners in Mbowen Souley, in southern Senegal, where it is helping them achieve

their own agroecological transition. The programme has equipped their market gardening operation with a well fed by a solar-powered pump that draws water from 110 metres beneath the ground. The first seeds have also been supplied (seed will be gathered locally in future years) along with organic pesticides and organic fertilisers to supplement the manure collected locally. Today, the food they produce is sufficient to feed their families and pay for school fees, clothing and healthcare. The yield is the same as before, but they no longer have any need to spend money on chemical fertilisers or pesticides. Like all farmers' organisations supported by agroecological projects, the Mbowen Souley market gardeners are set to become self-sufficient in the near future. ■

ment. Nikol Pachinian, the journalist behind the Velvet Revolution that deposed the former president in 2018, was elected Prime Minister in 2019. The primary goal of his much younger government is to combat corruption and promote sustainable economic growth.

## PROVIDING ACCESS TO WORK FOR WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FERIZAJ AND MITROVICA REGIONS OF KOSOVO

Driven for many years by the Trepča industrial and mining complex, the dynamic economy of the Mitrovica region was wrecked by the 1999 war. The closure of the plant, the influx of internal refugees and the lack of investment have resulted in an unemployment rate estimated at 65-70% of the total workforce. Most young people leave to try their luck abroad, and those who stay receive little support and are ill-prepared when a job opportunity does arise. Having taken a very active role in brokering peace between the Albanian and Serbian communities since the end of the war, Caritas Kosovo launched a new project here in January 2019. Its aim is to boost the employability of young people and women in the Ferizaj and Mitrovica regions by supporting the creation of sustainable jobs through training, mentoring, networking, internships and material support for unemployed young people and women who want to start their own business or develop an income-generating activity. Close attention was paid to the identifying and selecting the individuals who would benefit from this support in order to prioritise those who are most vulnerable and marginalised. As well as employment centres, training centres and local businesses, five business organisations also contributed to the project.

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE IPCC SPECIAL REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND

It was in Geneva between 2 and 8 August 2019 that the findings of the IPCC report on land were adopted. The report sets out the alarming level of competition driven by the negative effects of climate change, and suggests responses based on the use of plant-de-

rived agrofuels and bioenergy. Secours Catholique-Caritas France followed up on the publication of this report, highlighting the fact that the world's poorest population groups are central to the effects of these challenges. They are the first to suffer from the impact of climate change in terms of food security and forced migration, but at the same time, they are also pioneers in experimenting with alternative solutions like agroecology, which produce very limited greenhouse gas emissions. This key report will be at the heart of the next round of major meetings on climate and the environment, and confirms our belief and advocacy for solutions that are rooted in the rights and knowledge of indigenous peoples and subsistence farming communities as sustainable alternatives to current agricultural models.

## COP25 FALLS SHORT ON ALL THE KEY CHALLENGES

Deadly hurricanes in the Pacific, record heatwaves in Europe, tropical cyclones and floods in Mozambique, and uncontrolled forest fires in Brazil, Australia and the United States: the headline climate events of 2019 that triggered unprecedented social protest

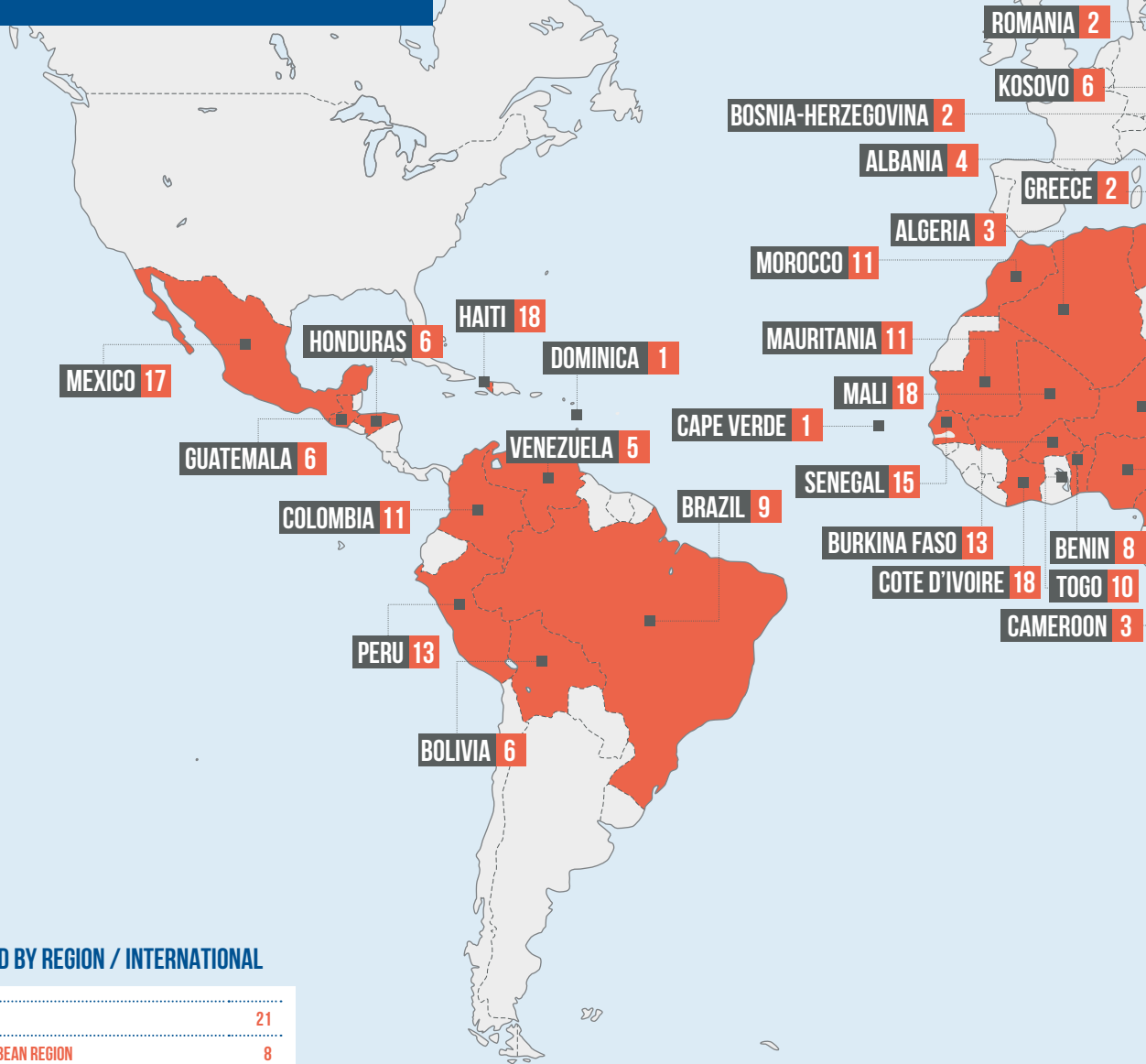
held out the hope that nation states would wake up to the emergency at COP25. But what Secours Catholique-Caritas France representatives witnessed in Madrid be-

tween 2 to 13 December was quite the opposite. Repeated blocking tactics by Australia, Brazil, Saudi Arabia or the United States, and the culpable complicity of France, whose contributions to the most crucial negotiations were made without ministerial representation, highlight the lack of political conscience and courage that surround these issues today. So as the emergency continues, we also continue our advocacy by maintaining and insisting that the climate crisis, which impacts the poorest and least polluting countries, is a social injustice. World governments, and particularly those of the European Union, have been given an opportunity to return this year with more ambitious commitments, such as those set out in the Paris Agreement. Failure to do so would be to negate the dramatic human and climatic consequences. ■

“THE CLIMATE CRISIS, WHICH IMPACTS THE POOREST AND LEAST POLLUTING COUNTRIES, IS A SOCIAL INJUSTICE.”

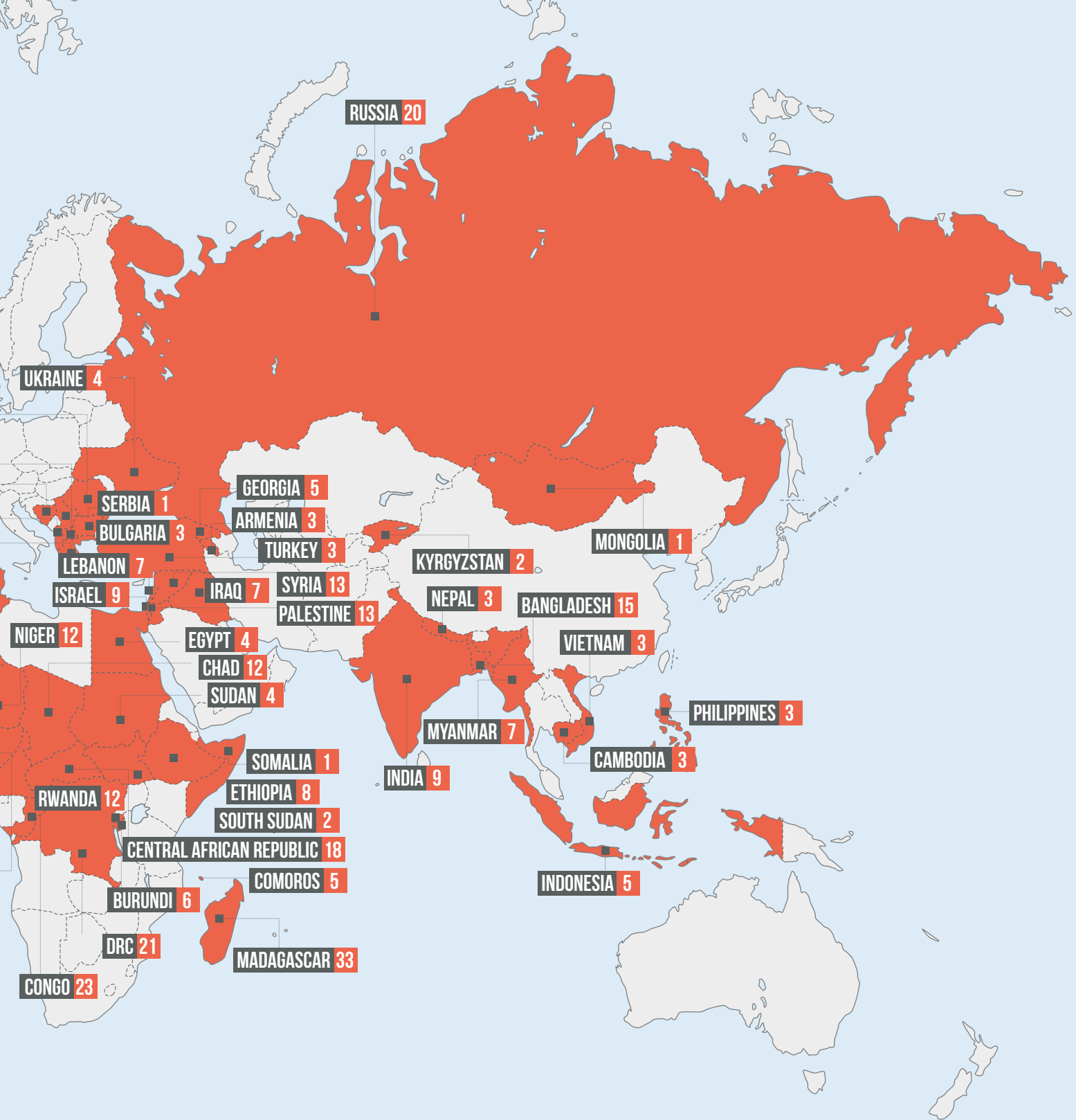


# 586 PROJECTS SUPPORTED WORLDWIDE



## PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY REGION / INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA REGION	21
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION	8
ASIA REGION	5
EUROPE REGION	8
MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA REGION	3
INTERNATIONAL	22



**COUNTRY** NUMBER OF PROJECTS

# BUILDING AN INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH SOCIETY

**CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY** is a daily reality for the teams of Secours Catholique-Caritas France, not only in their centres, but also in their initiatives. Enriching in many ways, this diversity also creates tensions within French society; tensions that can extend as far as provoking reactions of rejection. As front line stakeholders working closely with everyone experiencing difficulties in their lives, regardless of cultural or religious background, we see it as our duty to find ways of living in harmony by respecting our differences as a route to a more cohesive society. The young people of all faiths who together make up the Young Caritas network have been leading by example for a long time now, and continued to do so in 2019 by developing new events that bring people together. We find this type of successful interfaith coexistence in other collectives, such as Coexister and the Christian/Muslim movement Ensemble avec Marie (Together with Mary), of which we are members. In 2019, we continued the process of building closer ties with these organisations throughout France to implement more joint initiatives. Also during the year, we reviewed the practices and actions within our own network, with particular focus on those with a non-explicit intercultural and interfaith dimension, as the basis for evaluating the need for further training to promote greater interaction and inclusion for all.





Gael Kerbaol / SCSF

## ALL NEW, ALL YOUNG

Over the last five years, the Young Caritas Summer Schools have succeeded brilliantly in coalescing the solidarity commitment of young people of all nationalities, cultures and faiths. As a result, around thirty delegations now have Young Caritas teams of



### DELEGATION PROJECT

**BETWEEN 30 JULY AND 6 AUGUST 2019**, Young Caritas members from Seine-et-Marne and Seine-Saint-Denis worked as volunteers at the Cité Saint-Pierre in Lourdes. Some helped cleaning dishes, others assisted animators and guides, and all were involved in a day of events and games to introduce Young Caritas and its work.

In the Côtes-d'Armor region, Young Caritas members from Amiens, Brest and Seine-et-Marne joined with their counterparts from a partner association to open a community garden and community space close to the sea. The event was literally a breath of fresh air for some of these young people, who are experiencing difficulties - especially with administrative issues - in their own lives.

committed young people with the ability to organise their own events and contribute to those of their delegation, with particular emphasis on ensuring continuity of activities throughout the summer holidays. In order to lead, develop and consolidate this network at national level, a group of young volunteers supported by employees and a chaplain was formed in 2019: the 'Young Team'. Its mission is to assist local teams in developing their projects, and provide practical support with preparing national events. In March 2019, the Young Team hosted its first weekend project management training course for Young Caritas members keen to organise their own events. The year also saw the launch of 'Young Letter', a quarterly newsletter for network members. In 2021, the Young Caritas Summer School will adopt a new format. Renamed 'Young Days', it will become a biennial event with an initial round of two-day regional events to form groups that will then converge on to Lourdes for a much larger get-together.

## FORMATION OF AN INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH TEAM

Intercultural and interfaith encounters are a daily experience for the teams of Secours Catholique-Caritas France, who welcome and help all vulnerable people, regardless of culture or faith. And that experience is a reality not only in terms of the people we help, but also in terms of our own volunteers and employees.

It was against this background that a dedicated team of volunteers was formed in 2019, led by a representative of our Spiritual Leadership and Diaconia department. Its mission is to promote and support intercultural and interfaith initiatives by facilitating interaction and experience sharing between the full range of stakeholders: delegations, national, regional, and local teams.

## OVERVIEW OF INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED

In 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France prepared an overview of intercultural and interfaith initiatives implemented within its network. Although each is important in its own right, whether it involves helping people directly, including with material help, sharing in groups, workshop sessions or religious reflection and celebration, expectations may differ depending on circumstances. The purpose of this survey was to decide on which attitudes should be adopted for each type of initiative, and identify any training needs for volunteers and employees.

The resulting overview highlighted two important issues: a number of delegations offer training courses addressing intercultural and/or interfaith issues, but under a range of very different titles; topics around culture or faith are often implicitly included in other training courses whose main focus is, for example, French language tuition for migrants, empathy and

listening skills, or understanding migration policies and effects. This work will continue in 2020 with the aim of identifying the need of front line staff and volunteers more accurately.

## CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS UNITED AROUND THE VIRGIN MARY

Secours Catholique-Caritas France is involved at national and local levels with the Ensemble avec Marie (Together with Mary) movement of Christians and Muslims. In 2019, we took part in six of its twelve meetings organised as walks, visits, personal experiences and prayers. We also plan to take part in three further meetings organised by the movement in prisons, based on the Caritas Belgium model.

Throughout the year, several of our local teams and delegations continued to provide support for the Ensemble avec Marie initiative in towns and cities around France, including Lille, Châteaubriant, Bordeaux, Mulhouse, Cergy, Saint-Denis and Longpont. We will continue to publicise this initiative, and intend to integrate those delegations where the initiative has already been taken up with no involvement from ourselves.

## LINKING UP WITH ISLAMIC RELIEF

Secours Catholique-Caritas France and Secours Islamique de France (SIF) share the same desire to implement communal initiatives. In addition to ensuring that the most needy in society receive aid effectively, our aim is also to improve the way we embody the 'dialogue of works' between Christians and Muslims and make it a reality of our lives, as the Church proposes.

Following initial contacts between our teams and their counterparts at SIF, the decision was made that the delegations of Secours Catholique and Secours Islamique in Seine-Saint-Denis should explore the issues in greater depth. An initial meeting in our Saint-Denis office was useful in setting out the practical details of this initiative, and the leaders of the two local teams drew up a joint list of initiatives. There are many possibilities, including providing breakfasts to vulnerable people, hosting meals during religious festivals (Christmas, the end of Ramadan, etc.), cultural trips, joint participation in street tours, etc. The decision was also made to engage only with long lasting initiatives.



CHRISTOPHE HARGOUES / SCCF





ÉLODIE PERRIOT / SCOF

## CLOSER LINKS WITH COEXISTER

Secours Catholique-Caritas France is a long-term partner of the interfaith youth movement Coexister. Throughout 2019, we continued working together on joint initiatives through the Young Caritas teams and the Saint-Laurent network. Our respective teams and volunteers have worked closely together in many towns and cities of France on a broad diversity of initiatives, from awareness-raising information workshops and meetings to setting up new Coexister groups, hosting interactive events, running outreach projects like street cafés, and contributing to events involving a number of different associations. Other partnerships are also being formed in places like Angers, where our teams share outreach street-level projects.

At national level, a partnership with Young Caritas gave ten young people from Coexister the opportunity to attend a festival in Saint-Malo and play the 'On the Road with a Migrant' game. In April 2019, our President Véronique Fayet attended a meeting of the Coexister Strategy Committee. As a committee member, she was able to discuss the complementary nature of the educational courses run by Coexister in thirty French regions, and how our partners can benefit from them or contribute to them at grassroots level.

## SAINT-LAURENT NETWORK GROUP VISIT TO THE HOLY LAND

The members of the Saint-Laurent network are Christian groups that share a faith pathway within the Church with and from people living in poverty and social exclusion. Many of its members had long expressed a wish to experience a pilgrimage in Jesus' footsteps, without ever imagining that it could actually happen. But their dream became a reality in November 2019, when 51 members of the network travelled together to the Holy Land. Secours Catholique-Caritas France welcomed them at the House of Abraham in the heart of Jerusalem, which provides accommodation and sustenance for the poorest in society, regardless of faith. The week-long pilgrimage included visits to key locations in the life of Jesus (Jericho, Wadi Qelt Valley, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem and Gethsemane), and meetings with representatives of the country's communities engaged in the quest for peace. They also met with those who live in exclusion and poverty here.



**“FOR ME, GOD IS MUCH MORE THAN A WORD; GOD IS MY CONSTANT COMPANION. THIS PILGRIMAGE WILL HELP ME BREAK DOWN ALL THE WALLS THAT SURROUND ME, WHETHER PHYSICAL OR THOSE WE ALL HAVE WITHIN US: ALL THE WALLS OF HATRED, INDIFFERENCE AND RACISM. IT WILL ALSO HELP US CONTINUE ON OUR JOURNEY.”**

**BRIGITTE, FROM THE LE PONT GROUP IN PARIS.**

## MEASURING THE SOCIAL VALUE OF HOST FAMILIE STAYS DURING VACATIONS

To mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 'Host Familie Stays During Vacations' Accueil Familial de Vacances (AFV) scheme, Secours Catholique-Caritas France thought it opportune to measure its contribution to society. So we commissioned two young researchers at the Institut Catholique de Paris to conduct a survey.

They interviewed a total of 150 people individually and in groups: parents of children on family holidays, volunteers accompanying families, host families, and young adults who went on these holidays as children. Published in 2019, the results of this process highlight the originality and contemporary relevance of the AFV scheme. Because it allows people to move beyond the limits of everyday life, privacy and practicality, as well as beyond the normal social, cultural and religious limits, the AFV scheme helps children and their families to find a new place in society. In a world that is increasingly structured around safety, control and mistrust, this type of assistance opens up a valuable space for freedom between cultures.

## A NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR THE HOUSE OF ABRAHAM

The House of Abraham is a large building surrounded by pine trees on the slopes of the Mount of Olives in the heart of East Jerusalem. Leased by Secours Catholique-Caritas France since 1964, its doors

are open to everyone, from pilgrims of all faiths to families, groups, international NGOs and local associations, with preference given to the poorest in society. In 2016, the House of Abraham adopted a new comprehensive development project, the mid-term review of which was presented to our Board of Directors in June 2019. The review paints a positive picture of the House of Abraham fulfilling its triple mission of being a house of hospitality, a space for meetings between those working for peace and justice, and a place of regeneration and education. Its hospitality and accommodation activity continues to develop, while the process of renovating the house one area at a time, which began in 2018, is on schedule to complete midway through 2020. Like our delegations in France, the House of Abraham also plays a role in local life, maintaining close relationships with citizens and associations. Social and spiritual leadership is provided by a team that includes a chaplain, a community of the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, volunteers who help out for a month at a time, and salaried employees. ■

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**AT THE END OF 2019, THE VOLUNTEERS OF SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE** were called upon to help with two post-emergency missions. The first came in November with the aftermath of the Ardèche earthquake, and the second in December, following the floods that hit the Alpes-Maritimes, Var and Vaucluse regions of France. Elsewhere in the world, our International Emergency Division continued its work with the victims of the ongoing Syrian crisis, and those suffering from the ongoing climate and political crisis in Africa. We also continued to work actively to relieve the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, but with a more comprehensive approach that has allowed us to extend that work into the neighbouring countries now receiving Venezuelan refugees, especially Colombia. Our work during the year also focused on providing this prevention training for our partners and the communities themselves.



SEBASTIEN LE CLEZIO / SCCF

## WORKING ALONGSIDE THE VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTERS IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

In 2019, France was hit by two natural disasters in quick succession. On 11 November, an earthquake destroyed and damaged a number of buildings in the village of Le Teil, in the Ardèche region of France. And in December came the floods that also affected many people in the departments of Alpes-Maritimes, Var and Vaucluse. As soon as they received the

**“IN TODAY’S FAST-CHANGING WORLD, THE TRADITIONAL FORMS OF CHARITY HAVE TO EMBRACE THE IDEA OF CONSTANT ADAPTATION. SO OUR PRIMARY FOCUS IS TO WORK ON THIS PROCESS OF PERMANENT REINVENTION, ADAPTATION AND EDUCATION.”**

alert, the local teams of Secours Catholique-Caritas France worked alongside colleagues in the France Emergency Department to undertake post-emergency missions with disaster victims.

Working in teams of two, our members went door-to-door to meet the individuals and families impacted by the disaster. Their first mission was to listen to what people had to say, empathise with them, and reassure them. Next came the issue of working with them to assess what they needed in order to resume normal life (bedding, furniture, household appliances, etc.). At least half of all the families affected needed material or financial assistance, while others simply needed help dealing with their insurers, or referrals for psychological support. Our long-term support will continue until these people can resume their normal lives.

## BOOSTING THE RESPONSE CAPABILITIES OF OUR PARTNERS

*“In today’s fast-changing world, the traditional forms of charity have to embrace the idea of constant adaptation. So our primary focus is to work on this process of permanent reinvention, adaptation and education.”* True to the spirit of these words from Mgr Jean Rodhain, the founder of Secours Catholique, our International Emergency Division is refining its scope of action and boosting its own capabilities, as



well as those of its partners. In 2019, we applied this approach via our partners - especially in Niger and Madagascar - and sometimes more directly with communities themselves to help prepare them for different types of humanitarian crisis. These capability enhancement projects offer training and support to improve the internal processes of our partners so that they can respond and intervene more effectively with vulnerable population groups. Where we are working directly with communities, the focus is on raising their awareness of potential risks and preparing them to deal with those risks.

## HELPING VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN COLOMBIA

Working in partnership with Caritas Venezuela and the Asociación Venezolana de Servicios de Salud de Orientación Cristiana (Avesoc), Secours Catholique-Caritas France is one of the most committed contributors to alleviating the humanitarian crisis that has been raging in Venezuela for several years now. The biggest impact of the resulting migration flows is being felt in Colombia, where estimates suggest that more than a million Venezuelans are now refugees, but Colombia does not have the human or financial resources needed to deal with this additional crisis within its own borders. This is why in 2019 we decided to extend our response to the Venezuelan crisis beyond the vulnerable in Venezuela itself and into Colombia, via its national Caritas organisation, providing medical care, psychosocial support, rights protection, meals, educational assistance and other services to hundreds of Venezuelan migrant and refugee families.



CARTAS VENEZUELA

## POST-EMERGENCY AND RECONSTRUCTION WORK IN NEPAL



CARTAS INTERNACIONALIS

Five years ago, on 25 April 2015, Nepal was hit by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake followed by several aftershocks, which killed 9,000 people, injured 23,000 and left 1 million homeless, many of whom are still destitute. Together with its partner Caritas Nepal and the entire Caritas network, Secours Catholique-Caritas France finalised a three-year reconstruction project in 2019. This project has already built 4,775 earthquake-resistant homes, and repaired 68 drinking water supply systems and 8 irrigation systems. To help households that have lost everything to regain a source of income, we have now entered into two new partnerships. The first, with the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO), aims to revive agriculture by distributing of seeds and farm inputs and providing training on mushroom growing, apiculture and coffee growing, which are more profitable and have a ready market. The second partnership is with the Forum for Nation Building (FNB) Nepal, an association of lawyers that is helping earthquake victims exercise their right to state grants for rebuilding their homes. ■

# THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR AMBITION

**THE PRIMARY STRENGTH OF SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE**, lies in its network: 73 delegations and several thousand local teams and reception centres in France run by 64,300 volunteers and around 1,000 employees, as well as partnerships with the 165 members of the Caritas Internationalis network and local organisations around the world. In 2019, 15 of our delegations received approval for their five-year plans to implement our major national guidelines in their regions.

In 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France provided help and support to 1,393,000 people in their own homes and 2,400 in its reception centres.

This help and support is delivered through 73 delegations and 3,500 local teams, 64,300 volunteers and 908 employees. Three central facilities complete this network: the Cité Saint-Pierre in Lourdes, the House of Abraham in Jerusalem, and the CEDRE asylum seeker and refugee reception centre in Paris. Internationally, Secours Catholique-Caritas France provided help and support to 2,900,000 people via 162 partners in 56 countries or regions through 233 decisions to support new projects or new phases of projects previously adopted.

## YEAR TWO OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Formed in 2017, the Secours Catholique-Caritas France National Coordination Committee (CAN) met twice in 2019. The first meeting was held in the Morbihan region during January to work on the issue of shared governance, while the second took place in the Hauts-de-France region during September, and was attended by our Board of Directors. Its members are drawn from a broad diversity of backgrounds, and have personal experience of life challenges, of channeling group dynamics or hold responsible positions within the association, making the CAN a living laboratory for shared governance. During its first meeting of the year, it considered and discussed what changes need to be made to the way we work together so that each of us has his or her share of power and responsibility for implementing our shared plans. The members' recommendations on the requirements for training, support, following

up on experiments and communicating the overall approach were presented to our Board of Directors at the second meeting. This meeting also provided the opportunity to review the first two years of the CAN, and announce the formation of an operations committee tasked with monitoring how shared governance is evolving within the offices and leadership councils of our delegations.

## SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AT THE HEART OF DELEGATION PROJECTS

In 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France approved 15 delegation's five-year plans, which are prepared in order to set out how each delegation intends to play its part in implementing the association's national plan. They all share the same fundamental trend: a burning desire for internal changes to more effectively empower the people receiving their support, the need to work together on action and advocacy, and a desire to review governance methods to involve a wider range of stakeholders in decision-making bodies. Experience has shown that the process of developing these plans is just as important for delegations as

**“ PRACTISING FRATERNITY AND ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO DO SO, STARTING WITHIN THE TEAMS THEMSELVES, IS ANOTHER CONSTANT THREAD RUNNING THROUGH THESE NEW PLANS. ”**

their outcomes, since it requires as many people as possible to work together to achieve a shared and ambitious vision designed to facilitate social transformation. Practising fraternity and encouraging others to do so, starting within the teams themselves, is another constant thread running through these new plans. As is the need to move more towards individual and overall support in terms of access to rights, and towards approaches that contribute to regional development.

To help our delegations, we have created a shared resource that was tested by five delegations in 2019, and will be tested by ten more in 2020. This appraisal matrix allows us to conduct a team-by-team assessment of what was achieved during the year, in terms of fraternity, social justice and regional transformation, and the coordination and leadership required (or not) for the following year.



GAËL KERBAOL / SCCF





GAËL KERBAOL / SCCF

An effective way of helping our delegations to prioritise their initiatives and gives us valuable feedback on how we need to adjust our national management.

## A NETWORK OF 64,300 VOLUNTEERS IN FRANCE

Secours Catholique-Caritas France recorded a slight decrease in its total number of volunteers, from 68,200 in 2018 to 64,300 in 2019. If we cross-reference the statistical data for our network with the trends observed by sociologist Roger Sue in his book *La France bénévole 2019*, we see that this reduction is consistent with a national trend. It is the result of reduced commitment in the over-65s, a generation that is becoming more and more concerned about the way its lifestyles are changing, and that is also increasingly called upon to help dependent parents and children who have not yet reached autonomy. ■

# COMMUNICATION

The 'Changing the way we look at migrants' aspect of the Global Migration Campaign has been chosen by Secours Catholique-Caritas France as the basis for a public communication campaign in the form of short videos screened via social media to mark World Day of Migrants and Refugees on 29 September 2019. The campaign then continued in the run-up to publication of our statistical report on poverty in France, which also focused on migrants, and marked the beginning of our end-of-year campaign.

## ADAPTING THE GLOBAL MIGRATION CAMPAIGN FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The public communication around the Secours Catholique-Caritas France Global Migration Campaign was launched on World Migrant and Refugee Day with the hashtag #IciEtVivant (#HereAndAlive). 'Migrant' is not an identity: that was the central message delivered through a series of very short instructional videos that characterised an individual in terms of one of his or her talents. One of them was Junior, a young man who is an excellent footballer, although we only find out at the end of the video that he is also a migrant. Designed to go viral on social media, these videos looked at migration in a consciously peaceful way by highlighting the contributions that migrants make to their host societies. The change of perspective we are trying to achieve is a major challenge. We understand that it will be very difficult to change the reception migrants receive and improve their living conditions if the prejudices they suffer prevail. So the choice of social media was made to reach out to a young and potentially partisan target

audience. The campaign ran until the evening before publication of our statistical report, which marked another key moment in the Global Migration Campaign, because this was the first of these reports to include international data provided by our partners in migrant departure and/or transit countries.

## A CAMPAIGN THAT CONTINUED THE FRATERNAL REVOLUTION

As in previous years, the Secours Catholique-Caritas France end-of-year campaign began with the publication of the Statistical Report on the State of Poverty in France on 7 November. Following on from the 2018 campaign, it continued to promote the Fraternal Revolution by highlighting unique, real-life experiences that demonstrate how our daily commitment to fraternity can help vulnerable people to take back control of their lives.

Baking and sharing the 'Le fraternel!' cake once again created many opportunities for conviviality and shar-



STEVEN WASSENAAR / SCCF

ing in delegations, reception centres, parishes, markets, railway stations, shopping centres and many more locations. All were opportunities to discuss issues in society, publicise our positions and initiatives, and encourage more and more people to put their generosity to work.

### BRINGING BACK THE TRUE MEANING OF ADVENT

At the end of 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France offered families - whether Catholic or otherwise - an Advent calendar created by the famous illustrator Soledad Bravi. Designed and intended to bring out the true meaning of this period of preparation for Christmas, which has become synonymous with consumerism, each window of the calendar opened to reveal messages designed for children; messages that encourage them to think about what words like 'prejudice', 'vulnerability' and 'exclusion' really mean. The result is a wonderful opportunity to raise the awareness of children to the need for solidarity, and prepare them for making their own contribution to our Fraternal Revolution. All the money raised from sales of the calendar went to fund our delegation initiatives and a new e-shop opened on our website for the festive period.

### A NEW QUARTERLY MESSAGES THAT CONTAINS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

In March 2019, those who donate to Secours Catholique-Caritas France found that their *Messages* magazine had adopted a new format. Now published quarterly instead of monthly, the new *Messages* has a more expansive and dynamic layout, and features both a world map and a map of France to make it easier for readers to keep up to date with our initiatives and experience the universal breadth of our commitment in practical terms. There was also a special Christmas issue reporting on initiatives implemented and to support the end-of-year fundraising campaign.

The forum for debating ideas and analyses has now transferred to a new publication called *Résolutions*, which is included as a supplement to *Messages* for our institutional audiences, volunteers and employees. This new magazine is designed to raise institutional awareness of our commitment to transforming society. Its forty pages contain articles that explain the challenges of combating poverty in France and around the world in the words of experts and stakeholders actively involved in facilitating change: political leaders, people living in vulnerable circumstances, clerics, association volunteers, trade union activists, and others. ■

## PUBLICATIONS

### GIVING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN SOCIETY A VOICE TO EXPRESS THEIR ANGER



From January to February 2019, Secours Catholique hosted 150 debates in sixty delegations in order to make the voices, suffering, anger and suggestions of the most vulnerable in society heard in France's Great National Debate. This document summarises the 800 pages of verbatim accounts collected. (See pages 8-9.)

### A STATISTICAL REPORT FOCUSED ON MIGRATION



The Secours Catholique-Caritas France statistical report for 2019 documents the trend in vulnerability throughout France based on the analysis of more than 72,000 households passing through our reception centres. Enhanced with data and contributions from our partners in migrant departure and transit countries, this report also offers a valuable snapshot of the situation of migrants in France and worldwide. (See also pages 15 and 33.)

### RÉSOLUTIONS MAGAZINE



A completely new magazine from Secours Catholique-Caritas France published as a supplement to the now-quarterly Messages, Résolutions is targeted specifically at local and national politicians, institutions, social stakeholders and the clergy. Its 40 pages of debates and analyses decipher the issues at the heart of the movement to combat poverty in France and around the world in the words of experts, committed stakeholders and vulnerable people themselves. (See also page 53.)

### THE ABSURDITY OF THE DUBLIN REGULATION IN WORDS AND PICTURES



The illustrated report 'Exiled, Dublined, Mistreated' recounts the dramatic experiences of those on the wrong side of the Dublin Regulation. Published to invite the opinions and perspectives of the public and the authorities, it was designed and produced in collaboration with ten migrants assisted by Secours Catholique, with illustrations by talented cartoonist Camille Ulrich. (See also page 16.)

### UNDERSTANDING POVERTY IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS

Secours Catholique was a contributor to the French portion of the research conducted by the ATD Fourth World movement and Oxford University to identify the many dimensions of poverty in six countries. The research team included people with personal experience of poverty, professionals with experience of working on initiatives with vulnerable people, and researchers contributing their academic knowledge. (See also page 16.)

### TWO NEW ISSUES OF L'APOSTROPHE, THE POVERTY EXPERTS' JOURNAL



L'Apostrophe continues to stimulate the dynamics of writing and expressive skills of those who have experienced difficult and vulnerable life situations, and those who continue to do so. Two new issues were published in 2019: No. 6, on the theme of trust, and No. 7, on the theme of reconciliation between man and nature. (See also page 13.)



# GENEROSITY AND FUNDING

The decline in fundraising income for 2019 reflects a genuine structural trend which is shared by many associations and foundations in the sector, and which was exacerbated by the effects on the wider context of the protests that erupted at the end of the year. Secours Catholique-Caritas France began taking action to curb this trend some time ago. At the end of 2018, we launched a large-scale experiment around street collections and fundraising on private premises, which continued through 2019 with the experimental introduction of communication and resource development posts in four regions.

## A DOWNWARD STRUCTURAL TREND IN FUNDRAISING

In 2019, Secours Catholique-Caritas France once again recorded a slight year-on-year decline in fundraising income of 2%, ending the year with €60.5 million in donations, compared with €62 million in 2018. This is a structural trend that is fairly widespread throughout the voluntary sector, and is all the more marked in our case due to the large proportion of elderly people among our donors, some of whom can no longer afford to support us, despite their deep desire to do so. This fundamental trend was further exacerbated by the effects on the wider context of the protests that erupted at end of the year, which is the period when 90% of those who make donations only once a year do so. Not only did these demonstrations bring France to a standstill, but they also cast a shadow over the festive season, which is normally a good time for us in terms of fundraising. Nevertheless, it should be noted that we asked our donors less often to give during the year, and that if we compare the total amount of funds raised with the total amount of expenditure incurred, the balance remains at the same level as in previous years, or even slightly higher.

## INTRODUCTION OF NEW FUNDRAISING METHODS

We responded to this chronic erosion of donation levels by stepping up our efforts to retain existing donors and attract new supporters. As such we continued the street collections we experimented with in December 2018, which encourage members of the public to donate by direct debit. These campaigns target younger donors in the 25 to 35 age group, and is a very effective way of increasing donor numbers and reducing their age profile, because it builds

loyalty from the moment they sign up by offering them the opportunity to donate regularly by direct debit. Another benefit of donation by direct debit is that we no longer have to reach out for donations during the year, which considerably reduces our expenditure, and has the eco-benefit of reducing our paper consumption, at the same time as improving the investment/fundraising ratio.

## RAISING OUR PROFILE THROUGH SALES OF 'LE FRATERNEL !' CAKES

In 2019, sales of the 'Le fraternel !' cake generated a level of income almost equivalent to that achieved in 2018. It was used by Secours Catholique teams more as a promotional tool to raise the profile of their initiatives than for purely fundraising purposes. There is no doubt that these demonstrations of conviviality were impacted negatively by the end-of-year protests, but they nevertheless played their part in enhancing the impact of the high volume of mailings sent out during the same period. These were also invaluable in generating online donations that cannot be attributed to a particular campaign,



CHRISTOPHE MARGOUES / SCCF

but are definitely stimulated by the overall effect of the many initiatives that highlight our contribution to combating vulnerability. Online fundraising contributed 10.6% of total fundraising in 2019; a level 11% higher than in 2018.

In the same way as 'Le fraternel !', 'support contributions' did not bring in large sums during 2019 (€2.3 million), but did help to raise our profile, and therefore contributed to increasing the level of donation in all its forms.

## INCOME FROM BEQUESTS RETURNS TO ITS NORMAL LEVEL

Income from bequests fell slightly in 2019 (by 9%, and only 4% below budget), but this decline was expected. The fact that a long backlog of bequests was actioned by solicitors in 2018 inflated the figures for that particular year, meaning that we saw income from bequests return to a more familiar level in 2019. Added to which, the end-of-year protests and demonstrations delayed the paperwork necessary to complete a major property transaction, although this sale was finally completed early in 2020. Bequests remain an important source of funding for Secours Catholique, since they contribute 30% of our resources. As one of the first to promote this form of giving, we continue to do so in response to increasing competition from other associations.

## EXPERIMENTS TO DEVELOP GRANT INCOME

Income from grants awarded to Secours Catholique increased very slightly in France during the year, but less than was forecast. Since grants represent a very important source of funding for our association, we continue to pay particular attention to ensuring a flow of them. In 2019, we have therefore launched an experiment in four regions which involved allocating human resources to help delegations in their efforts to increase the level of funding raised at the end of the year, and raise grant income at local level. These new posts were created in December 2019. We intend to run the experiment until the end of 2022, at which point we will review the results and examine the option to extend the experiment into more regions. We are confident in the effectiveness of this support for volunteer teams, whose priority commitment is not necessarily fundraising. The level of international grants we receive is driven by whether or not

our projects are eligible for co-funding programmes. Despite the expected slight decrease seen in 2019, the total amount of international grants remained healthy at around €3 million in funding for missions.

## EMERGENCY FUNDRAISING

The South of France was hit by two natural disasters at the end of 2019. Their low level of media coverage meant that they did not trigger a major outpouring of generosity. But that fact did not prevent our teams from working with victims of both disasters in the post-emergency period, which is an area in which we have particularly strong expertise. This mission was extended into 2020 to provide those affected with support until their homes are fully repaired or rebuilt, and their lives can return to normal.

## A NEW FORMAT FOR MESSAGES MAGAZINE



*Messages*, the Secours Catholique-Caritas France magazine, changed both its format and publication frequency in 2019. Now quarterly, it focuses more sharply on our initiatives in France and internationally, and contains much more visual material. A special Christmas

issue reported on the superb work being done at grassroots level with the people we help and support throughout the year. Readers were delighted with this new quarterly format, which generated almost as much in donations as the previous format, and will be continued in 2020. ■

# THE CARITAS FRANCE NETWORK

The Caritas France Network was created by Secours Catholique-Caritas France to unite the organisations it has helped to create or which share its values, aims and principles for action. Its goal is to encourage innovation and cooperation at regional level by combining the skills and resources of its members to facilitate the provision of overall support for all those vulnerable people experiencing poverty and exclusion, and help them take action themselves. It is also committed to encouraging solidarity and fraternity in others, and acting on the causes of poverty. Under the chairmanship of Secours Catholique, the Caritas France network worked closely with its 12 member organisations during 2019 to prepare and develop a strategy for the period 2020-2025. [www.reseaucaritasfrance.org](http://www.reseaucaritasfrance.org)

## ACCOMMODATION AND HOUSING SUPPORT

Faced with a shortage of housing and the ongoing problem of substandard housing, Secours Catholique has created new solutions within the Caritas France network: construction of new homes funded by solidarity-based savings, accessing private sector housing via its social housing agency (AIS), and supporting home insulation upgrades. These projects complement the range of accommodation options and overall housing support provided by Secours Catholique-Caritas France.

### THE CITÉS CARITAS ASSOCIATION



Previously known as the Association des Cités du Secours Catholique, this association was formed by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in 1989 to empower the *cités* (communities of citizens) under its management. The mission of Cités Caritas is to welcome, accommodate and support vulnerable people, those excluded from society and the disabled, and empower them to reintegrate into society and the world of work. It manages 19 cités - 14 in the social sector and 5 in the disabled sector - in the three French regions of Centre-Ouest, Île-de-France et Sud. In 2019, more than 1,000 employees - the majority of them social workers - and around 300 volunteers helped more than 13,000 people, including 350 with disabilities (those with psychiatric issues, learning difficulties or autism), through 127 social support services managed by the association, including emergency accommodation, social reintegration centres, drop-in centres, boarding houses for families and childcare nurseries. The support provided by Cités Caritas teams promotes and encourages the active involvement of those receiving their help, and values their participation as a rich resource. The education initiatives implemented

by these cité communities working with disabled people focus on help through work. Its network of 'Grandir en crèche' childcare nurseries now offers around a hundred places. As a member of the Caritas France network, Cités Caritas makes a proactive contribution to social change and the way society cares for its most vulnerable members. Its ongoing work is based on the principle of involving professionals and volunteers, as well as the active involvement of those it supports. At the end of 2019, it adopted a new association plan for the period 2020-2025.

[acsc.asso.fr](http://acsc.asso.fr)

### THE CARITAS ÎLE-DE-FRANCE SOCIAL HOUSING AGENCY



At the end of 2018, Secours Catholique and Cités Caritas worked together to create the Caritas Île-de-France AIS social housing agency to experiment with a new way of providing people in the Paris Region with direct access to conventional housing,

without the need to pass through the stages of emergency or temporary accommodation. By working with owners open to the idea of letting their property to those who cannot provide all the usual guarantees, the Caritas AIS is demonstrating that with the appropriate level of high-quality support, it is perfectly possible for some people to gain direct access to a permanent home.

### CARITAS HABITAT

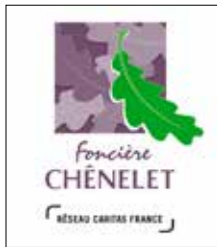


Caritas Habitat was formed in 2015 as a social property company with the purpose of developing social housing for use by the member organisations of the Caritas France

network in helping the most fragile in society to access permanent housing solutions. Working within the social and solidarity economy, it draws on personal and institutional solidarity savings to invest in purchasing land and property to build new social housing and renovate or convert existing buildings. The management of these properties is then transferred to associations specialising in helping those living in substandard accommodation. These associations may be members of the Caritas France network (Cités Caritas or AIS Caritas Île-de-France in particular) or close partner associations.

[www.caritashabitat.org](http://www.caritashabitat.org)

### FONCIÈRE CHÊNELET



Foncière Chênelet was set up in 2009 to respond to the major social housing issues faced by people on the lowest incomes in rural or suburban communities by offering them high-quality eco-friendly housing. As certified social housing contractors, Foncière Chênelet builds high-quality, low-rent social housing, the majority of which is in rural communities.

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[www.fonciere-chenelet.org](http://www.fonciere-chenelet.org)

### THE ÉCO HABITAT NETWORK



The Éco Habitat Network was set up as an experimental initiative in 2014 by the delegations of Secours Catholique on the basis of their awareness that many home-owning families in particularly vulnerable situations do not use the public sector schemes available to improve the energy performance of their homes, thereby reducing their energy consumption. The mission of the Éco Habitat Network is to network local stakeholders in home energy improvement (local authorities, businesses and volunteers) to help households on very low incomes carry out major upgrades that are 90% funded by the association.

The mission of the Éco Habitat Network is to network local stakeholders in home energy improvement (local authorities, businesses and volunteers) to help households on very low incomes carry out major upgrades that are 90% funded by the association.

[www.reseau-ecohabitat.fr](http://www.reseau-ecohabitat.fr)

## EMPLOYMENT AND INTEGRATION

*In addition to the general level of support for employment integration provided by the teams of Secours Catholique-Caritas France, some members of the Caritas France Network also develop employment integration projects, support social innovation and experimentation, and implement advocacy initiatives to facilitate the employment and workplace integration of those most excluded from society.*

### TISSONS LA SOLIDARITÉ

# **tissons la solidarité**

RÉSEAU CARITAS FRANCE

Founded by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in 2004 to unite the charity shops it had created to support em-

ployment, the Tissons la Solidarite (Let's Weave Solidarity) network has since expanded significantly, and currently includes 70 companies and employment integration projects. The people it helps work in a range of different fashion production and sales careers, and all receive accredited training from fashion industry professionals. Some of the workplace integration projects coordinated by Tissons la Solidarité cooperate at local level with Secours Catholique delegations through its charity shops.

[www.tissonslasolidarite.fr](http://www.tissonslasolidarite.fr)

### COMITÉ CHRÉTIEN DE SOLIDARITÉ AVEC LES CHÔMEURS



The Comité Chrétien de Solidarité avec les Chômeurs (CCSC) - the Christian Committee for Solidarity with the Unemployed and Vulnerable- was formed more than 30 years ago to keep

public attention focused on the effects of unemployment. By raising awareness among Christian communities and society as a whole to the issues around unemployment, and countering indifference by highlighting the personal experiences of unemployment people, the CCSC encourages everyone to play their part in helping the unemployed and vulnerable to regain their rightful place in society. In 2019, the CCSC developed a new format for its 'Vaincre le chômage' (Beating unemployment) newsletter with help and support from Secours Catholique-Caritas France.

[ccscfrance.com](http://ccscfrance.com)



## FÉDÉRATION SOLIDARAUTO

Solidarauto is the name of the network of community garages set up by Secours Catholique-Caritas France delegations in a number of French regions. These Solidarauto garages work to provide people with the personal mobility they need to facilitate integration into the world of work and society through vehicle sales, maintenance, repair and rental. In 2019, the federation operated eight garages in France.

[www.solidarauto.org](http://www.solidarauto.org)

## DEVELOPMENTS IN PHILANTHROPY, INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

*The Caritas France Network also has a cross-functional mission to develop, promote and fund research and consultation around the theology of charity and social innovation.*

## THE CARITAS FRANCE FOUNDATION



Founded by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in 2009, the Caritas France Foundation is France's first and only umbrella foundation focused on combating poverty. Its core mission is to encourage the development of philanthropy and combat social

exclusion via its member foundations, which totalled more than 100 in 2019. It gives individuals, families and groups of friends the opportunity to set up their own foundations, and ensures their smooth running by supporting and helping their founders with their choice of projects, the involvement of friends and family, etc. Its second mission is to raise funds in support of projects run by Secours Catholique-Caritas France, by the Caritas Network in France and internationally, and by other partners. In 2019, more than two-thirds of the funds raised were redistributed to the Caritas France network and projects elsewhere in the world. The Caritas France Foundation has supported around 1,000 projects in this way since its creation.

Lastly, the foundation also supports research and experimentation by presenting an annual award to a young social sciences researcher at the Institut de France symposium.

[www.fondationcaritasfrance.org](http://www.fondationcaritasfrance.org)

## THE JEAN-RODHAIN FOUNDATION

The Fondation Jean Rodhain was established in 1981 to contribute to Christian reflection on charity in its broadest sense (in terms of justice, solidarity and social doctrine), promote the study of the theology of charity through academic research, and develop a dialogue with field workers based on the experiences and personal accounts of the poor. Every two years, it hosts a symposium attended by around 50 academics and professionals. It has instituted and funded academic chairs in a number of university theological faculties, and continues to support the 'Servons la Fraternité' (Let's Facilitate Fraternity) website that developed out of 'Diaconia 2013' with the aim of sharing good practices that make fraternity a reality for all.

[www.fondationjeanrodhain.org](http://www.fondationjeanrodhain.org)

[www.servonslafaternite.net](http://www.servonslafaternite.net)

## CARITAS IN ALSACE

*It was the history of the Catholic Church in Alsace that led to the creation of Caritas, which preceded Secours Catholique in France, and covered all the topics referred to above.*

## THE CARITAS ALSACE CHARITY FEDERATION

Founded in 1903 by Monsignor Paul Müller-Simonis to "improve the organisation of Catholic charity work in Alsace", the Strasbourg-based Caritas Alsace Charity Federation has been working in line with its founder's vision for over 100 years. A service of the Alsace diocese of the Catholic Church and an association under local law, it addresses the physical, moral and spiritual hardships of our time. It has three core missions: to act as a central unifying point for charitable activities, to promote charitable initiatives, and to call for more effective social justice by bringing forward proposals to do so. The federation also carries out the work of Secours Catholique-Caritas France in Alsace, working under the name of Caritas Alsace, Secours Catholique network.

[www.federation-de-charite.org](http://www.federation-de-charite.org)

# GOVERNANCE AND CONTROL AT SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE

AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of Secours Catholique-Caritas France consists of the 180 members of the association: the 146 active members (directors, qualified individuals, delegation presidents and vice-presidents, and one treasurer per region) and 32 honorary members. The maximum age limit for membership is 75. 56% of active members are men, and 44% are women.

## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

has 21 volunteer members, 12 of whom are delegation presidents or vice-presidents, and 9 are qualified individuals. Members are appointed for terms of three years, which may be renewed on two occasions. The Board meets 11 times per year. The members of its Bureau (Board Committee) are the President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer and a Secretary.

The Chaplain General and Secretary General attend meetings of the Bureau and Board of Directors, but have no voting rights.

## BUREAU

### President:

Véronique Fayet

### Vice-Presidents:

Louise Avon, Alain de Brugière

### Treasurer:

Bernard Alet

### Secretary:

Françoise Maury

## OTHER MEMBERS

Pierre Boit, Pascal Bourgue, Gilles Cagnard, Anne Duthilleul, Marie Fleury, Francine Guilbert, Chantal Nicol, Emmanuel de Rivoire, Guy Sayaret, Marie-Laure Denès, Isabelle Biseau, Hélène Mayer, Hervé Masurel.

### Secretary General:

Vincent Destival

### Chaplain General:

Père Hervé Perrot

### Honorary Presidents:

François Soulage, Joël Thoraval

## LINKS WITH THE FRENCH CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

- ▶ Delegation Presidents and Vice-Presidents are approved by the Board of Directors, subject to the agreement of the diocesan bishop concerned. Qualified individual members are co-opted by the Board of Directors, subject to the agreement of the Permanent Council of the French Conference of Bishops, and elected by the General Assembly.
- ▶ The National President is elected by the Board

of Directors from among those candidates previously approved by the Permanent Council of the French Conference of Bishops.

- ▶ The Chaplain General is appointed by the Permanent Council of the French Conference of Bishops.
- ▶ The Executive Officer is elected by the Board of Directors from among a list of candidates approved by the Permanent Council of the French Conference of Bishops.
- ▶ The General Secretariat of the French Conference of Bishops and the National President, Executive Officer and Chaplain General of Secours Catholique-Caritas France meet regularly.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

These committees offer advices and recommendations on the day-to-day running and plans of the association.

- ▶ Strategy Committee,
- ▶ France pre- Board of Directors Committee,
- ▶ International pre- Board of Directors Committee,
- ▶ Resources Committee,
- ▶ Audit Committee,
- ▶ Appointments Committee,
- ▶ National Coordination Committee,
- ▶ Treasury Committee,
- ▶ Shared Governance Supervisory Committee

# PROFILE

## SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE

Secours Catholique-Caritas France is a service of the Catholic Church in France, a member of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation and an association under French law.

## THE MISSION OF SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE

The mission of Secours Catholique-Caritas France is based on the Gospel, and is a mission of love and the awakening of solidarity in France and throughout the world. Secours Catholique calls on everyone to commit themselves to reaching out to one another, supporting one another and experiencing the joy of fraternity. Its active members work to strengthen the ability of everyone to take action together to ensure dignified living conditions for all. The association combats the causes of poverty, inequality and exclusion, and brings forward alternative solutions for the common good.

## ACTIONS

- ▶ In France, 1,393,000 people received support through 2,400 reception centres in 2019.
- ▶ Internationally, 586 projects were undertaken in 56 countries or regions in partnership with the 165 members of the Caritas Internationalis network. 2.9 million people benefited from international aid provided by Secours Catholique-Caritas France in one year.

## ORGANISATION

- ▶ At 31 December 2019, there were 73 delegations staffed by 3,500 local teams covering all of mainland France and the French overseas territories and departments.
- ▶ A nationwide network of 64,000 volunteers and 908 employees.
- ▶ Three central facilities: the Cité Saint-Pierre in Lourdes, the House of Abraham in Jerusalem, and the CEDRE asylum seeker and refugee reception centre in Paris.

## TRANSPARENCY AND AUDITS

**The 2019 annual financial statements**, including the application of funds statement, are certified by the DeLoitte auditing firm, and will be submitted for approval by the General Assembly on 2 July 2020. These financial statements may be viewed at [www.secours-catholique.org](http://www.secours-catholique.org), and a copy may be obtained by writing to:

Secours Catholique-Caritas France, 106 rue du Bac, 75341 Paris Cedex 07.

## The statutory auditor,

in addition to certifying the financial statements, audits ten delegations each year. When added to the checks made by the internal audit department, this means that one-third of all delegations are subject to inspection every year.

## The donate with confidence charter committee

is an oversight association responsible for supervising public fundraising. It develops codes of ethics, awards the 'Donate with Confidence' label to successful voluntary organisation applicants, and provides continuous independent monitoring to ensure that organisations fulfil their commitments. These commitments are based on the principles of respect for donors, transparency, efficiency, integrity and altruism in the three areas of governance, management and communication. The 'Donate with Confidence' accreditation of Secours Catholique-Caritas France was renewed for a further three years on 26 April 2018.



## WE THANK ALL OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Agence du don en nature – Agence française de développement  
Agence de l'eau Artois-Picardie – Agence de l'eau Loire-Bretagne  
Agence de l'eau Rhône-Méditerranée-Corse  
Agence de l'eau Seine-Normandie

Caisse d'épargne – CGR Cinémas – European Commission  
(Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
as well as European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations)  
Communauté de l'agglomération havraise  
Ile de France Regional Council - COSUDE: Swiss embassy in Colombia –  
Dons Solidaires

EDF

Caritas France Foundation - Member foundations of the Caritas France  
Foundation umbrella organisation: Fondation L'Arbre du voyageur –  
Fondation Avenir solidaire  
Fondation Famille et Solidarités – Fondation Franck-Giroud  
Fondation François, Monique et Pascal Bilger – Fondation Girafe formations  
Fondation Le Manteau de saint Martin – Fondation Pro-femmes  
Fondation Tolot – Fondation Xamafra

Fondation Chanel – Fondation Crédit coopératif – Fondation Eiffage  
Fondation de France – Member foundations of the Fondation de France  
umbrella organisation:  
Fondation Guy-Nicolas – Fondation Hardy  
Fonds Merymu – Fondation Notre-Dame  
Fondation Porticus – Fondation Sainte-Geneviève  
Fondation Saint-Irénée – Fondation Sancta Devota  
Fondation Somfy - Les petites Pierres – Fondation Suez  
Fonds français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM)

IF International Foundation

L'Agence nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances

Fonds de dotation Antigone – Grand Lyon – Jean Lutz SA – La Poste  
Le Petit Futé

French Ministry of Culture - French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

McMillan-Stewart Foundation – Moneta  
Orange – Saint-Christophe Assurances

As well as all the authorities (municipalities, joint community authorities  
and departmental councils as well as regional councils) that support us.

and the companies that support us through skills patronage:  
Orange, BNP-Paribas and La Poste.





Secours  
Catholique  
Caritas France

## TOGETHER, BUILDING A FAIR AND FRATERNAL WORLD

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July 2020

# KEY FIGURES FOR SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS FRANCE



## €330M

TOTAL BUDGET, OF WHICH 86% IS SPENT ON AID PROGRAMMES

### 2019, FRANCE



## 1,393,000

PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN FRANCE



## 64,300

VOLUNTEERS



## 5,000

CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS SUPPORTED IN THEIR STUDIES



## 2,400

RECEPTION CENTRES



## 295,000

FAMILIES SUPPORTED



## 3,000

PEOPLE HELPED TO FIND JOBS



## 3,000

PEOPLE HELPED WITH THEIR HOLIDAY PLANS



## 1,300

CHILDREN GIVEN HOLIDAYS BY HOST FAMILIES



## 1,028

MICROCREDIT ACCOUNTS, INCLUDING 468 NEW LOANS DURING THE YEAR

### 2019, INTERNATIONAL



## 2.9 MILLION

PEOPLE SUPPORTED INTERNATIONALLY



## 586

PROJECTS



## 26

EMERGENCY RESPONSES

