



## **AIC 2017** **400 years of solidarity**

In 1617, St Vincent de Paul had the incredible intuition to entrust women, organized in groups, with supporting disadvantaged people in their communities.

Ever since then, women have been taking on this challenge! Their work has continued until the present day, and now there are thousands of volunteers acting all over the world. In 2017, we are celebrating 400 years of action to support the most disadvantaged people

### **International Association of Charities - Association Internationale des Charités (AIC)**

- **An international network fighting against poverty**
- **150,000 volunteers**, mainly women, Christians, committed in their local communities, working alongside the most disadvantaged people
- In **53 countries** on 4 continents
- **More than 10,000** local actions



## Our History

Because **poverty** is unacceptable, because we want to **put an end to it**, we **support people** living in poverty, so that they can radically change their vulnerable situation.

And we have been doing this for **400 years**, ever since Saint Vincent de Paul founded the first group of volunteers in **Châtillon-les-Dombes**, in France, **on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1617**.

Today, there are more than **150,000 volunteers!**

## Our Strengths

We work in **teams**, this way, we combine our strengths.

An essential tool in our fight against poverty is **education**, which we see as a **two-way exchange** and a means of prevention.

We work **at grassroots level**, which means we are very familiar with the local context and so able to provide the best adapted responses to the situations of poverty we encounter.

**We value each person's strengths**. We help people to build their dreams and make them come true, and so to become agents of change.

We establish **individual relationships** with the people we support, considering all their needs, material, human and spiritual.

## Our Beneficiaries

**70%** of our **beneficiaries** are **women** and their children. Women who want to move forward and who are fighting to achieve their dreams.

Faced with the challenge of an ageing population, we also support **elderly people** living in vulnerable conditions. We seek to valorise the knowledge they have acquired throughout their lives and help them get out of isolation by rebuilding social ties.



## Our local actions: new trends

We have more than **10,000 local actions to fight against poverty**.

We have noticed a new tendency in AIC's educational projects: **learning about peace and citizenship**. The objective is to allow young people and adults living in an environment marked by violence and poverty to understand and experience another way of "living together", in peace and solidarity with each other.

Concerned by the **migrant** crisis, we have implemented actions promoting social integration in different countries, in conjunction with the competent local authorities.

Today, we are trying to protect our "Common Home" and gradually integrate elements of **environmental protection** into our grassroots actions. This is a new challenge for us!

## Our Networking

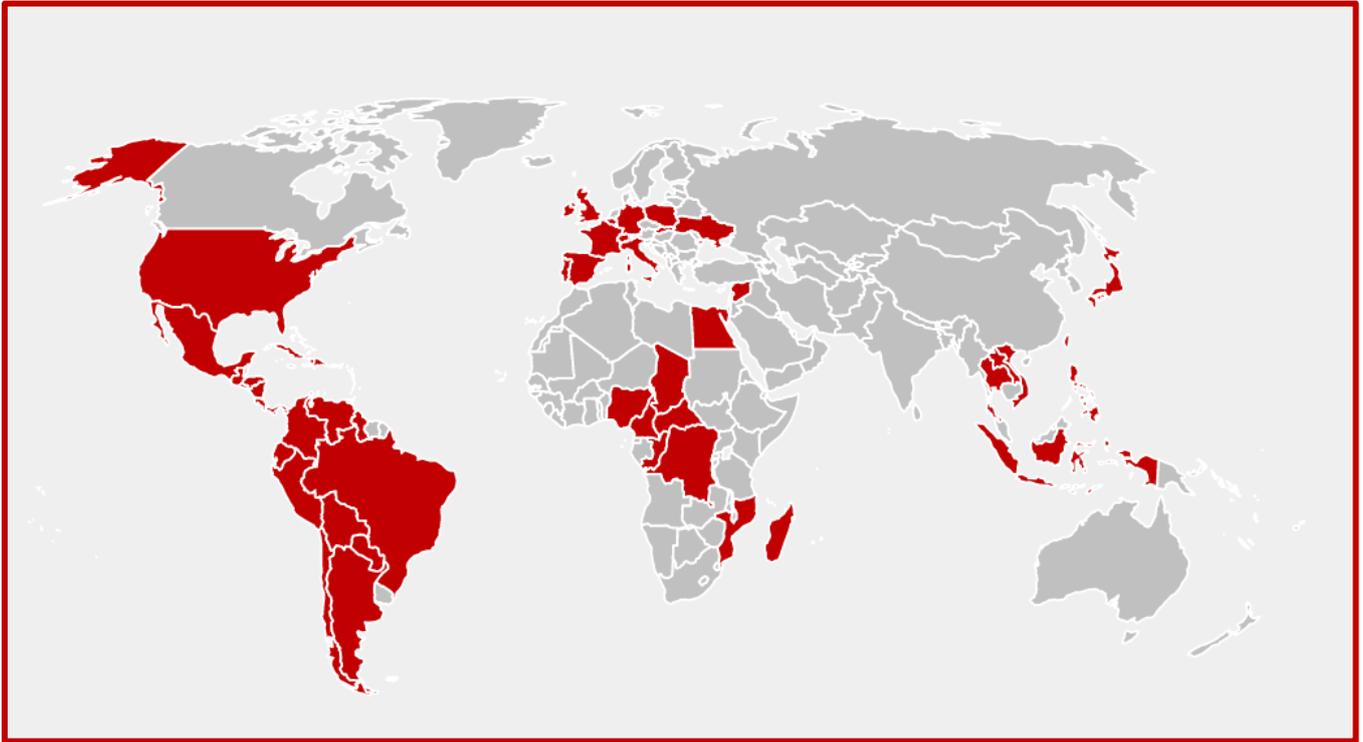
Belonging to an international network fosters the exchange of ideas and best practices, encourages synergies and promotes complementarity, which allows us to fight against poverty in a truly global sense. We try to build **twinnings between AIC groups** across the world, allowing us to create a culture of solidarity.

As an INGO, we have **representatives** in different international organizations: UNESCO – ECOSOC – Council of Europe – Human Rights Council – Pontifical Council COR UNUM – CRESCENDO – International Catholic Centres.

We belong to the **Vincentian Family**, a large network of over 2 million members across the world, inspired by the charisma of St Vincent de Paul.



## AIC Network



**In Africa:** Cameroon, Central Africa, Congo Brazzaville, Madagascar, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Chad.

**In America:** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chili, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, United States, Venezuela.

**In Asia:** Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam.

**In Europe:** Belgium, Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Madeira, Poland, United Kingdom, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine.

**In the Middle East:** Egypt, Lebanon, Syria.

WE ARE AIC

**International Association of Charities**

*“Let’s continue building together to bring hope to life!”*

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