

REPORT ON CLIMATE ACTION

On 23 September 2019, a Climate Action Summit was held at the United Nations, New York. It was preceded by a Youth Climate Summit and accompanied by climate strikes throughout the world from 20 – 27 October 2018. An adolescent girl, why not her name? played a pivotal role in engaging civil society and young people in pleading for governments to pay attention to what is being done to respond to this serious situation.

The aim of the UN Summit was for governments from the 193 Member states to come with their action plans. The Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres asked Heads of State to “come with actions and no more words” A briefing on the Summit called on NGOs to give an account of what they are doing.

We took up this idea and called on Province UN Representatives to share some of the initiatives being taken in each country. It is not an exhaustive account of how **the Mary Ward Family worldwide** is responding to the climate crisis, but it does give an idea of what is being doing.



Province UN Representatives were invited to give examples in the following categories:

1. Corporate actions - actions taken by province leadership or at a Province meeting.
2. Province Actions taken by province schools, non-formal education centers or groups.
3. Individual actions.
4. Initiatives in our respective countries. Mainly, what government, Church or other local responses are we aware of?

The responses received from the following provinces/countries provide us with a good sample of efforts: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, Romania, Tanzania, South Africa, Spain, Zimbabwe.

1. Corporate Actions, i.e. following decisions by Province Decisions taken by leadership or some Province process.

South Asia Province has taken the following corporate actions:

- Solar plant installation on all buildings
- Tree plantation of 100,000 (1 Lakh) saplings by the year 2020;
- Signature Campaign for Paris Agreement;
- Rainwater harvesting system.

Australia and South East Asia Province is planting trees on a block of land owned by the Institute in south-western Victoria, Australia.

Peru Region has a corporate approach to addressing the consequences of human mistreatment of our planet

- In 2015 they reinforced their efforts following the publication of *Laudato Si* and the adoption of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

- Since 2017 a specific ecological program to protect our “Common Home” - “Amanecer para Servir” - was introduced to all their ministries -it is an ongoing effort. The program is included in our 2019 Annual Work Plan and involves monthly training sessions for the whole Mary Ward Family in Peru.
- A robust program of separating and recycling paper, single use plastic in all community houses, Regional office, volunteer residence and medical centres. It includes practice and training and encourages the use of cloth bags,

Kenya has a corporate response to the following:

- Ongoing installation of solar panel water heating in all schools and community houses.
- Replacing use of firewood with GAS burners for school catering of over 1,000 meals per day;
- Ongoing installation of large (1,000 litres plus) water storage tanks for harvesting
 - (a) rainwater for domestic use
 - (b) grey water for agriculture/trees/sanitation as in Loreto Abundant Life Centre.
- Providing School buses reduces vehicle exhaust fumes of otherwise numerous private cars

Canada. Collaborates with 100 religious’ organizations on climate change-related lobbying activity.

Romania. Province initiatives taken to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Waste sorting and recycle.

Nepal. Province decision to establish an “Environment Club” in all their schools

Zimbabwe. Reforestation and afforestation. Region planted trees in preparation for GC 2020.



Mauritius has taken the following decisions to curb climate change

- Solar Panels in community houses and LED lights
- Waste sorting, composting, responsible use of water, cloth bags instead of single use plastics
- Flowers are planted in their gardens.

2. Actions taken by province institutions including Schools, Colleges, Non- formal Education Centers, Spiritual Centers, Medical Centers, Development Centers, Specific Projects or Houses, local Parish

Loreto (Australia) schools are making serious efforts around the following in Plant and Resources Management:

- removal of all plastic from campuses; use of ethically sourced paper;
- use of slave-free products;
- improvements to school water, power and waste usage, e.g. use of solar power, installation of cut-off switches on any new lights installed, the use of a bore for summer watering, passive cladding material on walls, use of 5-star electrical appliances, installing a night time cut-off on the heating system, limiting the maximum temperature settings of class heaters; and contracting regular cardboard and comingle waste collection.
- A number of their schools now boast an explicit ecological framework as part of their formal Strategic Plans, ensuing that the environment is front and centre of all future planning in their schools

Australia School Curriculum. All Australian Loreto schools have well-developed environmental perspectives across the formal curriculum. This is in response to: the mandated *Sustainability* priority for study in our mandated Australian

Curriculum; the Institute's 2014: GC Call #4: *living sustainably* and the 2017 Mary Ward Schools Compass document: *Thinking and Acting Justly and Engaging with the Bigger Picture*.

WANAWAKW KWA WANAWAKE (Kibera slum, Nairobi.) They:



-Supply the women in the project with energy saving stoves so that they use very little charcoal for cooking and so that they stop using kerosene stoves.

-Supply solar lights so that the families do not have to use kerosene for lighting as well as using illegal electricity connection which is also a danger to their lives.

-Plant vegetables and many flowers and shrubs to teach the children how to grow things in pots and to teach them to love and appreciate nature.

Tanzania. Solar panels produce electricity for the needs of the whole school compound (about 1,000 people) for some years and require minimal use from public suppliers.

Nepal (CJ) Saplings from the District Forest Department are distributed to members of their cooperative for planting.

Nepal: (ibvm) Planted trees in 12 villages

Bangladesh took the following actions:

- Created a herbal garden in the school and in the formation house
- Managed solid waste and compost pit
- Harvested rainwater
- Eating organic vegetables and fruit.
- Taking part in the local "green march"
-

Romania holds the following extracurricular activity:

- planting a tree for the life of our planet

Zimbabwe. Local women with limited resources recycle plastic bottles by locals.



Canada shared the following actions taken by specific institutions:

- Loretto College Toronto, Canada – new indoor composting system including vermicomposter
 - Participation in Global strike at demonstration on Friday Sept 27, 2019
- Mary Ward Centre Toronto– co-sponsorship of Season of Creation event on Oct 4, 2019
- Presentation Manor Toronto – began a recycling program at this 250 bed residence Sept 1, 2019
- Loretto Maryholme, Canada – use of sustainable products and systems throughout centre
 - No bottled water
 - Planted 5 native trees
 - Inventory of woodlands to determine balance of native trees in woodland conversion. It is now over %50 from %15 in 2001

Spain. All **communities** are aware of the importance of recycling: all plastics and paper are separated from the rest of the waste.

Schools in Mauritius.

- Installed solar panels on the roofs of buildings and solar powered lamps in schools' premises. LED lights have been introduced.
- Repainted classrooms in off-white colour.
- Installed rainwater harvesting systems
- Planted trees in school grounds.
Are creating a vertical garden and engaging in Aquaponics for food sufficiency.
- Engaged in composting and abide by the 3 R's
- Held sensitization campaigns during the school assembly (e.g. how to cut down on the use of paper)
- Campaigned for zero waste: SAY NO TO PLASTIC: Encouraged students and staff members to bring their own water bottles, use napkins instead of tissue paper and plastic bags, use bamboo straws and metal straws instead of plastic straws and use biodegradable pens and pencils made of newspaper and cartons.
- Recycle furniture



Perú: Colegio Fe y Alegría Jicamarca, Lima engages in

- The responsible use of water,
- Recycling paper, paper, plastic bottles and tops recycling
- Creating a culture of caring for plants.
- Exhibiting Art on significant days, such as World Environment Day
- The Climate March in the neighbourhood on 20 September 2019

South Africa

Loreto Primary School, Strand, South Africa has a water management plan in response to the Department of Education requirement.

- Rainwater tanks have been installed and borehole water is used wisely.
- The school takes recycling and plastic use seriously:
 - plastic pollution awareness – assemblies;
 - bottle top campaign. These are collected and recycled. The money received helps to fund 'Miles for Smiles';
 - paper recycling – money received is used towards the Library Book Fund;
 - paper straws, cups, plates, containers, etc used instead of plastic and polystyrene at all school functions.

Spain: Initiative to promote ecological consumption among school families.

The El Soto and Bami schools (Madrid and Seville) promote fair and ecological consumption thanks to their association with two organizations that allow families to buy seasonal and ecological locally grown products.

Bami works with [Bioalverde](#), an institution created by Caritas Sevilla in which the workers are people in social-exclusion risk.

El Soto works through [Farmidable](#), a social enterprise on sustainable development working with people at risk of social exclusion.

In both cases, families just have to choose their order and pick it up in the school.

Mauritius. Spirituality Centres have

- Installed solar panels on the roof of the buildings
- Switched from normal lamps to LED lights
- Planted trees and flowers
- Recycled furniture

Romania. Homecare centre for elderly people, collaborates with “Banca pentru alimente”(food bank), to combat food waste and work towards sustainability of both institutions.

Peru. They work with **local Parish** to create awareness of climate crisis through bidding prayers. People are encouraged to bring their own plates and avoid single use plastic at the anniversary celebration on 27 October. Plates made from sugarcane plant will be provided.

Awareness Raising

Spain Communications Office. As part of the work in the JPIC area, IBVM Spain focuses on the importance of the Environment and the connection with poverty and exclusion. The following actions are by the communications office:

- Distribution of information related to the Season of Creation, International Environment Day, International day without plastics...
- Encourage readers to question themselves and their day to day actions and contribute to the campaign ‘If you take care of the planet, you fight against poverty’.

Bangladesh: Awareness programme for children, parents and community in the locality on environmental crisis.

Nepal (ibvm) Awareness programme on conservation of water

Nepal (CJ) World Environment Day is celebrated in schools, very often in collaboration with the local authorities and neighbouring schools.

Morocco: Last December, teachers of Arabic language at the IBVM centre in Asilah took part in a training course on ecological agriculture organized by the association “Earth and Humanism” in Marrakech. Following the training course, the participants shared their learnings on sustainable care of the land with the women attending the literacy course at the centre, including practical activities in the centre garden.



South Africa:

Loreto Strand, Cape Town. Children take part in beach clean-up and litter monitors wear green vests at break. Loreto Nana Sita St. Pretoria. Building a Cleaner Future Project.

Schools in Spain have worked on the motto: “If you take care of the planet, you fight against poverty”. The interconnected relationship between the ecological crisis and poverty has been the focus of their efforts during the 2017/18 and 2018/19 school cycle.

Mauritius. Methods of awareness raising include:

- Sensitization campaigns during the school assembly (for e.g. how we need to cut down on the use of paper)
- Zero waste campaign: SAY NO TO PLASTIC

Zimbabwe Awareness campaigns at some schools and churches.

3. Initiatives taken by individual members of the IBVM/CJ Network.

Ms Katerina Kimmorley (past student of Loreto Kirribilli, Australia) is the co-founder of Pollinate Energy which has, so far, saved 65,173 tonnes of CO2 emissions by providing clean energy lighting options for people living in slum conditions in India (i.e. solar lanterns). The provision of clean energy options is accompanied by peer-education for those receiving the solar lights. <https://pollinategroup.org/>

Mrs. Neena Sood, a teacher at Loreto convent Tara Hall, Shimla, India, adopted a number of neglected parks. She mobilised the local community to plant many saplings in and around Shimla, all environmentally friendly. Now some sixty people have a group, NEW GREEN SHIMLA.

Sr. Regina, Bangladesh, has a herb garden with plants and trees which she uses for healing purposes in the local community

Sr. Initha, Nepal, takes a personal interest in environmental issues and works with Woman Self Help Groups on these issues.

Nepal. Teachers in charge of the Environment Club from two CJ schools negotiated with the local community forest department and were given some rare saplings which the students planted in the local community forest.

Sr. Ephigenia Gachiri has installed biogas catering cookers, solar panel security lights, solar panels heating hot water and 'recycling grey water for sanitation/toilets system' in the recently inaugurated Loreto Abundant Life Centre, Isinya, Kenya. This Centre is situated in a very dry area.

Ms Alicia Landeo, Jicamarca, Lima Peru, organized an organic garden beside the local church with a group of sacristans. They use waste organic matter from their own kitchens to make compost for the garden.

Sr. Pauline BOASE, Loreto NYAKATO, Tanzania has developed biogas from turkey waste. It serves the community and their neighbours.

Phyllis Parr associate member, Canada works to mitigate the climate crisis with

- Environmentally sustainable replacements for single use plastics
- Vegetarian diet
- Fuel conscious actions: type of car, no cruises, use of public transit
- Belonging to the Sustainability Committee at the local church
- The planting of 3 trees

Blanca Bergareche, Spain regularly attends conferences related to climate change, consumption and environment.



4. Examples of good initiatives happening at National level

Australia:

- Students across the country are involved in School Strike for the Climate
- Increased investment in renewable energy resources and much debate about energy sources in the public realm
- With technology available to incorporate plastic waste into an asphalt mix, recycled plastic is used in some Australian states to make roads
- Catholic Religious Australia – the peak body of Australian Catholic religious - has identified the climate crisis as one of four major post- Australian federal election social justice priorities for advocacy and action.

India:

- Bans single use plastics. Reuses plastics and using other alternative biodegradable plastics.
- Provides solar subsidy for housing, agriculture. Encouraging farmers to do solar farming on their barren land.

Bangladesh:

- Provides solar panels for street lights
- Planted Palm trees throughout the country (on 14.09.2019 at 10am at the same time)
- Planted trees along the river banks to prevent soil erosion.

Nepal:

- With the assistance of USAID Hariyo Ban project (NGO)prepares seedling and engages communities in conservation of environment projects
- Makes efforts to preserve biodiversity, ecosystems and forest
- Encourages rain water conservation

Kenya and Tanzania:

Protection of FORESTS: Kenyan & Tanzanian Government regulations regarding the movement of timber are being enforced- by and large people are more knowledgeable and conscious of the traditional responsibility not only to preserve trees but to increase forest coverage for the next generation and beyond. Electric light poles are now moulded cement poles, even the existing wooden poles are being replaced by cement moulded poles

WASTE MANAGEMENT in KENYA is seen to be urgent and a very important service to protect the health of the citizens. Many of the 47 counties are currently involved in tackling polluted rivers and dump sites. Safe New ways of waste disposal are being tried using technology. Naivasha in Nakuru County is achieving some success in converting human waste into safe fuel nuggets. Many People are sorting waste for recycling & becoming aware of the damage done to the environment by burning. They have voiced their concern over the current large fossil/ coal (to be imported from South Africa) generating plant in LAMU port and the negating of Kenya's PARIS AGREEMENT to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

WIND TURBINES in TURKANA KENYA, have, for some years, successfully added electric power to the National grid as have the hot springs of Mount Longonot and, more recently, Menengai volcanic craters, reducing dependence on fossil fuel electric generators. More needs to be done to achieve 100 % electrification and protect forest coverage so vital for the health of OUR Planet

Canada:

- Canadian launch of Global Catholic Climate Movement Oct 2 webinar
- Regeneration of agriculture by moving animals back on to the farmland in Alberta
- Canada wide carbon tax initiative beginning at \$20 per tonne of CO2 emissions in 2019 and graduating to \$50 per tonne

Romania:

- Zero plastic by 2030 – progressive legislative measures
- National Program – Green House
- Sustainability Embassy in Romania <http://ambasadasustenabilitatii.ro/>

South Africa

- South Africa signed the Paris Agreement
- Many retailers have changed from plastic to paper bags. Others have reduced their packaging. Coke changed from plastic to paper straws.
- Three Desalination Plants have been erected in the Western Cape. Two are functional.

Mauritius Budget 2019-2020

Reducing Mauritius Carbon Footprint on the planet by

- Protecting marine and terrestrial ecosystem in the face of climate change (SDG 13 & 14)

Measures taken:

- ✓ Encourage community based coral planting
- ✓ Government is at the same time pursuing a program underpinned by sound Marine spatial Planning and also promoting blue and green legacies to future generations

- Reducing Pollution by offering incentives

Budget 2019 – 2020: Measures taken

- ✓ The government has lowered the rate of excise duty on electric cars of more than 180KWh from 25% to 15%
- ✓ In the same vein, the government has reduced the excise duty on a plug-in-hybrid car 5-15% depending on cylinder capacity.
- ✓ Individuals will be allowed to deduct from their taxable income the total investment in the acquisition of a fast charger for an electric car.
- ✓ Some 200,000 trees were planted ahead of Pope Francis' visit to Mauritius on 9th September 2019.

Zimbabwe

- Legislation has been enacted to encourage people to take action against climate crisis.
- Conservation of the flora (plants) and fauna (animals) e.g people urged to avoid uncontrolled and unnecessary veld fires.
- Soil conservation methods promoted though more needs to be done for people to take positive strides.
- Control of illegal mining, though it is still very minimal because of the economic hardships in the country and use of proper mining methods.



Benefit from the experience of others

Climate Action Summit:

Main issues addressed on 23rd. September 2019.

The basic concern for all connected with the climate crisis is the reduction of CO₂ levels in the atmosphere. This is directly connected with the generation and use of energy. It is essential to end the mining and use of fossil fuels and to move towards clean and renewable energy. Sun, wind and water are reliable sources of energy for the future and must be further developed. Investment in renewable energy is not only important, it is essential if we are to reduce CO₂ emissions to the required level

Use of clean and renewable energy in public and private transport, in new and old buildings, in industry and in sustainable cities has to be achieved. Climate change is causing health problems, including deaths in cities due to poor quality water, and air pollution.

Countries noted the present situation of Forests and Oceans and their vital role in mitigating climate change. Incentives for Business to invest in different forms of renewable energy and other ways of reducing CO₂ in the atmosphere. A

change in lifestyle is needed to achieve the reduction of CO₂ in the atmosphere. A few interventions addressed public education on the situation and the role of government in ensuring that there is an acceptable level of awareness of the situation. On the other hand, all stakeholders were encouraged to educate ourselves and others.



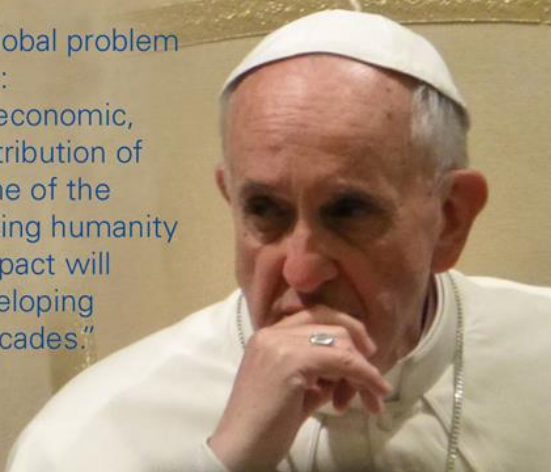
A RACE WE CAN WIN

“Nothing less than our future and the fate of humankind depends on how we rise to the climate challenge.”



António Guterres,
United Nations Secretary-General,
10 September, 2018

“Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades.”



The work on climate continues at the annual COP meeting (Committee of Parties). The 2019 COP 24 will be held in Santiago, Chile. We are happy to be represented there by Angela Orellana Schwalm, Associate with IBVM, Canada. Angela has a graduate degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Waterloo, and has worked with various groups on environmental concerns, including Development and Peace, Climate Fast, Pax Christi Toronto, and most recently she has been organizing events in

the Archdiocese of Toronto, Social Justice Committee, and Season of Creation events.

THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT.

NGO Office, New York