



Members of the Mission Capacity Support Team (MCST) meeting students from the Fe y Alegría School, Peru

Welcome to the 2019 Edmund Rice Development Newsletter.

We do hope you will enjoy reading the news from our projects and some of the stories of the wonderful activities taking place in support of Edmund Rice Mission.

Our programme manager Michael Hanly shares an update from his recent visit to South America. He visited the Fe y Alegría School and the Reaching New Horizons projects in Peru, and the Centro Hermano Manolo in Bolivia before returning to Lima to attend a gathering of the Mission Capacity Support Team. Our programme officer Naidi McDonnell also shares an update from her monitoring visit to PRATYeK in India this past April.

You can also read an update on the impact of the work of our partner projects, the *Journeying Together* project in Zambia and the Ruben Centre in Kenya. Additionally, we share an update on how Edmundo Rice Latinoamérica has been working with the refugees who have fled Venezuela and settled in Lima.

Once again sincere thanks for your ongoing support and interest in Edmund Rice Mission.

John Cooley
Chair, ERD Board

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From Peru to Bolivia: ERD's Visit to South America



Michael on a home visit to a local family (Mrs. Elizabeth Medina and Mr. Cristian Guadalupe with their children) supported by the Fe y Alegría project in Lima, Peru.

Programme manager Michael Hanly traveled to South America to visit several projects and attend the gathering of the Mission Capacity Support Team.

Michael first headed to Chimbote, Peru to visit the Reaching for New Horizons school project. This project seeks to improve the educational and psycho-social support services of a state run school in order for children and their families to have better opportunities for future growth and success. State schools in informal settlements and slums in Peru have inadequate funding to provide a quality educational service for their students. Moreover, many of the students have experienced adverse childhood experiences that affect their academic performance and overall

wellbeing. With Misesan Cara support, the project is providing a valuable service to the students and parents: a psychologist to give direct support to vulnerable students and act in a supporting and training role for teachers; a social worker who runs workshops for parents, visits students' homes where there are particular needs, and connects them to local and state services; additional English language tuition for 6th class students and art and dance classes to enrich the learning environment for the students. *"The Reaching New Horizons project is a vibrant community of dedicated teachers and enthusiastic students. The classrooms are colourful, stimulating, and are well resourced and cared for."*

Michael then traveled to Cochabamba, Bolivia to visit the Centro Hermano Manolo. The goal of the Centre is to empower working children and adolescents in La Cancha market and ultimately prevent them working and living on the streets in poverty. *"As a visitor to the Centre, one of the striking things I noticed was the way children feel very welcomed and make their way from room to room, shaking the hand of every person to greet and acknowledge them. This symbolises the intensive, one-to-one holistic service, with a very caring and personal approach. The missionary approach to development is evident: a direct, personal connection is made with vulnerable children, with respect and kindness, starting with self-respect, and working with a community approach, where meals are shared, and the young and shy are encouraged, and made to feel special and included: Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí."*

Michael then made his way back to Lima to visit the Fe y Alegría School (meaning "Faith and Joy") and to attend the gathering of the Mission Capacity Support Team. He received a tour of the Fe y Alegría School and was able to visit their ecology project, which is part of a larger academic and psycho-social support programme funded by Misesan Cara. The Mission Capacity Support Team gathering was another rewarding week of collaboration between mission coordinators and partners where trainings were focused on Leadership and Change, Safeguarding and Governance.



Pictured: José Santa Cruz is the Project Manager. He and the team run an ecology project for the school. A rocky hillside at the back of the school has miraculously been turned into a garden through use of composting and planting the right type of plants. The school garden is one of the students favourite activities.

Journeying Together Update



Participants digging the fish pond in Luampa, Zambia

The Youth Empowerment Centre was established in late 2017 in Luampa, Western Zambia. This centre provides an opportunity for young men and women to acquire skills in crop, livestock and fish production.

So far, this project has trained 113 youths. Of those trained, 78 improved their skills in agricultural crop, poultry and fish production and 25 of them were supplied with agricultural inputs. This group was able to grow food to help feed their families. Additionally, the centre offers workshops in reproductive health and nutrition for the participants. This centre has provided a much needed outlet for the youth in the community. Instead of spending time engaging in risky behaviour, including loitering, drug and alcohol abuse, the youth have had the opportunity to take up a productive activity to improve their livelihoods.

Amos is one of the volunteers involved in the project team in Luampa. He has eight children, seven girls and one boy, and his family have in the past found it a challenge to meet the basic needs of their household of ten. His wife was one of the beneficiaries of this project, and she chose to be trained in poultry farming with a group of four others.

When interviewed by the project team, Amos said, “My wife has earned enough money from the sale of chickens to plant two acres of groundnuts and one acre of monkey nuts. We were also able to meet labour costs for the preparation of land. From the same money we earned from the sale of chickens, we managed to pay school fees for our grade 9 school going daughter.”



Br. Conrad Cerejo, Br. Chris Meehl, and a community volunteer working closely with the Luampa team, Zambia

This project is part of the larger *Journeying Together* programme located in the Western Province of Zambia, an area with immense social problems, where three out of every four people live in extreme poverty. We thank Misesan Cara and our private donors for their support of the *Journeying Together* programme in Zambia.

Displaced Venezuelans in Peru Project



Beneficiaries enjoying a meal at the project

Since 2015, over 4 million Venezuelans have left their country due to the humanitarian crisis there according to UNHCR statistics. Nearly one million of these displaced Venezuelans have settled in Peru, where the majority of them live in poverty. Lima, the country's main city, is now home to more than 80% of Venezuelans currently living in Peru with the largest number living in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho. Edmundo Rice Latinoamérica has been working with these displaced people in the community of San Juan de Lurigancho to ensure their basic needs are met by providing a drop-in café for inexpensive meals, health care support, short-term housing and advice on obtaining residency.

STORIES OF IMPACT:

Due to the crisis in Venezuela, the young couple Nehomar and Coromoto left their country and traveled to Peru. Nehomar had a hard time getting a job due to health problems. Unfortunately, many of the available jobs to Venezuelans are very poorly paid and are as street vendors. Street vendors have to stand and walk from one place to another looking for customers, which is difficult and stressful. Nehomar's lack of employment and resources to cover their basic needs worsened his illness and made him depressed. Coromoto had to work for both of them, but even with her income, they did not have enough to cover the expensive medications that Nehomar needed to recover. This was also very difficult for her, not only having to cover such high expenses, but also for the great concern she felt for her husband's condition which was not improving. Despite being sick, Nehomar didn't stay at home; he started selling coffee on the streets. One day, he learned about the Displaced Venezuelan Project. At first, Nehomar and Coromoto had doubts about it, because so far, they had not come across any organisation willing to help them. At that point, Nehomar was malnourished and both needed urgent help. They first visited the drop-in café and bought an inexpensive and nutritious lunch. They learned that the project supported Venezuelans in need, and from that day, Nehomar and Coromoto started to visit the café daily. At one point, they were invited to be the housekeepers of the residence and they accepted it gladly. Nehomar started receiving health treatment from Red Cross and Polyclinic San Benito and they also began living at the residence. Nehomar's health has improved; he is working by taking care of the residence and Coromoto is currently working in a shopping centre. They send money back to their families in Venezuela each month. They both work hard and, with the support from the project, their lives have improved significantly. They are grateful for the support they have received from the project, and are hoping to be able to move out of the residence this year and start a family.

Through the project, over 80 displaced persons from Venezuela receive a daily nutritious lunch at the drop-in café. The menu has been tailored to the beneficiaries' needs and with consideration to their health problems. Two residences have also been made available for men and women, where 14 men and 8 women stay. In both residences, the beneficiaries have access to an affordable, secure and clean place to live. Health care services as well as free counselling services have been made available through partnerships with different organisations. Legal advice on immigration procedures and Peruvian labour laws has also been available to all beneficiaries. The project has partnered with ENCUENTROS, the Jesuit services for refugees, who have provided workshops and legal advice to all beneficiaries in several locations. By the end of their stay at the residence, most of the beneficiaries have obtained a Peruvian Temporary Work Permit. This emergency project not only has alleviated the difficult situation Venezuelans are going through, but also has provided an opportunity to the most disadvantaged to live with dignity. We thank Misesan Cara for their support of this project.

The Ruben Centre Birthing Unit Turns One!

On Friday June 21st, over 5,000 people gathered to celebrate the first anniversary of the Ruben Centre Birthing Unit in Mukuru, Nairobi. The unit began operating on May 21, 2018 and since then has conducted 834 safe deliveries. The number of deliveries has far exceeded the expectations of the centre. The Ruben Centre Birthing Unit has become the preferred option for mothers from the Mukuru community. As part of the celebration, the Ruben Clinic was upgraded from Medical Clinic Level 2 to Health Centre Level 3. The day was graced by His Excellency Mike Mbuvi Sonko, the Governor of Nairobi County. The Ruben



Br. Frank O'Shea, Zippora Mwangi, and His Excellency Mike Mbuvi Sonko with a Community Health Worker

Health Centre Manager Zipporah Mwangi gave a tour and presentation about the Health Centre to the Governor. Celebrations continued with various performances by the school's scouts and girl guides, the Ruben Orchestra, traditional dancers, gymnasts and the Community Health Volunteers.

The Governor promised the community with the acquisition of a disputed piece of land adjacent to the Ruben Centre. The land is to be used to build the only Government Secondary school in the Mukuru area and to expand the capacity of the Health Centre, which now has 8 beds. We look forward to seeing the future of the Ruben Centre Health Clinic and thank Miseen Cara and the Brigidine Sisters for funding this programme.

ERD's Visit to PRATYeK



Naidi (second from right) pictured with PRATYeK participants in New Delhi, India

Our Programme Office Naidi McDonnell visited India in April for a monitoring visit to PRATYeK. PRATYeK is a children's advocacy project based in New Delhi. PRATYeK facilitates a Children's Parliament, which is made up of 18 children from the 3 surrounding slums. Each child is a 'minister' for one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) together with an extra 18th SDG representing children. The children work closely together regardless of age, gender, caste or family income. This project is very much run by the children who make the rules; the PRATYeK staff facilitate the meetings and assist only when needed. Each minister comes up with issues they can address in their community. One of the examples provided was the prevalence of night time anti-social behaviour around the toilet facilities in the

slum that made many females feel intimidated. The parliament collectively wrote a letter and presented it to the local police station requesting them to carry out more patrols so that everyone in the slum has equal and safe access to the toilet and washing facilities. They have had many successes including extending the working hours of a pedestrian traffic light beside the project so that the children could use the light after school hours. They also discuss broader concerns in their slums such as one of their friends being married at a young age. This project addresses issues that concern children at a local level, but elevates their voices to a national level ensuring that they are included in the discussion of children's rights throughout India. During Naidi's visit, two of the project beneficiaries were interviewed by the BBC to discuss the issues of climate change in relation to children. While in India, Naidi also conducted a project visit to the *Journeying Together* India cluster and represented ERD at the Mission Capacity Support Team Workshop.

Empowering the Sama-Badjao Community in the Philippines



Badjao children showing off their cultural dance

Widely known as the “Sea Gypsies,” the Sama-Badjao tribe is one of the many ethnic groups of the Philippines. One of the largest populations of Badjaos in the Philippines can be found in Dolho, Bato Leyte where there are 109 Badjao households comprising a total of 658 people (as of a 2016 survey). The Sama-Badjao community living in Bato Leyte has experienced inequality, discrimination and high unemployment rates, which has led to high rates of poverty in the area.

Edmund Rice Ministries Philippines developed a project to address the challenges facing this community. They started by conducting a

participatory assessment as to the real living conditions of the community. All 109 heads of the families were interviewed, where it was concluded that access to sanitation, clean water and improved livelihoods would make a real impact in the area.

The project was developed aiming to build the capacity and reduce the vulnerability of Sama-Badjao women in particular, through the creation of community groups. So far, 50 women have participated in these groups where they have been educated on their basic human rights in addition to attending sessions on gender and development, Family-based Education and Values-Formation, and the Indigenous People’s Rights Act. This group has also formed a livelihoods working group. This will help generate income for the Sama-Badjao women, as currently many are excluded from society and are forced to beg in the street. This project also developed a WASH programme to improve access to clean water and sanitation in the community. The Sama-Badjao community in Dolho had only one toilet facility, which was donated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Additionally, there were low levels of health education, so many were not taught about the value of using the toilet and the importance of hygiene. So far, this project has educated 386 members of the Sama-Badjao community on sanitation, solid waste management techniques and proper hygiene practices. They also have received hygiene kits quarterly. Six more toilets have been installed in strategic locations in the community, as 97.25% of the households do not have a toilet.



Outreach activity in the community

“We are very thankful to Edmund Rice Ministries for really looking out for the Sama-Badjao people. The interventions and activities we’ve participated in helped us to gain confidence and be comfortable with who we are. Although discrimination still exists from the wider community... we will persevere.” -SAMA-BADJAO WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT, VANESA SABRANI

This is just the first step in educating and empowering the Sama-Badjao community in Bato Leyte. Thanks to Misesan Cara for funding this project, which will continue through 2020. We look forward to seeing the ongoing progress made in the community!

ROUND-UP OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Edmund Rice College Belfast Supports The Mary Rice Centre in Kenya

Many thanks to all the pupils and staff of Edmund Rice College who fundraised £6,000 for the Mary Rice Centre Kenya! The Mary Rice Centre transforms the lives of many young people with physical and intellectual disabilities and their families living in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya. Your donation will have such a positive impact on the beneficiaries of this centre, and we thank you again for your support!

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"The 17th October 2019 is designated as the International Day for the Eradication of World Poverty. With this in mind, it was with great pride that the pupils of our top fundraising class, 9LK, made a presentation to Mr John Cooley from the Edmund Rice Development Board in the sum of £6000. This represented the total raised by the pupils over the course of our last school year. Last year we decided to focus our fundraising to support a specific project being funded by Edmund Rice Development.



Edmund Rice College presenting cheque to Edmund Rice Development

We chose to support the Mary Rice Centre in Nairobi. This is a fantastic project which works to educate and support children who have additional learning needs. The Centre supports children with disabilities through basic learning skills, vocational skills, therapy services and an outreach programme. It also supports the parents of the children through skills training and income generating activities in bead work, tailoring and dressmaking.

The Centre mission statement really encapsulates the ethos of the worldwide community of Edmund Rice schools – 'Our Caring Hearts Build Hope.' As a college we were very proud of the total that was achieved and we look forward to beating it this year!"

The *Irish Times* features Edmund Rice Missionary

The *Irish Times* featured an Edmund Rice missionary in an article entitled 'The returned missionaries: "I'm more African than I am Irish"' last January. Br. Greg Kennedy has returned to Ireland after spending 54 years serving Edmund Rice Mission in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Br. Greg is pictured with children at Thuta Ya Bana (drop-in school) in Kimberley, South Africa in 2017. Thanks to The *Irish Times* for capturing the human side of the missionary experience.



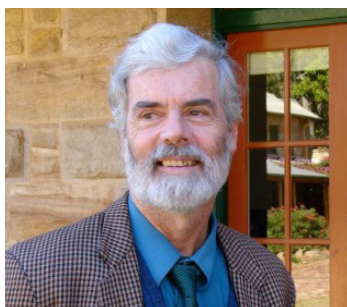
Global Spotlight on the Work of The Justice Desk

The Justice Desk has received global recognition for their grassroots human rights work in Cape Town, South Africa. On September 23rd, The Justice Desk welcomed The Duke and Duchess of Sussex on the first stop of their African tour. The Justice Desk hosted a community event in Nyanga, a township that faces high levels of poverty and violence, especially against women and children. The Justice Desk has partnered with members of the Nyanga community years ago to empower local people to understand and defend their human rights, in order to build safer communities for all. They carry out trainings with community members of all age groups, from young children who are still in pre-school to adult community members. The Justice Desk also gave The Duke and Duchess a tour of the Mbokodo Club, a women's empowerment project set up in partnership with The Justice Desk in communities across Cape Town, which works to re-engage women who have experienced trauma. In 2016, the Justice Desk Founder and CEO Jessica Dewhurst became a Queens Young Leader and has since received support from the Queens Commonwealth Trust, of which the Duke and Duchess serve as President and Vice President.



Top: Participants from the Mbokodo Club
Bottom: The Duke and Duchess of Sussex with Founder and CEO Jessica Dewhurst of The Justice Desk project in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Justice Desk is an award-winning human rights organisation which operates in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe working to empower local people to understand and defend their human rights. They educate, train, advocate for and equip youth, vulnerable groups, civil society, and government personnel in human rights, justice and advocacy. The Justice Desk project works primarily in township areas and vulnerable communities, empowering and equipping local people with the necessary skills and platforms to transform society in a sustainable way and create a more just and equal world. We thank Misesa Cara for their ongoing support of The Justice Desk.



In Memory: Br. Moy Hitchen

ERD is deeply saddened to learn of the sudden passing of Br. Moy Hitchen in Zambia in August. Br. Moy was a member of the *Journeying Together* initiative in the Western Cluster in Zambia, and will be greatly missed by the community there. Our deepest sympathies extend to Br. Moy's family, the Brothers and many friends around the world. May he Rest in Peace.

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