

Mike Dilger in South Africa

"Working as the BBC One Show's wild man, my year tends to be composed of hurtling around the UK travelling from the toe of Cornwall to the Outer Hebrides filming anything from pygmy shrews to basking sharks. With a couple of university degrees in biology and ecology and close to 30 years study in the field, 'wildlife' is very much what I do, which made it all the more exciting to be asked and have been involved in something so completely different.

As the One Show host Christine Bleakley was preparing for her Sport Relief water ski challenge I was asked if I'd like to travel

in her place to South Africa to cover three stories showing where some of the money raised by the Great British public gets spent. So with bags packed I travelled out to Johannesburg with the film crew to immerse myself firstly in a project supporting squatters rights and then on to Capetown to work with a charity which removes abused or abandoned children into care.

With two stories 'in the can' and one to go, I was beginning to feel beaten down by the endlessly depressing nature of the stories. In Johannesburg I felt

terrible sympathy for the squatters we met whom would probably never find a place they could call home, and in Capetown I was appalled at the level of neglect of the children in townships being torn apart by alcohol and drugs. Maybe I should have just stuck to animals, maybe I wasn't up to this hard-headed journalism? Either way I needed a positive story to end my trip to South Africa and restore my faith in humankind...

Fortunately that was provided by the wonderfully uplifting project New Life, which works out of a couple of shipping containers in the heart of the township of Uitsig. Founded by

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European Union visit Arunodhaya

Daniele Smadja was nearly swamped by excited children in the ICT Partner-run Guided Learning Centre in the Tiruvottiyur district in the north of Chennai. Ms Smadja is the Head of the European Union (EU) Delegation for India and, together with the Consulates General of France and Germany, she was visiting selected European Commission funded projects. The Guided Learning Centre was just one stop made, of many, whilst viewing ICT Partner Arunodhaya's impressive project sites which combine to form one of the most successful community mobilisation programmes in South Asia. It serves to protect children from early labour and other exploitation and abuse, and to empower women (mostly mothers) economically and socially.

On 15th February the small but highly influential group of delegates flew into Chennai and spoke with many of the mothers benefiting from the self-help groups in the slum communities. Here they learned that women had been able to cooperate in building small businesses, which have given them enough funds to provide support for their children in school and to look

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I(C)T is an international development organisation that works to help children living in poverty find the path to a brighter future. ICT Partners work with children that are made vulnerable through poverty, in particular, with street involved children and children at risk of becoming child labourers.

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Gerrie Smit, New Life is a community based strategy for providing help to children unable to go to school, who are provided with square meals and home-schooling at teachers' houses around the township. Providing much more than just food and an education however, this terrific project also gives structure, support and unconditional love to children who have had none of the comforts and delights that I had at their age. One little boy I met, who was being given a second chance by the project, was called Dino. At a similar age to when I was climbing trees and building dens in the back garden,



Dino was found by one of the New Life street workers living and sleeping in a car park. Abandoned due to his mother's addiction to crystal meth and his father incarceration in the local prison, New Life has since provided him with a home, a foster mum called Petronella (who also doubles as his teacher) and a chance to rediscover his childhood – and from what I saw he and many of the other children involved in the project were seizing the opportunity with both hands!

With my faith in humanity restored and my spirits finally lifted I bid farewell to my new South African friends and headed for home. Since my return, although I'm now back on the more familiar terrain of filming wildlife, scarcely a day passes when I don't wonder how firstly how my friend Dino is progressing and also secondly, how a little bit of money put directly into the right hands of those who care goes an awfully long way.



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after other family needs. In particular the tailoring centre, in which women learn the skills to make clothes and then are helped into marketing their skills as a business, drew approval from Ms Smadja who expressed her interest in the garments being made – school uniforms as it happens – and spent some time enjoying a chat with one of the women whilst she was at her sewing machine.

They also spoke to women from the community who were teaching in the interim schools, which are formed to help children back into school once their education has been interrupted. These women spoke of their enormous sense of self-respect, that they were part of something as constructive as helping the children in the community back into school. They told of the training they received in the techniques to help children learn the alphabet and the basic numeracy skills needed for entering state school and of the support they gave to many young children who

otherwise would be stuck in casual labour, sometimes abusive labour, for the rest of their lives.

However by far the most excitement came when the group visited the Guided Learning Centre. Here so many children came to see their guests and gathered round them excitedly, some wanting to touch their hands and to know their names. Ms Smadja talked with the children, some who had been withdrawn from shop work, or factory work, and who are now studying in the centre preparatory to entering state school, about their experiences and gave some gifts for the centre; and as she sat with the children it seemed as though they might completely cover her.

Some time was spent discussing matters with Ms Smadja and she was strong in voicing her, and the European Commission's, belief that this work is an investment in people, especially children, and is crucial to helping communities move away from poverty and therefore an approach that they strongly favour. ICT agrees.

Through the Eyes of...

Johanna Martlow

Joanna is a Community Coordinator for New Life Community Projects in Uitsig township in South Africa. Living in the Uitsig Community herself she is a strong woman who cares what happens to the children and young people in the townships of today. The project was featured in Sport Relief last month with Mike Dilger. Here she speaks to the International Children's Trust.



many problems at home, and that this house was a Community Home School of the New Life project.

Since then I had always wanted to work towards the social upliftment of my community. I joined the project as a home school teacher. Today I am the community co-ordinator of the project.

Seeing that it is a community project, we deal with a vast range of problems, as well as with the diverse needs of children and their families who live in poverty. Here one cannot do window dressing or simply ignore these problems – one has to face reality.

2. What keeps you going?

I am passionate about helping children and their families who live in

poverty. In this work I am able to realise my love for supporting these children and their parents. I can see the changes that we bring about in the lives of deprived children and their families. It is wonderful to see that these children are able laugh again, and that they feel happy because the project helps to solve many of the problems facing them and their parents. The community has developed trust in our project. The fact that I am able to build up positive relationships with the community makes this work, which is sometimes done under extremely difficult conditions, worthwhile. I can see how my personal involvement makes a difference in the lives of impoverished children and their families. The passion that each staff member has for the work also motivates me to carry on with it.

1. How did you get involved in this work?

One day, almost five years ago, I saw a group of children entering a home at a time in the morning where they should actually be in school. On investigating further, I discovered that these children were in fact street children who had

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More 2010 Dates for your diary

28th September:

This years Golf Day is at Walton Heath. If you or your company can field a team of 4, you can reserve your place on the day, and play alongside other golfers including a few famous names. Contact the ICT on 01733 319777 or admin@ictinfo.org.uk for more details.



ICT Patron Pete McGarvey with Gary Lineker and friends on the fairway.

28th October Annual ICT conference. Launching a month of campaigns until Universal Children's Day on 20th November. Child development will be discussed by a series of specialist speakers. Contact Alison@ictinfo.org.uk for further information.

Mid-late November House of Lords ICT supporters evening. Usually held in the River Room on a Tuesday evening. Watch this space.

Focus on ICT supporter: Bel Camargo



Brazilian Bel Camargo, pictured here with ex-ICT Chairman Marcus Lyon, is one of our most active supporters. She is currently living in England and studying at London School of Economics. Bel is a committed ICT fan and as well as regularly rattling buckets and tins for us on the streets of London, she ran last July's 10k London run and came along to all our donor functions. She is also a great photographer and has sent us some excellent quality photographs as well. Bel, many thanks for all you do!

September Golf Day

Last September our Patron Pete McGarvey held the second of his annual Sunningdale Golf Days and raised over £37,000 for the ICT. Teams of 4 made a shotgun start on the fairway of the UK's prestigious golf home and then enjoyed lunch in the dining room overlooking the start of the course. The famous Golf Day ICT auction took place and raised over £7,000 itself.



The Braemore Group have competed for two years running now, and look set to come back this year.

Printer cartridges recycled for the ICT

Think of ICT when your printer cartridge needs changing. Check whether your HP, Dell, Lexmark and Samsung cartridges can benefit us by visiting www.cashforcartridges.co.uk then send your used printer cartridges to Account R00119 'FREEPOST', The Recycling Centre, 13 Main Street, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5AA. The ICT could benefit by up to £3.50 per original cartridge so please get friends and relatives recycling. Remember to show 'Account R00119' on your envelope to ensure the funds get to the ICT. Every little cartridge helps! Any queries, please contact lisa@ictinfo.org.uk.

Discover Adventure: Open Challenges

If hiking up Kilimanjaro or cycling across the Sahara Desert is your lifelong dream why not fundraise for the ICT whilst you fulfil that dream! On the other hand if you prefer to take your adventures closer to home and think that walking along Hadrian's Wall is the most exciting goal of all then you can still do it for the ICT. Go online to www.discoveradventure.com and sign up to prepare for your challenge and fundraise for us at the same time. The open challenges on the website are supervised adventures, from which you can choose from many all over the world, by Discover Adventure staff teams. You can decide to simply pay for your entry which will in itself fundraise for us, or you can choose to fundraise to pay the costs of your entry and donate to us also. Contact the ICT office for more details.

LONDON 10km RUN Get your running shoes, the heat is on

The ICT is again entering a team of runners into the **ASICS London 10km** run on 11th July. This year our target is £10,000, so if you feel up to the challenge, please contact us, or if you know a friend or colleague who could run for us, please put them forward. The heat is on as we aim to raise more than ever before.

ADIDAS 5k WOMEN'S CHALLENGE

Hyde Park Sunday 6th September

The Adidas Women's 5km run on 5th September in Hyde Park is a challenge to all women everywhere. The run itself is organised to raise money for Breakthrough for Breast Cancer. If you however want to run for the ICT go to the Adidas Women's 5km www.womenschallenge.co.uk and enter online. You will be able to nominate the ICT to receive your donations.

HAPPY TO TALK!

If you belong to a social club, or group, whether at school, university, or workplace, or as part of the Rotary, Inner Wheel or Lions Clubs, or a Union and you would like the ICT to come and speak on all, or any part of, our work, we will be more than happy to discuss your needs.

We would like all supporters to send us an email so that we can contact them with information from time to time.

Please email lisa@ictinfo.org.uk

JOIN US

ICT is a membership organisation – Why not become involved, and help us raise awareness and funds, to ensure that we can continue building futures for children living in poverty?

SUPPORT US

- Donate • Sponsor a child
- Organise a fundraiser

Work with us to raise the funds needed to transform the lives of children in poverty. Information on giving is provided on the slip attached to the newsletter.

We would be happy to talk to you about any fundraising ideas you might have, and can provide suggestions (such as a sponsored fire-walk!), so please feel free to call our offices.

CONTACT US

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