

HELPING GIRLS STAY IN SCHOOL

A HEART-WARMING REPORT ON A
LIFE-CHANGING INITIATIVE IN TANZANIA



World Vision
Ireland

NEWS

VISION

ISSUE TWO ■ 2007



Greetings

Welcome to the Winter issue of NewsVision. Here are some of the activities that we've been involved with over the past few months...



Helen Keogh and Patron Dr. Geraldine Smyth in North Rukiga, Uganda, April 2007

First of all, welcome to all new sponsors – we had a phenomenal response to our recent TV campaign and we are delighted to have you join us on this wonderful journey. Through child sponsorship, your donation will directly impact on a community which faces challenges that we struggle to even understand, let alone endure, in Ireland. Thank you for making a difference.



1,000 Campaign Update

As I mentioned above, during the months of August and September we set ourselves the task of recruiting 1,000 new child sponsors through the use of TV, radio, press and web. It was our first major advertising push and one, I'm delighted to say, that has been an enormous success for us. We have already welcomed 1,300 new sponsors!

Trip to Uganda

The rainy season was in full flood on my recent trip to our ADP in North Rukiga, Uganda. Meetings in the schools and offices were held against a backdrop of deafening rain thudding on the tin roofs of the buildings. Transport was difficult as tracks that were passable in the dry mornings were swept away, making us wonder if we would get back to our lodgings that night.

North Rukiga Area Development Programme is situated in south-western Uganda in the Kabale district. Some 70,000 people live in the area; they are farmers who grow bananas, potatoes, beans and cabbage. I met with the chairman who proudly listed the achievements of the local people working with World Vision – 23 classrooms constructed in 4 Primary schools, with 10 more on the way, Health Clubs in Primary schools have been formed.

In Mparo parish we met with PLWA (People Living With Aids) project members – extraordinary people who have hope in the future thanks to the work of World Vision. 72 people, young,

middle aged, mothers, fathers, widows, all with a new lease of life. The project has helped them to avail of anti retro-viral drugs, made them aware of the importance of nutrition and made it possible to set up income-generating activities so that they will have a sustainable future. Most importantly they have combated the stigma of AIDS and reach out to others who need their help. One person said "Before if you heard the bad news it was despair – now there is hope".

Although Uganda has taken great measures in tackling HIV/AIDS, there is still a high prevalence in North Rukiga. We estimate one in ten adults is HIV positive. The difficulties faced by child headed families are immense – World Vision has many programmes helping those who have been infected or affected by the pandemic. We came away from our trip convinced that these proud, hardworking people will do all in their power to overcome the challenges they face and we will continue to work with them to help them achieve their goals.

Dóchas Code of Conduct

On 1st May 2007, 36 Irish aid and development agencies, including World Vision Ireland, formally adopted a new Code Of Conduct for public communications. The signatories to the Code are all members of Dóchas, the umbrella group of Irish Development NGOs. The adoption of this Code means that Irish aid agencies will choose images and messages that represent the full complexity of the situations in which we work, keeping the development agenda very much in the public eye, and looking beyond the sensational single image or sound bite.

As always, thank you for making our efforts possible,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Keogh".

Helen Keogh
Chief Executive

New ADP launch

Sierra Leone in West Africa was ravaged for 11 years by a brutal civil war, which left some 50,000 dead, thousands more amputees and a destroyed infrastructure. But through the resilience of the Sierra Leoneans and the support of Irish sponsors, many of the population are now looking forward to a more hopeful future.

Sierra Leone is a country rich in natural resources, particularly diamonds, which unfortunately played a key role in perpetuating the civil war, as they were illegally traded to fund arms.

In 2002, the civil war ended with the support of a large UN peacekeeping mission, and over the past few years the country has been facing the challenge of reconstruction. The 17,000 UN peacekeepers left in 2005 and the country is now enjoying a peaceful time, looking forward to rebuilding the country from the ground up.

An Imperi school that was destroyed during the conflict

The New Area Development Programme - 'Imperi'

18 Months ago, World Vision Ireland started a new Area Development Programme (ADP) in Sierra Leone, in the Imperi Chiefdom. Over 1,000 children have been registered and sponsorship is scheduled to begin in October of this year. So far we have welcomed 250 new Irish child sponsors on board for Sierra Leone.

Imperi Chiefdom in particular was badly hit by the civil conflict. It was the centre of attraction for the rebels as it was the location of the Sierra Rutile Mining Company. Rebels overran the Chiefdom in 1994, destroying schools, clinics, houses and the entire company's assets. By the time the war ended, most infrastructure had been destroyed or vandalised.



School children from Imperi

A Fresh Start

During the preparatory 'seed' phase of the ADP, which began in January 2006, an assessment report revealed that thousands of children in the area do not have access to basic necessities that we all take for granted, such as clean water, nutritious food, healthcare and education.

Over the next 12 months, the ADP will support community training, rehabilitating wells, and helping rebuild health services through outreach clinics.

Education

The education situation for children in Sierra Leone is one of the worst in the world. The most recent State of the World's Children Report (2005) indicated that the literacy rate in Sierra Leone is barely 30%. It is now hard to believe that in the 1950s and 1960s Sierra Leone was termed the 'Athens of Africa', but bad governance and mismanagement systematically destroyed a once admirable educational system.

60% of the children in the Imperi ADP are not currently attending school, so there is a major focus to repair damaged schools and build new ones in order to cope with the increase in children who want to attend school. David Kpevai, the ADP Manager spoke to a child who had not been able to attend school for many years, due to the unrest, "I have been scared to go to school but with the new building, I will confidently go to school now."

Health Services

Most of the healthcare infrastructure was destroyed in the war, so access to good health services is very difficult for people in Sierra Leone. In the Imperi ADP, some people live as far away as 15 kilometres from the nearest health centre. This means that it is very common for women to die in childbirth and many sick children die before reaching the health centre.

The World Vision ADP staff, in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health, plan to facilitate outreach clinics, which will mean health staff will be able to travel to the small isolated villages within the Imperi ADP and bring health services directly to the community.

A second activity of the outreach clinics will be to inform the community on HIV/AIDS and how to combat its spread.

Water/Sanitation

ADP staff are working with the Imperi Community in order to implement several water/sanitation projects, which will mean access to clean water, a decrease in the spread of water-borne diseases and ultimately a healthier community.

Looking Forward

People all over Sierra Leone have suffered unimaginable hardship, but through the generosity of Irish Child Sponsors, the Imperi ADP can now look forward to helping themselves out of the injustice of extreme poverty and into a sustainable future, working in partnership with World Vision Ireland.



Imperi World AIDS Day Walk

ELECTRIC PICNIC 2007

In August, 33,000 music-loving Irish people made their way to the Stradbally Estate in Co. Laois for a three day weekend of fun, dancing and entertainment as part of the Electric Picnic Boutique Music Festival. The festival has a reputation as one of the highlights of many young Irish adults' event calendars and includes an array of international and local music acts, comedy and thought provoking debates.

Many Irish charities choose Electric Picnic as the perfect forum to communicate their messages to this audience. This year World Vision Ireland took the opportunity to share the journey of our patrons Victoria Smurfit and Pauline McLynn and their incredible journey to the Tanzanian community of Kwamtoro.

Child sponsors Pauline and Victoria made the journey to the rural town of Kwamtoro to visit their sponsored children. Victoria took a series of beautiful photos that depict the reality of daily life in Africa and Pauline wrote thoughtful accompanying words.

Pauline's reflection on the trip to Tanzania, "The trip turned us upside down and inside out and sent us home with a spring in our, previously tired, Western step and a vigour for life that money alone could never buy".

"THE TRIP TURNED US UPSIDE DOWN AND INSIDE OUT AND SENT US HOME WITH A SPRING IN OUR, PREVIOUSLY TIRED WESTERN STEP" .Pauline McLynn



"THE INCREDIBLE PEOPLE I MET ARE CERTAINLY MATERIALLY POOR BUT ARE RICH IN SPIRIT AND COURAGE" .Victoria Smurfit

Victoria said the trip was one of the most amazing experiences she'd had. "The incredible people I met are certainly materially poor but are rich in spirit and courage. I think that comes through in the photos. Pauline and I are really proud of the exhibition."

On Sunday afternoon we were joined by our friends the Dublin Gospel Choir, who treated us and a rather large crowd to some excellent gospel songs. This was one of the highlights of our weekend and it certainly provided a welcome boost on the last day of the festival.

Many festival goers visited the World Vision Ireland stand and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about how child sponsorship is making a real difference in the areas we are working.

The exhibition at Electric Picnic was a great success and part of World Vision Ireland's campaign to sign up 1,000 additional child sponsors by the end of September to help alleviate the extreme poverty suffered by millions in Africa.



Helen Keogh introduces the Dublin Gospel Choir

Working to Keep Girls in School

In Spring 2007 Mundemu Girls' Hostel Project celebrated their first anniversary, here we look back at the journey that started in 2005 and rejoice in the efforts the people of rural central Tanzania have made to ensure that their girls stay in school.

Mundemu Secondary School is the only secondary school in the whole division of Mundemu in the Dodoma Rural District, Central Tanzania. Students who are enrolled in the school are from homes ranging from five to sixty kilometres away. When the school began registering pupils in 1997, a pattern emerged, revealing vast numbers of girls who were dropping out of school before completing secondary education, the majority of those leaving were from distances greater than 10km away.

Given the distance, girls had either to endure long daily walks in the baking heat or they had to rent rooms in Mundemu – both options were difficult and dangerous and parents were reluctant to allow them to attend school as they were concerned for their safety.



As a temporary solution, the school management decided to allow some of the girls to sleep in three of the classrooms. When our Programmes staff, Sheila Garry and Eileen Morrow visited the school back in November 2004, they found that the floors were covered entirely in mattresses. As it was not possible to use these classrooms during school hours, the remaining classrooms were seriously overcrowded.

The community, recognising the need for a hostel for girls approached the Tanzanian Government to find funding and support for this project. The community received some funding and commenced building the hostel. They were unable to complete it though as there were insufficient funds available despite significant local fundraising efforts. Through the support of World Vision Tanzania and the Bank of Ireland Staff Fund, the community were able to complete the hostel and it is now in full use.

The hostel now accommodates 76 students in 19 rooms with each room accommodating four students. There is a reception room, six toilets, four bathrooms and two laundry rooms. As with all of our projects, the local community was strongly involved in the planning and construction of Mundemu Girls Hostel. They gathered local resources such as sand, water and stones, made bricks and contributed their labour to help construct the hostel. Their commitment to the project never waned, despite prolonged drought and food shortages in the area.

The community, in partnership with the Tanzanian Government, continues to manage the Mundemu Secondary School and Hostel. This ensures that the facilities will be cared for and maintained in the long term.

Thank you to the staff at Bank of Ireland who have made this and many other projects possible. If you are interested in setting up a staff fund or to take part in a corporate social responsibility programme, please contact us at 1 850 366 283.

Eileen's Update

May 2007



On a recent trip to Uganda, **Eileen Morrow** visited Lunyo, one of our new ADPs in Eastern Uganda. Lunyo is in the Busia District, bordering Kenya and Lake Victoria. Here Eileen reports on her visit.

‘AT ONLY 13 YEARS OF AGE SHE HAS A WORLD OF RESPONSIBILITY ON HER SHOULDERS.’



Sharon with her brothers and sisters



Inside the school classroom

“Bumping down the red earth roads of Lunyo subcounty, past little round mudhuts surrounded by green banana trees and swarms of waving children on the roadside, I feel I am travelling through paradise. I was in for a rude awakening the next morning.

The ADP staff had arranged for me to meet with Sharon Nekesa and her five brothers and sisters.

In 2001 Sharon's father died. Shortly afterwards her mother passed away as well. Sharon was only 8 years old at the time but, as the oldest, she was left with the responsibility of caring for her younger brothers and sisters, which she carries to this day.

Under normal circumstances, her father's brothers would have taken them in, but they had all died too. Her mother's family live far away and while they have been able to help Sharon a little by paying school fees, Sharon is really on her own.

Sharon does everything to try to keep herself and her siblings in school. At weekends, instead of playing, she rounds them up to collect firewood, which they sell at the roadside. On a good weekend, this earns them just enough money to get by. During the rainy season though, it's difficult to find dry firewood and

they earn so little they sometimes only get one meal a day. Sharon and her siblings all go to Sihubira Primary School. It only costs 1,000 Ugandan Shillings a month to attend (less than 50 cent), but often they are turned away as they can't afford the fees. The school is in an appalling condition. The classrooms are made of mud and straw and are caving in. There is no furniture or blackboard.

Sharon wants to stay in school and study to be a nurse, but in between trying to look after all of her brothers and sisters, find food, fetch water and collect firewood it is difficult to study.

At only 13 years of age she has a world of responsibility on her shoulders. AIDS has taken a massive toll on families and communities, robbing children of their parents, and the elderly of their children. World Vision established an ADP in Lunyo because of the serious needs of children like Sharon. The ADP is just finishing up its assessment and design phase, during which information was

collected about the community's needs, strengths and challenges and what resources are available locally to help address them. This information is used as the basis of World Vision's plan of action for tackling poverty in Lunyo.

The development plan is being drawn up in partnership with the community and local government and emphasises community-based solutions. A big part of this programme will focus on supporting children like Sharon, who have been left destitute and traumatised by AIDS, as well as combating the further spread of HIV. It will establish Community Care Coalitions, which will regularly visit all orphaned or vulnerable children to check up on their health and progress in

school, provide emotional support and help them out if they are struggling with food or other basic needs. Older children who have dropped out of school will be given vocational training and the basic equipment and materials needed to set up a small business. And people who are sick with AIDS will be provided with homebased care.

Besides the effects of the AIDS scourge, the Lunyo community faces other critical problems such as a lack of access to clean water, outbreaks of malaria, poor immunisation coverage and low primary school attendance levels. Over the next three years, the ADP will focus on tackling these pressing issues. Currently, the ADP is registering children for sponsorship and gearing up towards starting activities.

We are just at the beginning of a long and difficult journey, one that will have its ups and downs. Development work is rarely linear; progress can be made in some areas and then an unexpected problem – like drought or floods – can suddenly turn things on their head. There will be significant challenges to overcome, but there is also huge potential for positive and lasting change. ”

a country caught in twin emergencies of drought and AIDS



Southern Africa is experiencing the worst drought in three decades. More than 5 million people in Swaziland, Lesotho and Zimbabwe have been particularly hard hit. Unfortunately this crisis is not a recent one, these regions have been hit by 10 to 15 years of worsening cyclical drought. Moreover, the situation is compounded by the world's highest HIV prevalence rates. Here is just one family's story, one that is all too common in Swaziland today.

Khanyisile Sifundza, 34, lies on a thin mattress inside a 4 metre by 4 metre hut in rural Swaziland. Lying on her stomach beside her is Yenziwe, 3, kicking her legs restlessly. Khanyisile has little energy to engage with her daughter, and Yenziwe is too young to understand that her mother is dying of AIDS.

This tiny hut is home to nine people - Khanyisile's great aunt and uncle, an elderly couple who never had children of their own, Khanyisile, Yenziwe, as well as five other children who have lost both of their parents.

This is the reality of life in Swaziland, mothers and fathers are dying in their twenties and thirties, leaving behind small children. Some children may be cared for by an elderly relative or neighbour - but they have often little to survive on themselves. All too often however, these vulnerable children are left starving and homeless and often have no choice but to turn to the sex industry in order to survive.

HELP MUST CONTINUE

Despite their age, Yenziwe's "grandparents," as she calls them, have continued to cultivate their field over the past few years. This year's crop failure was a big blow to the hardworking couple.



"In my entire life, I have not seen a drought where we have absolutely nothing to harvest at the end of the season" Mgcibelo Gamedze, 77, told us.

World Vision, the largest relief and development organisation in Swaziland, hopes to expand its emergency response in the lean months ahead to protect vulnerable families like

Yenziwe's. World Vision will also address the ongoing livelihoods crisis that subsistence farmers face in Swaziland due to recurring drought conditions and the additional burden of AIDS.

Interventions will include emergency food for vulnerable families, food-for-work opportunities, agricultural and livelihoods training, seed and tool distributions and water projects to help people cope with water shortages. But more funding is needed to ensure that the health and nutrition levels of vulnerable children like Yenziwe don't deteriorate.

If you would like to contribute to our recovery and prevention projects in Swaziland, please contact 1850 366 283 or visit www.worldvision.ie.

Thank you.

GIFT CATALOGUE

Enclosed with this issue of NewsVision you will have received this year's **Alternative Gift Catalogue**. As always, each of the gifts has been specifically requested by our **Area Development Programmes (ADPs)** so you know that they are genuinely needed and will be gratefully received.



A hugely important and unique aspect of our Gift Catalogue

is that all of the gifts are sourced locally so that we not only get the best value from your generous donations but also ensure that we support local business and trade.

If you have internet access, it's worth checking out the catalogue at www.worldvision.ie. That way, you can still choose any of the gifts that are available in the catalogue whilst also selecting anyone of hundreds of cards which can be personalised with your message and even your own photos. (Please note these cards are sent from a supplier in the UK so take 5 working days from date of order.)



If you don't have internet access, you can simply call us on 1850 366 283 or complete the order form in the back of the catalogue and pop it in the post.

Finally, if your company buys corporate Christmas gifts for customers, why not give something a little different instead of a bottle of wine this year? For more information please contact Judith_Gilsenan@wvi.org.

FAQ

How are the gifts chosen?

Each of the communities where we have ADPs gives us a list of items that they need and how many of each item.

How much of the cost goes towards the gift?

80% of the price you pay is spent on the gift, the remaining 20% is spent on any training required by the recipient of the gift, costs of purchasing and transporting the gift to the recipient and print and admin costs.

Can I select an alternative gift for the child I sponsor?

Sorry, but no. This form of giving is designed to benefit families both within and outside our sponsorship programmes. Community leaders who are best qualified to identify the people in greatest need, select those who will receive the gift.

THANK YOU & FEEDBACK

Tax Back mailing

We received a phenomenal 53% response to our tax-back mailing earlier this year. This means that €550,000 of your tax money was returned to us from the Revenue Commissioners – an amazing €125,000 increase on last year. This money is incredibly important to us. We use it to help fund the setting up of new ADPs, or to react quickly to an unforeseen emergency. And it doesn't cost you a thing!

Don't forget that there's no cut off date, so if you've forgotten to send back your form, or if you've lost it, just give us a call on 1850 366 283 and we'll post a new form out straight away.

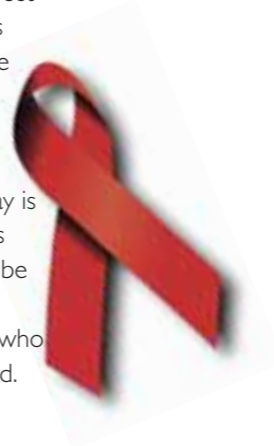
Christmas cards

Christmas cards will be mailed mid October – if your sponsored child has a birthday around the same time (especially Mauritanian children whose birthdays are usually registered on 31st December of the year that they're born rather than an individual date), the ADP staff will separate the birthday and Christmas celebrations so that the children get a chance for two special days.

With regard to Christmas gifts, as always our field staff will buy a small gift for sponsored children (this is included in your €5 donation to fulfil the Christmas card). If you'd like to give more, we would encourage buying gifts that benefit the whole community - you can do this by selecting an additional gift featured in the Christmas card mailing. However if you would also like to send something to your sponsored child, please only send items that are small and light and fit in a flat A4 envelope (colouring books, notebooks and pens are the best received items) and post directly to the field office to the address shown on your sponsored child's picture folder.

World AIDS Day

Please don't forget that World AIDS Day is on 1st December. In order to mark this important day, World Vision Ireland will be campaigning to raise awareness of the effect this horrific illness has on people who live in extreme poverty, across the world.



WorldVision's new Christmas card



James, Grace and Tomás

Search for Volunteers

We are always looking for volunteers to help us out in the office in Rathmines, Dublin. We're a small team of just 13 people so you can imagine the mayhem, especially at Christmas! If you'd like to help us, even for a couple of hours a week, please call Rosaleen at (01) 498 0800.

Thoughtful Tots

Huge thanks to Cliodhna Daly from Rathfarnham in Dublin who asked that her friends donate to a collection for her family's sponsored child instead of giving gifts for her 8th birthday. Her generosity and that of her friends raised €500, allowing the Wainaina Family from Kenya to buy a much-appreciated plot of land.

6 year old twin boys James and Tomás donated proceeds from their birthday to buy a number of gifts from the gift catalogue. They are pictured below with their sister Grace.

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World Vision Ireland was founded in 1983 and is part of World Vision International, one of the world's leading international relief and development agencies. World Vision works towards ending poverty, fighting hunger and injustice, and bringing about lasting change for the better in the lives of more than 100 million people in some 100 countries worldwide.

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Please complete the form below in block capitals



World Vision

Yes

I'd like to become a World Vision Child Sponsor

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____ Tel: _____

I'm already a sponsor but I'd like to sponsor another child

I would prefer to sponsor a: Boy Girl No preference

At this rate: €25 one month €75 three months €150 six months €300 one year Other _____ Please specify

I would like to pay by cheque/postal order (make payable to World Vision Ireland) and post to

World Vision Ireland, The Mews, Garland House, Rathmines Park, Dublin 6.

OR

Please debit my Mastercard/Visa/Laser

Card #: Expiry Date:

Signature of Card Holder: _____ Date: _____

I would prefer to pay by standing order

Please send me an information pack

I can't sponsor a child right now
but here's my gift of € _____

Or simply call, text or go online:

1850 366 283

Text SPONSOR and your name to 51500*

www.worldvision.ie

* STANDARD TEXT MESSAGE RATES APPLY

When you have completed this form, please post in an envelope addressed to: World Vision Ireland, The Mews, Garland House, Rathmines Park, FREEPOST, Dublin 6

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