

## Greetings from Edmund Rice Development

Inside this issue you can read updates on Edmund Rice Camps in South Africa, Training for Transformation in Zambia and how the Centro Hermano Manolo in Bolivia is supporting children's rights to fair transport charges. Also Edmund Rice International reflects on the new year and progress on the *Millennium Development Goals* and the forthcoming *Sustainable Development Goals*, which are due to be adopted by the UN General Assembly in September this year.

At this time also, our hearts and prayers go out to the communities in West Africa, where the horrific Ebola pandemic is affecting entire communities. We think of all those affected by the virus and pray that the situation improves very soon.

***Wishing you a blessed and peaceful 2015!***



Primary School Students at Regina Mundi School, Goa, India

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## *2015 - A Crucial Year for Our Future*

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More than most years, events in 2015 have the capacity to shape the course of human history for decades to come. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire in 2015 and if agreement among states can be reached, they will be replaced by the set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are due to be adopted by the UN General Assembly in September.

Two months later in Paris, will come the last, best opportunity to reach agreement on addressing climate change.

Whilst some Millennium Development Goals targets will not be met, others such as halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water have already been achieved. Overall then, the MDGs could be judged to be successfully achieved, something which would better serve to inspire further action rather than be a reason for complacency.

The draft of the Sustainable Development Goals includes 17 goals and 169 targets which taken together are far more ambitious and wide reaching than the MDGs. As the name suggests, principles of environmental stewardship are woven into the fabric of the SDGs, and the Paris Climate Summit will be a major step forward in building on these goals which hopefully will address the looming ecological crisis facing our planet, while creating new pathways for the economic development of poor countries in responsible and sustainable ways.

Other events in 2015 are predicted to have a significant impact on our world. Almost half of the countries in Africa are due to conduct elections. It is to be hoped that they are accompanied by increased freedom and political space for candidates, activists and voters to make their voices heard, in open, transparent and inclusive elections.



Falling oil prices will have a significant effect. Whilst welcome news for consumers, it is not so good news for countries whose economies are heavily dependent on oil exports.

The Ebola crisis, and the strain on UN agencies and NGOs that provide relief for the unprecedented level of people displaced by conflict and natural disasters, are among the other issues that will continue to challenge the global community.

In reflecting on the past twelve months and looking to these global challenges we face in 2015, the Chair of Elders, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, identified fear as a major obstacle in confronting these challenges. Not just people who live in fear of violence, disease, or hunger, but those who live in fear of change, fear of the unknown, and fear of 'the other' which can "lead us to retreat behind barricades, turn our backs on those in need, and persecute those we see as a threat" and the fears we see in our political leaders – "the fear of losing face, of losing popularity, of losing power."

"Today more than ever, we need far-sighted leaders who can see beyond their national boundaries and beyond the next election" he added, pointing out that the world's most respected leaders are those characterised by "their wisdom, their integrity and their compassion for their fellow human beings."

**Edmund Rice International**

## Supporting West Africa Communities Devastated by Ebola

*"We never had any mechanism in place for such an invincible and merciless virus. The situation is still not under control. It is too big for government to handle, we need to step up."*

Br. Pious Conteh, Sierra Leone, September 2014

The 2014 Ebola outbreak currently devastating the people of West Africa is one of the largest Ebola outbreaks in history and the first in West Africa, with most recent figures at time of printing estimating the total number of deaths at over 8,400, with almost 21,000 cases confirmed across eight countries. Christian Brothers and members of the Edmund Rice Network in West Africa have taken active roles in the Ebola response.

Reflecting on the cardinal principle that 'Faith without work is dead,' Brothers in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and The Gambia and other Edmund Rice people have actively engaged in awareness-raising campaigns, and in providing sanitary materials including chlorine, food items, megaphones, hand sanitisers and buckets. This support has been directed to people directly affected in Bo, Njala, Blama and Hamilton. Community Youth Counsellors have been trained to provide psychological first aid and counselling as part of the healing process. Sessions were held on dealing with loss, grief and managing stigma and shame both within families and at community levels. Children who have been affected and separated from their families or orphaned as a result of the Ebola crisis are the most helpless victims of this crisis.

Among other direct actions undertaken by Brothers and the Edmund Rice people are public health education through radio discussions and donation of food items (both to affected families and children in the orphanage) such as rice, cooking oil, onions, salt and tomato paste. Items such as mattresses, second-hand clothing, drinking buckets, beddings, pillows,

plates, spoons, cups and bathing soap were also donated.

This support has been made possible by the generous support of Edmund Rice Development donors and by Misesan Cara. The initiatives are in line with our commitment

to compliment government's attempt to promote social justice through access to basic social services such as health, protection and food. Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs Hon. Moijueh Kaikai was invited to one of the public information sessions held in St. Mary Children's Home in Bo. He described the work being carried out there as "an example for bigger organizations to emulate". The minister took the opportunity to encourage faith-based organisations to join the fight against Ebola, which has not only obstructed education at all levels, but also continues to create breakdown in social cohesions largely through stigmatisation of survivors.

Please help this work by contributing to the West Africa Ebola Relief and Recovery Fund. Please call us at +353 1 8196782 or send your donation to:

**West Africa Ebola Relief and Recovery Fund,**  
Edmund Rice Development,  
Edmund Rice House,  
North Richmond Street, Dublin 1.

Or alternatively you can make your donation using the following bank details:

**Account:** Edmund Rice Development Ltd

**SWIFT/BIC:** BOFIE2D

**IBAN:** IE49 BOFI 9005 5120 1060 64

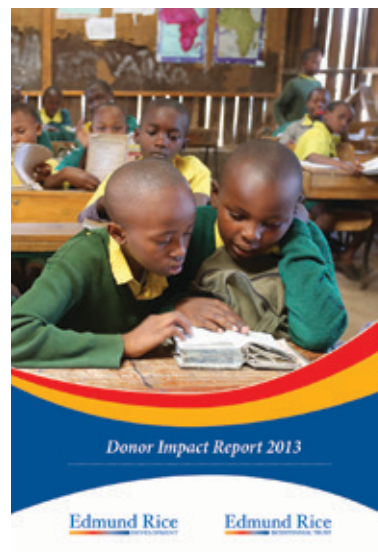


Br. Gomez and Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs Hon. Moijueh Kaikai during the presentation ceremony.

## ***Report demonstrates Impact of Donor Support***

The Edmund Rice Development & Edmund Rice Bicentennial Trust Donor Impact Report 2013 was compiled to convey the full impact of the support of our donors, volunteers and funders in 2013. It features profiles of the schools and informal education projects, health, income-generation, advocacy and human rights programmes and training and spirituality initiatives. These profile projects are representative of the many our supporters enabled us to help in 2013 each project working to empower the poor and vulnerable to create a better future for themselves.

The report also has a selection of stories of the various fundraising and other initiatives that took place throughout the Edmund Rice network in 2013 in support of the projects. It is as a result of the ongoing generosity of donors, funding partners and volunteers that we were able to support 60 individual projects in 2013. Thank you most sincerely for this.



The Donor Impact Report is available to view on our website [www.edmundricedevelopment.org](http://www.edmundricedevelopment.org), or a copy can be posted if you email us at [office@edmundricedevelopment.org](mailto:office@edmundricedevelopment.org)

## ***Children Advocate for Fair Transport Charges, Bolivia***

The Centro Hermano Manolo in Cochabamba, Bolivia supports working children and adolescents in la Cancha marketplace.

On Friday 23rd May, three groups, including the Centro Hermano Manolo, came together to hold a peaceful demonstration to protest against children being overcharged on public transport. The idea for the demonstration came about during a meeting of “Yanapanacuna”, a network of charities working in the area of prevention of abuse for child workers. The children complained about the abuse and unfair treatment by drivers in public transport – not giving them change, overcharging and not stopping to pick them up.



Peaceful demonstration in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

The protest was originally arranged for 12th April, Día del Niño – Children’s Day – an effort which failed as public transport drivers refused to meet the children, although agreed beforehand. So, three groups organised a protest at three main intersections in the city centre. They availed of the red light to stand in front of on-coming traffic and show their posters while other children gave hand outs to the drivers of public transport. Members of the Centro Hermano Manolo were interviewed by a reporter, with one of the youngest among them giving his opinion: “We are working children, working to survive and eat, and these drivers want to charge us a full Boliviano!”



## *Edmund Rice Camps, South Africa*

Edmund Rice Camps offer opportunities to marginalised children, youth and young adults to experience meaningful relationships and to help give them life-coping skills.

Five camps were held during 2014. The camps focus on providing an opportunity for growth, support and enjoyment within an atmosphere of acceptance, care and fun. They are entirely volunteer-led, participants each work one on one with a mentor throughout the duration of the camp. A theme for the second camp of the year was 'Adventure Time', which aimed to teach young people about the adventure that is our lives. Another theme was 'Winter Wonderland' which aimed to educate young people about the change of seasons and what this could represent for us. Activities for the children included an Easter egg hunt, water balloon activities, an obstacle course to highlight team work and encourage perseverance and a talent show. During 2014 Edmund Rice Camps, South Africa also organised a trip to the aquarium and leadership development training for its volunteers.

Edmund Rice Camps are run all over the world and aim to provide marginalized children and young people the opportunity to "just be kids" – a simple pleasure that is often denied those living in extreme poverty.



Edmund Rice Camp in South Africa, May 2014

## *Training for Transformation*

Training for Transformation is a project which forms part of an overall development plan to build the capacity of the Christian Brothers in Africa. It seeks to employ a community development approach in their work with the poor. The ultimate purpose of the project is the restoration of human dignity by empowering people made poor to overcome poverty and improve the quality of life of some of the poorest people in Africa.

Christian Brothers in East Africa recently came together to take part in this training and Br. Tony Shanahan gives an account of his experience: "We began with our own realities and the problems that form part of them, identifying the impact of these problems and some of the responses that have been tried. We explored the meaning of Charity, Development, Liberation and Transformation as types of intervention in social situations, and looked at the relationships between them.

The richest day for me was the one we spent on leadership. A viewing of the recent movie on the life of Nelson Mandela, "The Long Walk to Freedom", provided a powerful and moving start to our exploration of leadership and its relationship to such things as power and love. There is much more that could be said about the week and its impact on us, but I think that all found it enriching, mind-expanding, challenging and motivating."

Training for Transformation has received funding from Misesan Cara, the Irish funding agency which supports missionaries in their work to transform lives and communities around the world.



Training for Transformation Group, Lusaka, Zambia

## World Aids Day, 1st December 2014

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There are currently 35.3 million people living with HIV around the world and 1.6 million Aids related deaths a year. Every day 650 babies are born with HIV and 47% of people living with HIV are women. Christian Brothers and the Edmund Rice Network are working to help improve the daily lives of people living with this disease. One such project is Education for Life, which is based in Eldoret in Kenya. Education for Life promotes human dignity and a positive lifestyle through various programmes; the project also promotes advocacy with the aim to reduce the stigma associated with HIV/Aids and supports orphans and vulnerable children who have been affected by the disease. The project currently helps over 600 orphans and vulnerable children and supports over 500 adults living with HIV/AIDS through workshops, home visits, food distribution and income generating programmes.

Annet, a member of the Education for Life community, describe her experience and how the project has changed her life:

*"I was introduced to Education for Life in 2005 after learning of my HIV status. Through the counselling I realized life has to continue. As I struggled to cope, my sister died of AIDS and left me her five children one of whom was HIV positive. Education for Life*



Annet with her grandchildren, Eldoret, Kenya

*assisted me when I had to place two of the children in a children's home. Later my two daughters died of HIV and left two grandchildren, one who is also HIV positive. It has been challenging to take care of myself and the two children on antiretroviral medication. The older one is now sitting for her KCPE exams, the younger one is in pre- school and Education for Life put her on milk project which has made her health pick up well and they also take care of her school fees and school uniform. Through Education for Life, my niece went on to vocational training and can now pay rent for herself and take care of her expenses. I am involved in bead making in EFL and able to join the economic empowerment Savings and Internal Loans group. I have become stronger and can now face any difficulty because of Education for Life programme, thank you so much and may God bless you all."*

## Congratulations to Newly Professed Brothers

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Congratulations to Brothers Isaac Nyambe and Nsamu Moonga who made their final profession in Lusaka at Marian Shrine on Saturday 22 November 2014. Congratulations also to the eight novices who made their first profession as Christina Brothers in Tamale, Ghana on Saturday 29th November: Desmond Taboeya and Francis Toliman from Papua New Guinea, Cephass Bwalya, Emmanuel Nonde and Paul Kakulunda from Zambia, Dominic Konkoro Kargbo from Sierra Leone, Lawrence Ouma Agalo and Philip Ombucha Kwena from Kenya.



Newly Professed Brothers with the Archbishop of Tamale, Ghana



## *Over 400 attend 'Big Match' Dinner in support of Edmund Rice Missions*

Over 400 people attended the first Edmund Rice Development Big Match Dinner in Croke Park in September, the weekend of the All-Ireland Football Final. The evening was a great celebration of all things GAA and a demonstration of solidarity and friendship with communities in the developing world. The dinner raised over €44,000 to benefit Changa Changa Primary School (Zambia), Edmund Rice International, Kanvilli High School (Ghana) and the West Africa Ebola Relief Fund.

During the evening, guests enjoyed a lively panel discussion about the upcoming cluiche mór as panellists Colm O'Rourke, Barney Rock, Ger O'Keeffe and Brian Talty debated the merits of finalists Donegal and Kerry with compère Micheál O'Muircheartaigh.

The keynote speech was given by Edmund Rice Development's Special Ambassador, Ciarán Kilkenny. The Dublin footballer and county hurler gave a moving account of his recent visit to Zambia

with Edmund Rice Development saying: "What I saw in Zambia made me realise that the one single factor that supersedes everything else is opportunity. Here were children as intelligent and enthusiastic as any child in Ireland but unfortunately, they may never get the opportunity to achieve what I took for granted as a child."

Speaking about the Edmund Rice missions, Ciarán added, "They don't offer unrealistic guarantees of success in life but they're trying to go some way towards giving a child born into poverty the basic opportunities that we regard as a given."

Edmund Rice Development would like to extend our sincere thanks to the organising committee of Br. Dermot Ambrose, John Cooley, Br. Tommy McDonnell, Pádraig Ó Fainín and Tony O'Keeffe.

***Please ensure you save the date for the Big Match Dinner on 18th September 2015.***



Tony and Margaret Rose O'Keeffe



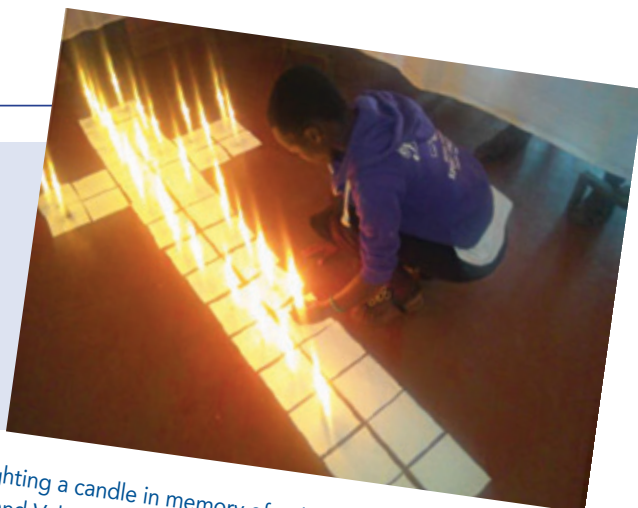
L-R: Colm Kavanagh, Eamon Phelan, Mary Phelan, Patricia Eves, Marissa Bryce



## In their words....

*"I pray that this workshop does not end. I came here feeling useless but am leaving as a worth-while person."*

CHILD ATTENDING THE ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN WORKSHOP AT SOY CLUB RESORT, KENYA



A child lighting a candle in memory of a deceased parent during the Orphans and Vulnerable Children workshop, Soy Club Resort, Kenya.



Teacher and pupils of St. Edmund's School, Mazabuka, Zambia

*"The school has made me realize that nothing is impossible to achieve and the sky is the only limit although sometimes it is not, as there is heaven beyond it. This has made me to work even harder to achieve my intended goals in life. For the great work that the school has done for many other pupils and me, I feel strongly that I owe the school too much to finish paying back."*

PRINCE, GRADE 12, ST. EDMUND'S SCHOOL, MAZABUKA, ZAMBIA.

*"The centre has done much for me. I had pain on my leg, they took me for medication and I got well. I can now sing the National Anthem and also identify and spell classroom objects. They bought me new clothes to come to school. I'm happy that I no longer sell fish, my life has changed."*

FATU, 12 YEARS OLD, OLD WHARF, FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE



Fatu with one of her teachers during class