



Pupils from Cochabamba, Bolivia taking part in a Defensoría Edmundo Rice workshop on Human Rights organised by the local coordinator.

Welcome to the second Edmund Rice Development Newsletter of 2021.

It has been remarkable to see the adaptability and commitment of Edmund Rice development projects this year, delivering essential services despite the ongoing pandemic. In this newsletter, we share updates with you from the Women's Agriculture and Livelihoods project in Western Zambia, Human Rights programmes in Peru and at the UN and Education in India. During the year, we continued to integrate the Capacity Development project into ERD. We've had great engagement with online training programmes and feedback from our partners has been really positive. By supporting the work of development projects and building the capacity of Edmund Rice personnel, we aim to achieve a longterm positive impact for those with whom we work.

We would like to express sincere thanks to John Cooley who has recently retired as ERD Chair for his years of service. You can read more about John's contribution on page 7. A warm welcome to his new role to Br. John Casey, our incoming Chair.

As 2021 comes to an end, we acknowledge everyone we have worked with during this year. Thanks to our partners in Edmund Rice Mission all over the world. I also want to thank Br. Colm Griffey for his support during his years as community leader in Edmund Rice House, where the ERD office is located. And a sincere appreciation to our generous donors for your invaluable support. Together, we will continue to support the liberation of people and communities from poverty and injustice.

2022 promises to be another exciting year in ERD and we look forward to working with our partners and supporters as we develop our new strategic plan.

Wishing you a happy Christmas and warm wishes for 2022.

Fiona Dowling
Chief Executive

IN THIS ISSUE

Project Spotlights (pg. 2)

Women's Empowerment in the Western Cluster, Zambia

Checking In with Defensoría Edmundo Rice

Edmund Rice Mission Capacity Development Project (pg. 4)

Governance Training in Edmund Rice Mission

Building Capacity in the Latin America Mission Area

Africa Province Strategic Planning

Events and News (pg. 6)

Facilitating the Voices of Young People at COP26

Edmund Rice Mission Conversations

Irish Schools Support Edmund Rice Mission in India

Dóchas Membership

Farewell to John Cooley, Second ERD Chair

ERD Update (pg. 8)

Letter from the Chair

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Project Spotlights



Female Beneficiary in the Western Cluster project, Zambia

Women's Empowerment in the Western Cluster, Zambia

Misean Cara recently conducted an evaluation of Women's Empowerment in Agricultural Settings. The Western Cluster project in Zambia was selected to be included. The Western Cluster project was established in 2016 in the Western Province in Zambia, an area with immense social problems, where three out of every four people live in extreme poverty. Since 2016 the project has supported more than 4,000 beneficiaries, the majority being women and girls. The current phase of the project supports 880 direct beneficiaries through empowering trainings, provision of agricultural inputs, education on irrigation, and access to clean water.

The evaluators and Misean Cara gave very positive feedback. It was particularly noted that women have been actively involved in all aspects of the project through their participation in the Project Committee. Women have played key roles in project implementation, from assessment of community needs, planning and monitoring, and advocacy on challenges faced by their communities.

The evaluation commended the project sustainability. There is real ownership of the project within the community and activities are expected to continue beyond the project life-cycle. An integrated, participative, rights-based approach builds the capacity of women in entrepreneurship and sustainable development. Additionally, there is economic empowerment through the provision of treadle pumps, livestock and farming inputs and women's participation in community savings groups. These initiatives all contribute towards long time change in their lives.

'Before joining the western cluster project I used to suffer because of lack of money to buy seed and fertilizer and I was planting my maize without applying fertilizer that resulted in me harvesting 5 bags of maize. However, since I joined this project I was supported with seed and fertilizer, I managed to harvest 20 bags of maize. I feel good because now I am able to send all my children to school, than before when only 3 were going to school. The other 2 children were remaining home due to lack of finances.'

- Female Beneficiary

'I have been supported with chickens, seed, 10 kg fertilizer, pesticide 2 bottles and a treadle pump that we are sharing among 4 beneficiaries, then trained on how to plant seed, how to apply fertilizer by the agricultural officer, my life has changed completely just look at my garden. I have joined the Saving community club because I'm able to save and pay school fees for my children, buy food for my family.'

- Female Beneficiary

The Western Cluster project is part of the larger *Journeying Together* programme — an Edmund Rice Mission initiative to work and live in the margins of society, maintain a compassion presence and walk in solidarity with the people they serve. The *Journeying Together* programme acts as a catalyst in a community so that people may realise their own power, resilience and talent.

Checking In with Defensoría Edmundo Rice

Defensoría Edmundo Rice (DER) is an NGO committed to the defence and promotion of human rights. DER's main task is to influence and encourage agents of change in Latin America. DER engages with governments, political authorities and international leaders, to seek solutions to the problems that affect the lives of the most vulnerable. DER seeks to raise human rights violations to the agenda of the international community at the United Nations. Despite the pandemic and school closures, the project carried out successful initiatives this year. Highlights include:

- Presenting three oral statements to the UN Human Rights Council, in collaboration with Edmund Rice International and PRATYeK. One warned of online risks to which children and adolescent are exposed, especially the risk of sexual exploitation. Recommendations were made for the four countries where the project operates: Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and Uruguay. The other statements focused on the increase in teenage pregnancies in Peru and cases of sexual abuse in Uruguay.
- A social media campaign for International Women's Day: "Women Leaders in the Region." 13 women participated including school principals, teachers and project personnel. The women shared their reflections on the importance of the role of women in the context of COVID-19. Paola Miranda, the DER Project Manager, is pictured above in the campaign.
- A global women's leadership campaign with Edmund Rice England and Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America, supported by Edmund Rice Beyond Borders. The campaign involved around 60 women teachers, principals and students across the global Edmund Rice network.
- Expanding the Model United Nations project in Peru. The number of students in the Better World school in Chimbote doubled to almost 40. In addition, the first group of 30 students at the Fe y Alegría school in Lima has begun training.
- Engagement with parents of primary and secondary pupils in Stella Maris school in Uruguay to find out their support for human rights activities. Responses somewhat surprised the team revealing a very high level of parental commitment and suggestions of activities in which they would like to be involved.
- Inclusion in the National Institute of Human Rights in Uruguay, allowed the DER team to participate in meetings, contribute to decision making and benefit from training.
- Marking Bolivian Children's Day and the International Day of the Family where several children shared their experiences with key community actors. Information was shared about rights and how families can participate.
- Working on the project 'Strengthening civil society in Bolivia' in the context of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), collaborating with the Marist International Solidarity Foundation, the International Catholic Centre of Geneva (CCIG) and a coalition of 18 civil society actors in Bolivia.



In June, Mísean Cara conducted a remote monitoring visit of the DER project. Beneficiaries, project staff and stakeholders shared their experiences and achievements through online methods. Mísean Cara's feedback on the projects was very positive, and included useful recommendations. ERD and the project team wish to take the opportunity to thank Mísean Cara for their continued support of the Defensoría Edmundo Rice project.

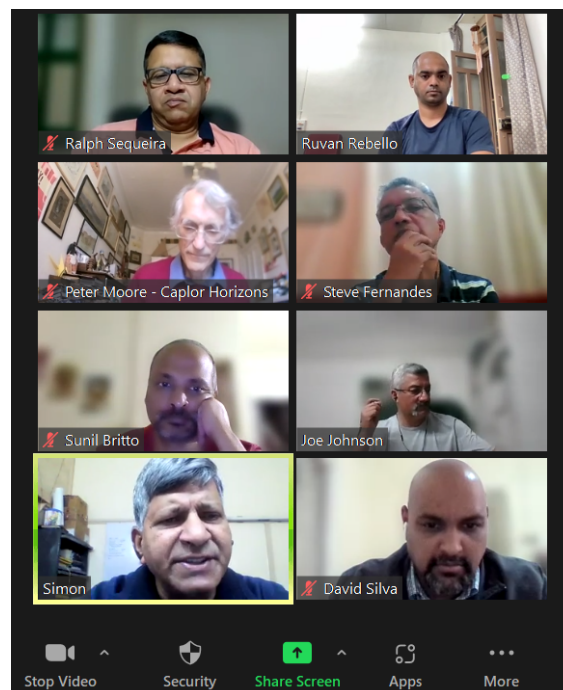
Edmund Rice Mission Capacity Development Project

The Capacity Development project continues to build the capacity of development projects around the world aiming to enable transformation of the lives of those made poor. In recent months, two Results-Based Management courses were delivered online in partnership with Maynooth University, with 21 participants from ER development projects around the world. Additionally, finance training and mentorship have continued in the Latin America Mission Area and West Africa. Here are some of the other 2021 highlights:

Governance Training in Edmund Rice Mission

Through the capacity development project, Mission Coordinators and partners identified an urgent need to build the governance capacity of development projects in 2019 and 2020. It was found that there was poor understanding of the components of good governance and confusion around the difference between 'governance' and 'management.' This is an experience shared by many charities in Ireland and across the world as the sector has become more complex and more highly regulated.

Responding to the key challenges, a global vision for governance training was articulated, which aimed to train new Leadership Teams and key personnel in good governance. The capacity development project partnered with Caplor Horizons, a UK-based non-profit, to plan and deliver the governance training. A steering group was established to design and lead the programme, comprising representatives from the Africa Province, the India Province and the Latin America Mission Area (LAMA). The steering group chose the Irish Charities Regulators Six Principles for Good Governance (pictured below) as the framework for the training.



India Province Governance Training in October 2021

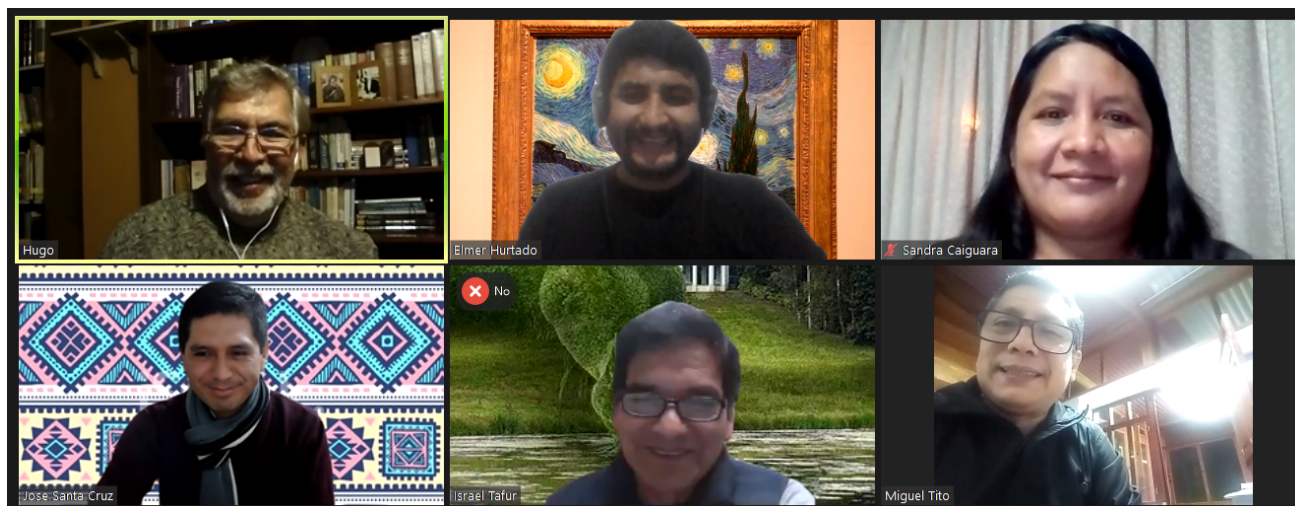


A highly participative training programme is now underway and to date 10 trainings have been delivered for 43 participants in governance or support roles in Africa, India and LAMA. The training approach blends theory with case studies and lively Question and Answer sessions! The Core Governance Trainings have been positively received by the participants, and have led to insightful and thought-provoking discussions on the challenges and possibilities of governance in Edmund Rice Mission.

'The training was very insightful and relevant to our reality. The task a head is how to make what is learned a reality in our own context.' – Africa Province participant

'I have a sense of clarity of the difference between roles of management and governance. The Six Principles of Governance - understanding each in detail was new to me. And I want to make these my benchmarks in my role in Leadership.' - India Province Participant

The next phase of the governance training programme will support application of the best practices of good governance to the local contexts of the ER development projects. We thank Edmund Rice Foundation Australia and Misesan Cara for supporting the Capacity Development project, and specifically the Governance Training programme.



Building Capacity in the Latin America Mission Area

Recognising the need to build capacity, six personnel from the Latin America Mission Area (LAMA) enrolled in a seven-month course in 'Design and Management of Social Projects' through the Pontifical Catholic University in Peru. The participants were managers of development projects in Peru and Bolivia, the Mission Office Coordinator and a member of the Governing Body. Having a diverse group of representatives from Edmund Rice projects ensured that learning reached all levels of the development mission. As the development sector has become more professional, it was clear that capacity building in Results-Based Management and Monitoring and Evaluation was needed.

'As a new call to move to the margins and empower those who we serve, we realised the need to move away from practices of the past, focused only in charity endeavours. We have recognised that the development of people involves new approaches, new ways of providing services, and new skills.'

– Elmer Hurtado, LAMA Mission Coordinator

Initially, it was planned that participants would attend the university courses in person. However, the university changed to virtual classes due to that pandemic. For that reason, it was possible to include a project manager from Bolivia, who could now attend virtually. Having successfully completed the course, the participants have now begun to apply the theory to their practice in the field. Additionally, the project managers have planned to cascade the most relevant content of the courses to their project teams through a series of workshops. We thank Misaan Cara for funding this capacity building initiative for the Latin America Mission Area.

Africa Province Strategic Planning

Throughout 2020 and the first half of 2021, the Africa Province Mission Office have led the Africa Province Strategic Planning process with facilitation from Caplor Horizons. From project staff to funding partners, the strategic planning process involved participation from stakeholders from all the world in a collaborative way. On March 31, the Strategic Framework was approved by the Province and a Strategy On a Page was released. The Four Strategic Themes articulated are Quality Education, Sustainable Livelihoods, Healthier Lives and Advocacy and Justice. The Four Strategic Objectives identified to achieve the themes are Community Engagement, Collaboration, Capacity Development and Sustainability.



Since the Strategic Framework was released, working groups were established to operationalise and implement the Strategic Plan with members bringing their own diverse experience and skills to the task at hand. The working groups have been assigned to one objective and have met throughout the past several months to operationalise their objectives; these plans were presented to a working group update forum in September. The Strategic Plan is now being finalised into a strategy booklet, and the Province Mission Office will be developing an implementation plan, which will be finalised before the end of the year. We look forward to seeing how the Africa Province Strategic Plan 2022-2024 becomes a reality over the next three years.

News and Events from the Edmund Rice Network

Facilitating the Voices of Young People at COP26

The Edmund Rice Network has actively engaged in climate activism leading up to COP26, the UN's Climate Change Conference, which took place in November in Glasgow, Scotland. A group of students from Edmund Rice schools in England attended the Conference of Youth (COY16) in Glasgow from 28th-31st October. They presented a statement on behalf of Edmund Rice Schools in England, India, Uruguay and the USA and young people in Bolivia, which became part of the global youth statement that went directly to policymakers at COP26. A further group of 12 students also participated in the Green Zone events at COP26 (pictured) at which copies of the statement representing the global schools network were distributed.



Other related initiatives involving Edmund Rice schools included the Edmund Rice Education Australia Climate Crisis Statement and the recent ERth Summit, organised by PRATYeK in India and supported by Edmund Rice International. This provided an opportunity for several hundred child activists from a range of countries to voice their concerns about the environment, particularly the current climate emergency. Following presentations from panelists and interactive discussions among the participants over the three days of the Summit, a list of recommendations was prepared ahead of the COP26 meeting. Commenting on the Summit Peadar O'Hubain, from the Embassy of Ireland, New Delhi stated 'This is an extremely timely discussion ahead of COP26. Your leadership in climate action is vital' whilst Ms Deirdre Boyd, UN Resident Coordinator, India, who presided over the culmination ceremony marvelled at the work and stated 'Climate change is no longer a threat 100 years away, it is already here. Children and young people are not just victims. You are the future to bring change.'

For more information on advocacy in the Edmund Rice Network, please visit: www.edmundriceinternational.org

Adapted from the Edmund Rice International October Newsletter

Edmund Rice Mission Conversations

Earlier this year, a journey began across Edmund Rice Network to explore pathways for collaboration. At the end of 2020, the Congregation Leadership Team (CLT) and Province Leaders of the Christian Brothers discussed the renewal of the Strategic Development Framework of Edmund Rice Mission to 2020, which was developed by a broad group of stakeholders in 2015. As the current framework comes to an end, the CLT considered how it might be reviewed and made more inclusive through broad conversations among those currently involved in Edmund Rice activities around the world. To get this process moving, the CLT established a small working party, which included ERD's Fiona Dowling, Br. John Casey, CLT member, Wayne Tinsey from Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders and Bren Arkinsall from Edmund Rice Foundation Australia (ERFA).

Fiona Dowling has represented ERD with her participation in a series of international Zoom calls in October and November, gathering Edmund Rice people from around the world to get to know each other a bit better, to get a better sense of who each one is and what reality they are coming from in their part of the world, and to discuss key issues. In October, the Zoom conversation was around issues to do with identity, tradition, core values, within the Edmund Rice network. In November the groups have looked to the future in terms of possibilities for sustainability, structures, and collaboration.

These Zoom conversations follow an online survey carried out earlier in the year to which about 250 people responded with suggestions for how to proceed. We look forward to continued participation and to the ideas that emerge from the conversations.

Irish Schools Support Edmund Rice Mission in India



Pupils from Ardscoil Rís visiting St. Vincent's Technical School

Ardscoil Rís in Limerick and Ardscoil Na Mara in Tramore have both generously raised funds for Edmund Rice Mission projects in India. These funds are currently supporting two projects in need of funding especially in the context of COVID-19.

The funding from Ardscoil Rís is making an impact for economically disadvantaged students in St. Vincent's Industrial Training Centre in Asansol, India. St. Vincent's is a much sought after technical training institute in the industrial town of Asansol and its neighbourhood, particularly for those who are living Below Poverty Line. St. Vincent's offers over a dozen courses in technical training and helps students secure jobs. A Certificate and placement from St. Vincent's has helped young people assist their families to meet their basic needs. The specific donation has supported the provision of two new technical courses at the school.

The funding from Ardscoil Na Mara has gone to the Providence School in Shillong, India. This school was formed to work exclusively with children of parents from lower-income groups. Its mandate is to empower these children with skills that will make them self-reliant and independent young people. The School currently serves 279 students directly. The students range from 5 to 18 years and belong to various religious communities and ethnic groups. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns in the city of Shillong, the parents of the children have been struggling to meet their needs, many of them having lost their daily wage opportunities. This funding will provide food rations to students, which will go a long way in helping the families deal with their current financial difficulties.

We thank the pupils and staff at Ardscoil Rís and Ardscoil Na Mara for their generous support of Edmund Rice Mission in India!

Dóchas Membership

We are delighted in ERD that our application to become members of Dóchas was successful earlier this year. Dóchas is the Irish association for international development organisations and is a leading voice for organisations that want Ireland to be a world leader in efforts to bring about global justice (www.dochas.ie). We are already benefiting from cooperating with other member organisations and look forward to continuing to do so in 2022.

Farewell to John Cooley, Second ERD Chair

John took up the Chairmanship of the ERD at a very challenging time for the organisation. He worked tirelessly to strengthen the organisation. The legacy of those years is the ERD of today, which values close partnerships, better and more transparent systems and consistency of approach in the complex world of International Development and Funding.

John was a collaborative leader, seeking advice and opinion widely before guiding the Board in its duties and decisions. The Board especially, but also the ERD staff and our partner bodies, join in thanking him for the generosity of his spirit, time and energy in his wonderful service of Leadership to ERD and in wishing him well for the future. We know, even in John's retirement, his passion for working to make a better world for the most marginalised and poorest will be undimmed; and so he will always remain connected to the vision of ERD, the inspiration of Edmund Rice and the Gospel message to reach out in love and compassion.



John Cooley (right) pictured with Br. Pat Madigan at Edmund Rice House

Update from the ERD Board

Letter from the Chair:

In mid-October I was appointed as ERD Board Chair, succeeding Mr. John Cooley who recently stepped down after many years of service. Having been a Director since 2014, I have a good sense of the work of the ERD, as well as knowing many of our funding partners and leaders across the global network of projects with whom we collaborate. I want to begin by paying tribute to John Cooley, one of the founding Directors of ERD back in 2008. Over the years John has been a hugely committed Director, generous with his time and always willing to travel to Dublin for Board meetings and the various other tasks that come with the job. In more recent years, he took on the additional role of Board Chairperson and astutely guided the Company through some key strategic planning. We are very grateful to John for his generosity and commitment.

2021 is a year of change and adapting for all of us. To add to the complexities of living with COVID and working from home, ERD has had several significant changes. The appointment of Fiona Dowling as Chief Executive at the beginning of the year, the putting in place of an interim strategy and addressing the standards being set by the new Irish Charities Regulator have kept everyone busy. All of this on top of the Team's normal workload of supporting Edmund Rice development projects through fundraising, project support and capacity building.

The Newsletter is an opportunity for us to keep you up to date with recent happenings. It also gives us a chance to express our gratitude. Thank you to those who continue to support our work in 2021. In this, the last Newsletter of the year, a bit early though it may be, can I wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and loving Christmas and New Year.

Br. John Casey



If you would like to support the work of Edmund Rice Development Mission this Christmas, you can donate online at:

www.edmundricedevlopment.org/donate

Alternatively, you can make a donation by cheque to:

Edmund Rice Development, Edmund Rice House, North Richmond Street, Dublin 1

Thank you for your support.

Artwork designed by Edmund Rice Mission in Peru

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