

Greetings from Edmund Rice Development

As the first **European Year of Development**, 2015 is a special year. For development organisations all over Europe, it is an unparalleled opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to eradicating poverty and to inspiring more people across Europe to become engaged and involved in the human journey towards a more just world.

Throughout this year, we continue to keep West Africa in our prayers as our Brothers and communities there continue to deal with the Ebola fall-out, and start to rebuild their future. Thank you most sincerely for your generous support of these efforts to date – inside we have an update on the impact of this directly from the communities you have supported.

Also in this issue are updates on our Human Rights and Advocacy initiatives and projects: the **Star Support Group** in South Sudan and **Fe y Alegría** in Peru.

We would like to say a special word of thanks to all individuals, groups and schools who continue to support our work true to the spirit of Blessed Edmund and the European Year of Development. There are some wonderful stories within of how they have come together to show solidarity and friendship with schools and projects across Africa, India and Latin America.

We look forward to meeting many friends old and new at the Edmund Rice Development **Big Match Dinner** which will take place on Friday 18th September in Croke Park, the weekend of the All-Ireland GAA Football final. It promises to be a very special evening, when we will come together in support of the Edmund Rice developing world missions. All are welcome and tickets are still available but selling fast – further details of how to book are within.

With best wishes,

Jenni Barrett
Chief Executive

Pupils and teacher at St.
Edmund's Secondary
School, Mazabuka, Zambia.



In This Issue

Pg Article

1. Welcome Message
2. Facing Ebola - Relief and Recovery efforts in **West Africa**
3. 30 Rights in 30 Days Campaign
A warm Monday morning welcome in **Eldoret**
4. Nine is Mine Public Day March
How your actions help save lives
5. Fe y Alegría - Buen Gusto Nutrition Program an Cerro Verde Project.
6. Supporting the work of Edmund Rice Projects
7. News from the Star Support Group Project
8. Big Match Dinner
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Facing Ebola – Relief and Recovery efforts in West Africa

The Ebola outbreak which has devastated communities in West Africa has been one of the largest Ebola outbreaks in history and the first in West Africa. First reported in March 2014, it began in Guinea and quickly spread to neighbouring countries. In the last week of June 2015, 20 new cases were confirmed in Guinea and Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, Liberia confirmed a second case of Ebola seven weeks after being declared Ebola-free in May – a crushing blow to a country already devastated by this epidemic.

When the outbreak started most activities, including school sessions and public gatherings, came to a standstill in an attempt to curb the spread of Ebola. During the month of April, schools reopened across West Africa, a hugely important step in the recovery process. Br. Abu Steven Kargbo, teacher at Njala University Secondary School, reported at the time: *'Our school has re-opened, and Ebola precautions are being implemented for pupils and teachers.'* He was referring to Ebola prevention measures such as testing pupils' temperatures and the use of buckets of chlorinated water (for its disinfectant properties). These precautions helped to ensure that children could return to their classrooms to find as safe a learning environment as possible.

The situation is however still critical in small towns and villages. In many of these, schools have no furniture or basic school material. According to the Ministry of Education, all schools should have been supplied with basic school materials before the reopening, but in reality this has not been the case. In Baoma Chiefdom, Sierra Leone, only 21 out of 56 schools received such support, while teachers of 35 schools were unable to teach due to lack of teaching and learning materials.

Over the past months, Christian Brothers and Edmund Rice people focused relief and recovery efforts on supporting families and orphaned children. This has been done through the provision of food, hygiene materials and counselling support, and also ensuring as many children as possible return to education. These efforts have been recognised by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and the District Ebola Response Committee in Sierra Leone, who recently

awarded the Christian Brothers two separate certificates of recognition for their contribution, support, commitment and relentless service in the fight against Ebola.

These response activities and more have been possible thanks to the generosity of donors who to date have contributed over €110,000 to this Ebola Relief and Recovery Appeal since September 2014.

Thank you most sincerely for this support and show of solidarity to those suffering in West Africa.

To help our ongoing Ebola relief and recovery efforts please call **+353 1 8196782** or send your donation to:

West Africa Ebola Relief Fund
Edmund Rice Development
Edmund Rice House
North Richmond Street, Dublin 1

You can also transfer your donation using the following bank details:

Account Name: Edmund Rice Development Ltd;
SWIFT/BIC: BOFIE2D;
IBAN: IE49 BOFI 9005 5120 1060 64

Please include reference **'Ebola'** in the narrative of your lodgement.



Pupil washing hands with chlorinated water

30 Rights in 30 Days Campaign

In February 2015, Edmund Rice Network South Africa's Social Justice and Advocacy Desk launched an awareness campaign aimed at informing young people of their 30 Human Rights. Each day focused on one particular Human Right. The Right, relevant information regarding it, a reflection and an image were released every day on our numerous social media accounts, providing a greater awareness of Human Rights to a nationwide data base.

The campaign was launched online on the 1st of February, where the history and relevance of Human Rights were explained in an easy-to-understand and exciting way. The short reflection given each day also assisted people in becoming aware of human rights violations within their own contexts, as well as how they could contribute towards addressing these violations. The images depicting each Right received a phenomenal response, as students, teachers and network people used the images on their social media accounts on a daily basis.

The 30 Rights in 30 Days Campaign was a phenomenal success and had participants from South Africa, Australia, The United Kingdom, Kenya and many others taking part. We look forward to this campaign being an annual one which serves to begin each year focusing on knowing and understanding ones Rights.

Once this is achieved, the real work can begin!

Jessica Dewhurst, Social Justice and Advocacy Desk Coordinator



30 Rights in 30 Days Campaign

A warm Monday Morning welcome in Eldoret, Kenya

From the moment I arrived at Education for Life in Eldoret back in March this year, I was made feel welcome.

Education for Life is a project, which focuses on supporting people living with HIV/AIDS, and promotes human dignity and a positive lifestyle through various programmes. 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.

It's not every Monday morning that you are greeted at the gate by a wonderful, smiling, singing, dancing group of women and men. Thank you so much to Angie Obutu, Brother Silverio, all of this vibrant community, and also to Brothers Bill Colford and George Massay for the warm Kenyan welcome. As I sat in this wonderful centre, I felt truly uplifted and alive as I enjoyed the energetic music and dancing of the Education for Life Choir. As the morning gathering continued I could sense the friendship and support that these women give to each other. Coming together, one of the women said, was a chance to forget about the difficulties of life for a short time and to gain strength and support from each other. One of the men also spoke and offered the solidarity of the men present – receiving a loud cheer when he referred to International Women's Day earlier in the week.

The 12 Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) then gathered together under the trees by the centre. Here groups of c.10 people – mainly women – work together to save money for their businesses (selling fish, clothing, metalwork, baked goods etc), also for schoolbooks and for food. It is a scheme that has been running for years now and it is clear it is making an impact on the lives of the people in these groups.

Jenni Barrett



Education for Life Choir welcomes Jenni

Nine is Mine Public Day March

5000 children from various sections of Delhi joined representatives of 27 states and union territories who had gathered in the national capital for the culmination of the Global Action 2015 launch on February 1st. These children who were largely in their teens assembled at Jantar Mantar to seek the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Children from numerous schools and civil society organisations that represent varied child-rights issues, joined the children's social forum that called for a budget that reflects a stronger commitment toward the last child. The children also held a one minute silence in honour of their Bapu by gesturing Gandhi's Monkeys to symbolize millions of India's children whose voices go unheard, or who still live in poverty or oppression.

15 year old Swarnalaxmi who is blind from childhood, addressed the gathering in her role as the Prime Minister of the national children's parliament that is facilitated by the NINEISMINE campaign. She called urgently for a society that ensures the inclusion of all, particularly children with disabilities and from various vulnerable and minorities communities.

Speaking at the close of this event, organised by young people of New Delhi themselves, Br Steve Rocha called for young people and the nation to commit themselves to building an INDIA – an Incredible Nation Dedicated to the Inclusion of All. The gathering closed with a unique rendition of the national language in sign language as a symbol of the children's commitment to amplify the voice of the unheard.



Nine is Mine March

How your actions help save lives

Br. Lawrence Colaco is based in a remote village in a mission run by the Christian Brothers and the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians. The Ane Moriam mission began over 15 years ago in this largely inaccessible rural area of the Arunchal Pradesh region in India. The mission consists of a school, community health services and socio-economic development programmes. The mission is a 20 hour drive from the closest airport and 10 hours away from the nearest large township.

In 2013, the Ane Moriam mission was able to purchase a new utility vehicle for use in the community from donations received by Edmund Rice Development. Here Br. Colaco describes the huge difference has made to a person's life:

'A mother of one of our students, Mrs Hiba Doke (aged 35) was reported seriously ill and was brought to the local dispensary. The woman was diagnosed with typhoid and had symptoms of high fever, extreme diarrhoea and was extremely weak to the extent that she was carried on a locally made bamboo stretcher to the Ane Moriam Dispensary. The sister in charge of the dispensary suggested that she immediately be rushed to a hospital. The only other hope to immediately get her to the closest hospital 12 hours away was by the utility vehicle of the Ane Moriam Mission. We departed with the patient at 10 in the morning and reached the hospital at 8 at night. Her timely arrival at the hospital ensured that she was given the necessary required treatment which saved her life.'

This is just one of many stories which highlights how people's kindness and generosity can be the key to saving a life.



Mrs Hiba Doke (L) and Ane Moriam Missionary Sister (R)

Fe y Alegría School, Lima, Peru

Fe y Alegría School provides primary and secondary level education in the Canto Grande, one of the poorest areas in Lima, Peru, improving access to education to the poorest and most marginalised children. A community of six brothers and over 60 staff work in this school of 1,700 students.

Buen Gusto Nutrition Program has been set up to provide a meal a day to the poorest and most marginalised children attending Fe y Alegría. The program is helping to tackle issues of poor nutrition and related problems of poor concentration due to children coming to school hungry, and health problems related to malnutrition.

Br. Alberto Llanos, coordinator of the Buen Gusto Nutrition Program gives an update on how the programme is making a difference to the pupils: *'During the academic year, about 75 students from both Grammar and High Schools receive a lunch Monday through Friday. The majority of these students come from low-income families with very high incidence of malnutrition. Other students come from broken homes, having been abandoned by one or both of their parents.'*



Pupils during lunch

Cerro Verde Project: Water conservation is an integral part of the pastoral plan of the Christian Brothers' school Fe y Alegría. The average annual rainfall in Lima is 5 mm, but despite the lack of rainfall in the area the Incas managed to produce abundant harvests. They used a system of terrace farming known as *andenes*, whereby terraces were dug into the slopes of mountains to provide cultivable hillsides. The most famous example of this practice is in Macchu Picchu.

For years, a dry desert hill behind Fe y Alegría School resisted efforts to plant small shrubs and make the desert bloom: the small shrubs planted died in the summer when no water was available.



Pupils volunteering to create the Cerro Verde

Local agricultural technicians recommended adopting the method of terrace farming employed by the Incas some 1800 years ago. This project, named 'Cerro Verde' (Green Hill), has allowed the school to have a green hill and to use only the water necessary to achieve this goal. Edmund Rice Development provided financial assistance for the construction of retaining walls for the terraces and students, parents and teachers have worked hours to build the terraces and fill them in with suitable soil.

One of Fe y Alegría's teachers, José Santa Cruz came up with an ingenious idea to water the greenery on the terraces – José calls the system 'eco-points'. The students bring recycled water from their homes, especially the water used to wash vegetables and rice. Sawdust, as an additive to the soil, acts as a type of fertilizer. Students earn 'eco-points' for volunteering to work on the terraces. This is a practical way to raise environmental awareness amongst the school population and it is rewarding to see the enthusiasm of our students as they engage with the environment.

"I love the idea of helping and being part of the change. Every day I bring my recycled water to school in a bottle. I get my eco-points and the plants receive their nutrition. It seems to me that to change the world you do not have to do anything very extraordinary."

LEYDI QUISPE, FIFTH YEAR, FE Y ALEGRIA SCHOOL, LIMA, PERU



Supporting the work of the Edmund Rice Projects

We are very grateful to everyone who has supported the work of the Christian Brother and Edmund Rice missions over the years. Here are some examples of some of the activities that have taken place in recent months in support of communities made poor around the world.

Pyjama Day in St. Joseph's Preparatory School raises funds for the Ebola Appeal

Back in February, pupils and staff of St. Joseph's Prep School in Stoke-on-Trent organised a pyjama day to raise funds in support of the communities in West Africa currently affected by the Ebola crisis.

Ms Victoria Kent, Edmund Rice Outreach Group coordinator, writes: *'Back in February of this year, the pupils from St Joseph's Prep School Stoke-on-Trent, who are taking part in the Edmund Rice Outreach Programme from year 6, were trying to think of ways to raise money for charities. Some ideas were given and one in particular from Jessica in Prep 6 brought all the children together. Her idea was to have a PJ day. This is when all the children from nursery up to year 6 and including all staff could come into school wearing their pyjamas. Each child was asked to bring in some money and in return they could come in their pyjamas. As you can see from some of the photographs the children really enjoyed themselves. The children organised this themselves, and the day was very well supported with £200 raised.'*



Pupils and staff during the Pyjama Day

Midleton CBS 'Mayo Charity Challenge' in support of the Hermano Manolo Centre, Bolivia

The Midleton CBS Edmund Rice Transition Year Outreach Project is a programme of activities, events and reflections which encourages transition year students towards active citizenship in the spirit and charisma of Blessed Edmund Rice. During the programme, students were challenged to look beyond their own self-interest and focus on the plight of those less fortunate. The programme took place over a 10 week period, concluding with the Mayo Charity Challenge on 23rd - 25th April 2015.

A total of 22 transition year students, accompanied by three teachers, undertook the two-day challenge, which entailed climbing Croagh Patrick and a 100 km cycle on the Great Western Greenway from Westport to Achill Island and back. All participants committed to raise funds to support the Hermano Manolo Centre in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The Centre provides multi-faceted support services for 40 working children who access the project on a daily basis, and for a further 30-40 children who access the centre on a 'drop-in basis'.



Pupils and teachers of Midleton CBS reach the top of Croagh Patrick.

Cork Schools rock out in support of children in Bolivia

Blarney Street CBS rock-bands, Wildfire and Voltage, also raised €1,187 for Centro Hermano Manolo, in Cochabamba Bolivia with their end of year 'World Tour' of Cork's primary schools.

'United we are Wildfire, Blarney Street' announced 11 year old lead singer David to screaming youthful audiences as he individually introduced his bandmates who hail from six different countries – Ghana, Hungary, India, Ireland, Latvia, and Nigeria. These boys left primary school at the end of June and wanted to give something back before they finished 6th class. Their aim on tour was both to entertain and share the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice.

Blarney Street CBS is a music-mad primary school on Cork's north-side and they put their music skills to good use by performing rock concerts in eight primary schools around the city. With a repertoire ranging from AC/DC to Ed Sheeran and Echoburn, they catered for all tastes and all 8 schools were left thunderstruck both by the boys' musical talents and by their empathy for those less fortunate. Cork schools dug deep into their pockets to support the rock-stars who spoke (between electric-guitar and drum solos) at their gigs about Edmund Rice Development and their work with people in poverty worldwide. Their 'World Tour' weaved north and south of the river Lee and took in Gaelscoil Mhachan, Scoil Croise Naofa, St. Vincent's Convent, Togher BNS, Scoil an Athar Maitiú, Scoil Iosagáin, St Marie's of the Isle and a homecoming gig in Blarney Street CBS.

The tour didn't go unnoticed by the media and gigs were retweeted on Twitter, featured on local newspapers and also shown on tv with national Irish language channel TG4 featuring the boys' gigs on their nightly news programme.



Wildfire and Voltage in action

News from the Star Support Group Project

The Star Support Group Project is a care and support centre for people living with HIV/AIDS, providing psychosocial support for people in Yambio, South Sudan. The project strives to build the capacity of the people living with HIV and AIDS by creating a community where affected women, men, children and families are free from any form of stigmatization, discrimination and isolation.

HIV/AIDS poses a continuous threat to all persons in the area regardless of age, sex, lifestyle, ethnic background and socio-economic status.

The Star Support Group Project is committed to help people with HIV/AIDS live with dignity: raising awareness, providing of medication and prophylaxis, home-based care support are some of the project's activities. Last year the project was privileged to receive donor support for the purchase of much-needed medication for the dispensary and to pay school fees for orphaned children to acquire basic primary education.

Currently 1124 clients, including 403 orphaned children, are the beneficiaries of the project.

Edmund Rice Development funding also contributed to the eagerly-awaited tailoring project, which opened late last month with the aim of helping members to gain sewing and tailoring skills. The first phase is currently enabling 30 beneficiaries to undertake such training. In turn it allows trained individuals to sustain themselves by producing and selling tailored items: this is one way in which the project is striving to become self-reliant.



Members during Tailoring Training

Big Match Dinner 2015

Edmund Rice
DEVELOPMENT



As excitement builds for the All-Ireland GAA Football Championships, plans are well underway for Edmund Rice Development 'Big Match' Dinner. The dinner will take place in The Hogan Suite, Croke Park on Friday 18th September 2015, the weekend of the All-Ireland GAA Football Final.

This year the evening will be compered by RTE Radio 1 presenter Damien O'Reilly who will lead a panel of well-known GAA personalities in what is expected to be a lively discussion about the big match that weekend.

Brother Elser Llanos will also be joining us from South America to tell us about his missionary work and about the inspiring partnership developing between the young people of Midleton CBS Secondary School in Ireland and the Cochabamba Youth Project in Bolivia. There will be live music, a prize draw and other surprises on the night.

Please join us for this evening of sport, friendship and solidarity.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE:

- **Host a table for 10 guests - €1,000**
Four course meal and wine
- **Sponsor a Corporate Table - €2,500**
 - Four course meal and wine for 10 guests;
 - Company Name and Logo on your Table;
 - Television Signage at the Venue;
- **Individual tickets - €100**

**To book please contact Eufemia at
Edmund Rice Development at 01 8196785
or eufemia@edmundricedevelopment.org**

Or visit:

www.edmundricedevelopment.org

If you can't make it along on the night, please consider making a donation to support Edmund Rice mission and the work that goes to benefit thousand of the world's poorest and most vulnerable children, young people and adults.



Students during crafts class in the Hermano Manolo Centre, Cochabamba, Bolivia



Aerial view of Croke Park, Dublin

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