

Scholarly support from Toulouse to Thailand

The Airbus Foundation joined students from the International School of Toulouse, French NGO Aviation Sans Frontières, and THAI to provide backpacks bulging with school essentials to their counterparts in southern Thailand.



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Emergency relief flights using Airbus test aircraft and working with young people are well-known Airbus Foundation activities. However, it also makes considerable efforts to bring partners from across the humanitarian community together. These 'linking' initiatives attract few headlines but they help to build networks that can prove far more effective than isolated groups.



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"In this case, THAI were keen to support disadvantaged school children by using their fifth A350-900 ferry flight to transport academic supplies," explains Julien NoMura, Airbus Foundation. "We're always ready to facilitate such efforts so we approached ASF, an NGO (non-governmental organisation) we work with regularly but they didn't have suitable backpacks or stationery in their warehouse."

Determined to continue, Foundation staff drew on their experience of linking groups across the humanitarian eco-system, checked their contacts, and contacted Emmanuel Renou who co-ordinates the CAS (creativity, activity service) activities for IB (International Baccalaureate) students at the International school of Toulouse. He alerted a team of his students to the need for help and they responded magnificently with a delicious initiative.



"Our school really values this sort of activity, CAS is a key element of our IB curriculum," explains one student. "The money was mainly raised through a bake sale offering home-made cakes in exchange for donations." The cakes proved to be a big hit with students and teachers providing funds for the project. Another student says that the charitable activities to support good causes have real educational benefits: "We're privileged to be in such a well-resourced school in a comparatively wealthy part of the world. In CAS we help others and also improve our leadership and organisational skills."

The IST group met with Alain Fouassier and Patrick Bruneau of ASF at their warehouse close to the Toulouse Delivery Centre to add their fully-equipped backpacks to the supplies that ASF had managed to secure. Following the ferry flight on the brand new A350-900 they will be distributed to the schools where they'll have a major positive impact.

"Sometimes we concentrate on putting the right people in touch with each other, it adds value to everyone's activities," concludes Julien. "In this case, we've managed to help a valued customer to demonstrate social responsibility, do further work with a key NGO partner, and link a school with a caring curriculum to disadvantaged students in Narathiwat Province."

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