

Meet the volunteer - Alicia



Alicia is a parish volunteer coordinator for CAFOD.

Having grown up in Uganda, Alicia has seen first-hand the impact of CAFOD's work. She spent a year as a CAFOD Climate Champion and is now supporting our parish volunteers as a parish volunteer coordinator.

How did you first get involved with CAFOD?

I had just finished my Masters in Environment and International Development and was trying to figure out my next step in life. I knew I wanted to help make a difference with my work and when I came across the CAFOD Climate Champions programme, it embodied everything I was hoping to do. A couple of applications later, I was selected! The year that followed was packed with learning, action and some great people (and Morris dancing somewhere along the way!). I have no regrets.

What inspires you to volunteer with CAFOD?

No one should be beyond the love and support they need to live a dignified life, and CAFOD is one of those organisations actively doing something about this. As someone who has studied international development, I know how development efforts can be hit-and-miss in terms of delivering the required results.

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I grew up in Uganda where a lot of people live in poverty. I've seen the impact CAFOD has had on one of its water-focused projects there - it's evident that CAFOD's approach to development combines a great understanding of the core issue, a dedicated plan of action to realise change, and transparency. It gives the most vulnerable a voice. In addition, as a Catholic, it gives me great pride to be part of an organisation that does such great work while retaining the tenets of the faith.

Who are your heroes?

I read this quote several years ago that really resonated with me: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter". It simply means that people who've recognised a problem and are doing something about it are the people this world needs. So, my heroes are just people doing great things in their own capacity. It's everyone from a grassroots environmental volunteer to Pope Francis.

What are your plans with CAFOD in the future?

I've recently taken on the role of parish volunteer coordinator. With this badge, I'm hoping to spur parish volunteers into action in every possible way. This includes helping parishes to become [Fairtrade parishes](#), encouraging them to get involved in the [Livesimply programme](#) and spreading awareness about [climate change](#). I want to use this platform to encourage others to do the best they can do because problem solving is definitely not a one-man job!

After the Climate Champion programme, I signed on to become a CAFOD Council Campaigner, a role I am eager to take on because it involves talking truth to power. Simply put, with CAFOD's support, I want to engage more with my local council to get them to act on crucial issues like climate change, something I encourage a lot more people to be doing if we're going to see any results within the current political system.