



Challenge to Change

A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT IN PRESENTATION SCHOOLS
 2011-2012



THIS YEAR'S PROJECTS

Our Footprints, Our World	Presentation Primary Carrick-on-Suir	2
Indian Immersion Project	Presentation Secondary Ballingarry	6
When You Save Energy You Save the World	Presentation Primary Portarlinton	10
Human Rights For You Me, Everybody	Presentation Primary George's Hill	12
Sow and Grow – The Story of Our School Garden	Presentation Primary Clonmel	15
Fair Trade, Fair School, Fair Life	Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown	19
Barbie versus Ken	Scoil Bhríde Naofa Kildare	23
Near and Far – Presentation Girls at Home and Abroad	Presentation Primary Waterford	26
Life is Precious, So are Girls	Coláiste Bríde Secondary Clondalkin	28
Homelessness – At Home and Abroad	Presentation Senior Primary Mullingar	32
Dumping Our Waste on Others	Scoil Áine Clondalkin	35
Many Cultures – One World	St. Joseph's College Lucan	39
The River of Life	St. Joseph's GNS Mountmellick	41
Prejudice and Inequality in Education	Presentation Secondary Kilkenny	43
Famine Then and Now	Presentation Primary Maynooth	45
Climate Change – Its Effects on Poverty in East Africa	Presentation Secondary Clonmel	48
Switch on the Lights to Human Rights	Holy Trinity NS Fethard	51
Feast or Famine?	Sacred Heart Primary Portlaoise	53
Less Education leads to More Exploitation	Presentation Secondary Mitchelstown	55
The Slums of India – A Moral Issue	Scoil Chríost Rí Portlaoise	59
Scoil Mhuire in Bloom	Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin	61
Sustainability in Our Community	Scoil Mhuire Portlaoise	63
Knit a Square for Africa	Scoil Mhuire Thurles	65
Energy Use - How Low can You Go?	Presentation Primary Kilkenny	67
India in Our Eyes	Presentation Secondary Thurles	69
Human Trafficking	Presentation Secondary Waterford	71
All Work and No Play – Becoming the Person You're Not!	Presentation Secondary Warrenmount	72
Poverty in Ireland	Our Lady's College Drogheda	75

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

is a development education project for young people attending Presentation schools.

It aims to

- Raise awareness and bring about a greater understanding of global issues
- Create and foster a critical mindset in relation to inequality, social justice and human rights
- Experience at first hand in a real and concrete way how local action can impact positively on global inequality
- Forge closer links between the Irish students and those in developing countries
- Develop an open, sharing and collaborative dialogue between our school communities and those of our Presentation network abroad
- Disseminate information and good practice

The **VISION** of the project is driven by the Presentation charism and ethos which embraces the challenge of working with those who are marginalised and excluded, for whatever reason. Justice, human rights, sustainability and promoting right relationships are central to the Presentation mission.

By informing the students and the wider community the project will bring about a heightened awareness, a social consciousness, a broader vision and an appreciation of developmental issues.

The **Congregational Gathering of the Presentation Sisters** took place in Summer 2012. The Gathering calls us ...

- To be immersed in the lives of poor and marginalised people, who open us to the Mystery of Love, and to be prophetic voices for them for the transformation of unjust systems locally and globally
- To live sustainably, and to use our resources creatively for the promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.



OUR FOOTPRINTS, OUR WORLD

Presentation Primary School Carrick-on-Suir



Our project examined **climate change**, what does it actually mean, what causes climate change and what long-term effects this has on the poorer people in our world?

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To coincide with our **fourth Green Flag**, the Transport Flag, we decided to explore the concerns we have, as children, about our environment
- To look at what we can do **locally** to stop the impact of climate change
- To learn what we can do here in Carrick to improve the lives of others far away on the other side of the world
- To examine the needless harm being done to our planet by our industrialised world
- To compare the **carbon footprint** of an African child with that of a child from Carrick
- To make a connection with the lives of our grandparents, how they travelled and how they appreciated food in season

TARGET GROUP

With the support of the whole school community we all worked together to create an awareness of our world, an awareness of the issue of **food miles**, our carbon footprint and the threat to our global environment. Children from Fifth and Sixth Classes led the project.



ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Dara Dever, Green Flag Coordinator, gave a powerpoint presentation on Climate Change to the senior classes.
- We looked at food production and packaging.
- We organised a whole school poster design competition.
- We had many **WOW Days** (Walk to school on Wednesday). On 1 February we had a celebratory **Funky Hair Day** where the pupils walked to school wearing their high viz jackets. Travel themed games and quizzes were held throughout the school. The Sixth Class girls visited the local nursing home to chat with the residents about travel long ago and everybody looked resplendent in their new hairstyles especially the teachers!
- Using **online research** the pupils identified the areas of the world hardest hit by climate change.
- All pupils sang the Green Safe Cross Code song.
- The chosen slogan from our school slogan competition was **Be Keen to Travel Green.**
- The pupils calculated their own carbon footprint. This exercise highlighted how we can make simple changes in our homes and school to cut down on carbon emissions.
- Eoin Kelly (a famous Tipperary hurler) came to the school at our request to wear a cotton shoe lace to highlight Fair Trade and the plight of African farmers.
- We followed the journey of the normal food we eat daily from source to table.

- We created a **Food Miles Game** whereby a person had to guess how many miles our favourite dinners travelled.
- We put the **Millennium Development Goals** into simpler language.
- We compared and contrasted the carbon footprint of a twelve-year old girl from Carrick-on-Suir with that of a twelve-year old from **Mali** in Africa.

OUTCOMES

- The pupils realised that our use and misuse of **fossil fuels** has an immediate effect on climate change. The effect of our **carbon dioxide emissions** is felt mainly in developing countries many, many miles away from us.
- More pupils are eager to walk to school because of our **WOW** days.
- We have created **discerning shoppers** who pay attention to the country of origin when buying food in the local supermarkets.
- We are trying to shop local and **shop with the seasons**.
- We can make **simple changes** to our homes and school to cut carbon emissions.
- We have an awareness of developing countries.
- The pupils who attended the Seminar have grown in confidence as a result of the experience of **public speaking**.



CONCLUSION

A wealth of teaching, investigating and research opportunities was created by getting involved in this project. There was a great sense of **team work** and **co-operative learning** as the children in all classes worked on achieving our fourth Green Flag for Transport. We realised that we need regular reminders to conserve energy and respect Mother Earth. The Seminar with its workshops and variety of displays proved to be a very positive and rewarding experience for those who attended.

WHAT THE PUPILS SAID

"It was great to visit other school projects." Ellen O'Donnell

"The drumming workshop was a WOW experience especially playing in front of such a large audience." Sienna Reynolds



Co-ordinators: Anne Millea and Annette Lynch



A Challenging Thought ...

In May 2011, the Mozambican Government approved the new Poverty Reduction Strategy 2011-2014. Its main goal is the reduction in people living on less than 50 cents (\$US) a day from 55% to 42% in 2014.

[Irish Aid Annual Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

INDIAN IMMERSION PROJECT

Presentation Secondary School Ballingarry



We are involved in shared learning with our partner school St. Anthony's School, Chennai, India. We investigated the many aspects of life in India and in particular the life of the children in our partner school. In addition, our students researched projects on sustainable development and social justice issues. We shared our findings with our Indian partners.

AIMS

- To establish links with our partner school - *St Anthony's School, Chennai, India*
- To visit our partner school and the surrounding community
- To engage in paired learning, shared learning projects, cultural activities
- To visit slums and schools in the area
- To accommodate a reciprocal visit to our school by teachers from Chennai

TARGET GROUP

Fifth Year students who shared their learning with the whole school.

ACTIONS

- Visit to our partner school in Chennai in November by Mrs Angela Cahill (Principal), Sr. Teresa Walsh, Ms Helena Bourke (Co-ordinator), Mr Brian Moran and Mrs Margaret Murphy.
- 'A day in the life' - each student made a video of their day to day activities - (family, school life, sporting life, entertainment and farm activities). The purpose of this was to give a snapshot of our culture to students in St. Anthony's.
- **Each student** made a scrap book of things in their lives that were important to them. This was brought to other schools in Chennai
- Balingarry students brought with them their projects on a range of issues - justice, environmental and sustainable development as part of shared learning activities.
- Students interviewed, with the help of interpreters from St. Anthony's, children in the slums, students in orphanages and teenagers about their day-to-day life in India.
- When the students returned, a report on their findings was presented to all the students in Balingarry.
- In January, staff and students at Balingarry welcomed two teachers from St. Anthony's - Mrs. Romila, Mr. Clement and the school's Principal, Sr. Jeyarani.



OUTCOMES

- Students gained a great insight into Indian culture
- They witnessed at firsthand the similarities and differences between the lifestyle and culture of Indian and Irish students
- They had an increased appreciation and awareness of issues - arranged marriages, human rights issues, environmental issues and justice issues
- Students are still in contact with students in St. Anthony's mainly through Facebook.

"For me my trip to India was something that will always remain embedded in my mind and the centre of my heart. This was a new experience for me - something I had never done in my life but was willing to take on. The hospitality of those who may not even have a home to live in ... but still had a smile and a welcoming hello. From the unwelcoming smells to the hot and spicy food, we were a long way away from bacon and cabbage. My journey was much more than an overseas adventure - it was the foundation for my new state of mind." Jacinta O'Grady

"When I look back on my life before this trip I find it hard to believe how unaware I was of the world around me. I didn't see a world past Slievenamon or the hills of Slievardagh. I had to move outside my comfort zone and step into what I thought would be the frightening world of the unknown. On arrival I can't deny I was scared but with the help of my friends and teachers I knew I wasn't alone. I never felt alone due to the friendliness and warm welcome of each new person I met. I will never forget this trip - the smiles, the laughter and the friends made will always hold a place in my heart." Jane Prendergast



Our trip to Chennai was most rewarding for all involved. On a positive level, students learned and became acutely aware of life as it really was in a most engaging way. They also learned how to support one another at difficult stages of their experience. On the negative front, students found it difficult to cope with the poverty and lack of basic human rights they encountered. The time leading up to the trip was also difficult as each student had to raise a lot of money to fund the journey.

LINKAGES

The principal link was made with our partner school. It is hoped that future Transition Year students will build on this link. Teachers are still in contact with each other and plans are being made to further develop this relationship.

IMPACT ON THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

On return to school students gave a verbal and visual presentation of their experiences to the whole school. In January the Principal and two teachers from St. Anthony's visited our school and met with the rest of the students and teachers.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Various different community activities were planned for our visitors:

- Farm visit
- Visit to the local co-operative
- A night of traditional Irish music
- Visits to local places of historical interest

CONCLUSION

Overall the project was very successful. Both students and teachers gained significant insight into a world that was unknown. The experience has left an indelible mark on all of us. Indeed, many of the students said it was a life-changing event. It is hoped that their experience will bear fruit as they leave school and venture into the future taking with them a profound and meaningful awareness of global issues they have encountered.

Co-ordinator: Margaret Murphy

A Challenging Thought ...



“International law is clear: No matter who you are, or where you live, your voice counts ... Let us unite to defend your right to make it heard.”

Ban Ki-moon

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

WHEN YOU SAVE ENERGY YOU SAVE THE WORLD

Presentation Primary School Portarlington



This year's Challenge to Change project investigated energy consumption and the ways in which we can conserve energy. Four class groups worked on different areas: **Energy Conservation** in our own school; **Global Warming**; **Renewable Energy**; **Nuclear Energy**.

AIMS

- To become aware of the beauty of our natural environment and to appreciate it
- To **raise awareness** of energy use at home and in school
- To instil a sense of **duty to care** for our natural resources
- To promote teamwork, co-operation and a sense of fair play
- To learn about **choices** we can make to reduce energy
- To promote the motto of **reduce, reuse, recycle**
- To **integrate this theme across the curriculum** - English, Irish, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Art, Music



TARGET GROUP

Third, Fourth and Fifth Classes carried out the main research and put the project together but it was aimed at all children in the school and they all became involved in some way. We also had a Parents' Day to spread awareness.

OUTLINE OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

- We researched using books, internet, surveys, letters, emails
- We made our own briquettes from shredded paper
- We recycled - phones, clothes, paper, batteries and print cartridges
- We produced a play on energy conservation.
- Senior classes enjoyed the **Wood of Life Exhibition**
- S.E.I. gave a presentation in February
- We displayed a **Green Float** with an energy theme as part of the St. Patrick's Day Parade



Co-ordinator: *Mary Kieran*



A Challenging Thought ...

“The world spends almost twice as much on weapons in one day than the United Nations spends for our global mission of peace, human rights and development in one year.

\$1.7 trillion was spent last year on weapons. That is an enormous cost to people who go to bed hungry ... children who die because they lack clean water... farmers who cannot till land because it is polluted by mines.”

[Remarks to opening session of the General Assembly High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR YOU, ME, EVERYBODY

Presentation Primary School George's Hill



Fourth Class pupils this year were interested in the topic of **Human Rights**, mainly because of all the coverage in the media currently about the problems in **Syria**. They heard the term human rights and saw flashes of images of humans suffering on the news and in the newspapers. They wanted to know what are human rights and to whom do they apply? The children garnered empathy for people and children around the world who are denied their basic human rights i.e. the basic rights that all humans are entitled to in order to live a full, healthy, happy life. Children also felt extremely lucky about their own lives here in Ireland and how in comparison with others in the world our problems seem quite trivial.

AIMS

- To learn about **Human Rights** i.e. the basic rights that all humans are entitled to in order to live a full, healthy, happy life
- To have an understanding of the **UN Declaration of Human Rights** and the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**.
- To learn about human rights abuses around the world e.g. child labour in developing and developed countries, child soldiers in Africa.
- To become aware of the agencies involved in helping to fight for human rights for all.



TARGET GROUP

Our target group was the children, parents and teachers in our school. We hoped to educate them about human rights, the basic rights. We also wanted to highlight the human rights injustices that are occurring worldwide. Furthermore we informed this group about the trojan work that NGOs, such as Trócaire, Concern and Amnesty International, are doing in the area of human rights.

ACTIONS

- We worked on the **Lift Off** series from Amnesty International and the associated activities.
- We learned about the **UN Declaration of Human Rights** and the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**.
- We were visited by **speakers** from Amnesty International, Concern and Trócaire who spoke with us about their human rights work.
- We visited the **Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre** on O'Connell Street, Dublin 1 to learn about their work overseas.



- We participated in **Friendship Week**, an Amnesty International initiative. We made friendship hands, played friendship games, wrote acrostic poems using the word friend and our best friends' names. We also sold Friendship Bracelets (made by Guatemalan Street Children) for €2 each to fundraise for Amnesty International's work. We raised over €300 and presented this to Amnesty International.
- As a whole school we supported Trócaire's Lenten Campaign by taking home Trócaire boxes.
- Our school's **Intercultural Day** took place on Friday 18th May 2012. We took this opportunity to display our project on human rights to the whole school community. We spoke with other children, teachers and parents about our work on human rights and we also sold our friendship bracelets.

OUTCOMES

- We have learned that Human Rights are for everybody.
- We know about the existence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of The Child (which affords extra rights for children on top of those contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).
- We have an understanding of the agencies that are helping with human rights injustices worldwide.
- We raised over €300 for Amnesty International and encouraged our parents, friends and teachers to support this agency and others like it going forward.
- We participated in Trócaire's Lenten Campaign by taking home Trócaire boxes.
- We now understand how lucky we are compared with some of our peers around the world.

Co-ordinator: Lorna McAuley



A Challenging Thought ...

Internationally, the number of children out of school fell from 106 million to 67 million between 1999 and 2009. Tanzania and Zambia are both very near to achieving Millennium Development Goal 2 of universal primary education.

[UN MDG Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

SOW AND GROW THE STORY OF OUR SCHOOL GARDEN

Presentation Primary School Clonmel



*"The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth."*

Dorothy Frances Gurney

This year we decided to start a school garden! Over the years, pupils often grew plants such as sunflowers and beans in small containers in their classrooms. In recent years a small number of classes experimented with lettuce and potatoes in pots in the yard. This year we embraced the challenge of building outdoor beds where all pupils can learn about, and witness the miracle of growth at first hand.

We hoped to learn more about

- **Plants** - how they grow, factors that contribute to good growth and the work involved
- **Plants as food** - nutrients provided by various plants and crops, plants grown in Ireland and other countries where our food comes from
- **Sustainability** - factors that affect the earth and its resources around the world
- **Caring for the earth** - taking responsibility for our environment and for the care and protection of the earth
- **Working together** - developing skills such as problem-solving, co-operation and communication
- **The world!** Creating a garden will involve Science, SPHE, History, Geography, Mathematics, English and more.



Step 1

We invited parents and family members to help us start the garden. After consideration and research, it was decided to (a) improve the existing flower bed between the two playgrounds and (b) to make raised beds in an area just off the top yard. These will be easily accessible to pupils and staff which will make maintenance easier.

Step 2

Zoe's father, Martin, and our caretaker, Seán, cleared the overgrown flower bed. They lifted the many bulbs and stored them in a large bin. The heathers were replanted beside the path to the staff car park. The roses were replanted in a garden. New topsoil was delivered. Once this was done, pupils replanted the bulbs. They were mainly daffodil bulbs but there were some crocuses and tulips too. Older pupils helped the young children. Everyone loved this activity. Martin planted a box hedge at both ends of the bed and we planted some herbs inside this area. Three miniature fruit trees were planted; apple, pear and plum. We had a wonderful flower display for Spring.

Step 3

Seán and Martin then took on the task of making three raised timber beds. These are on the platform outside Ms Tobin's infant class. We chose this spot so that pupils will have easy access to the garden. Making the beds was a big job and the men spent a few days working on them. Seán put in pebbles for drainage. Some parents helped to bring soil in wheelbarrows to fill the bed. Planting began in March when Ms Flanagan and her pupils planted potatoes and onions.



Step 4

Over the Easter holidays, a safety railing was erected as it would not be safe for pupils to work on the platform without this.

Step 5

After the Easter holidays Sixth Class pupils Chloe, Julia, Oonagh and Rebecca painted the beds with the help of Ms O'Connell and Seán. There were many things to be considered - weather, the need for protective clothing, the challenge of coordinating times that suited everyone.



Step 6

Classes started planting in earnest. Ms O'Dwyer's class planted more potatoes. Mrs. Flanagan helped pupils from Rang 6 and Rang 2 to plant strawberry plants and lettuce. Ms O'Dwyer and her pupils introduced our school scarecrow! Ms Moroney's class (Rang 4) planted the carrots that they grew from seed.

Step 7

Maintenance! Gardens need care and effort. Thank you to Ms Flanagan and her pupils in Rang 1 for their ongoing weeding of the raised beds and to pupils in Rang 6 for work on the old flower bed. We learned that weeds thrive in open spaces amid the rain and sun! Sixth Class girls kindly stayed after school to plant bedding plants in the flower bed. We are still not sure if this is the best solution for this bed as a lot of open space still remains and we will need to weed regularly during the summer. As we expected, making a garden involves a lot of effort and a lot of learning. Overall, we are delighted with our work and our results.



Related work

Many classes planted seeds and grew sunflowers, carrots and so on. Wonderful paintings and drawings on the theme of gardens and flowers decorated the school and our classes all year. We read poetry and inspirational quotes on the theme. Rang 5 researched the plants we had decided to plant and designed QR codes for us to read. This project appealed to all ages and enabled us to learn new information and skills in a most enjoyable way. We look forward to developing our garden for years to come.

"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin." Shakespeare

Co-ordinator: *Noelle Lambert*



A Challenging Thought ...

Irish Aid supported Trócaire's programme in South Central Somalia to provide 30,000 vulnerable people with access to food, water and the means of making a living.

[Irish Aid Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

FAIR TRADE, FAIR SCHOOL, FAIR LIFE

Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown



This year our Transition Year students completed a Challenge to Change project which we hope brought about an awareness of **Fairtrade**, in particular fair trade cotton and cotton farmers in developing countries.

LOCAL ACTION - GLOBAL IMPACT!

The Transition Year class tried to promote this by sourcing fairtrade cotton t-shirts and by getting our current First Years to purchase fairtrade cotton t-shirts for their P.E. gear for the coming year. By doing this, we hoped that this positive ethos will spread throughout our school community and more people will become aware of how buying something as small as a fairtrade t-shirt can help change lives in developing countries.

AIM

The aim of this project was to get people thinking about Fairtrade cotton and to show how they can support Fairtrade, by buying fairtrade food and clothes such as t-shirts.

ACTIONS

On Friday, 28th October, five students went to a **Fairtrade Conference** in Dublin Castle. The first speaker, Jan O'Sullivan, spoke about what the government was doing to support fairtrade. The second speaker, Melanie Drea, spoke about cotton and the process involved. During this conference we learned that Fairtrade has

established a three year-project and it has been launched in the UK, France and Ireland. Year One focuses on telling the story to the public. Year Two involves establishing commercial and business opportunities for cotton. Year Three relates to procurement.

The conference gave us great ideas for our project. We were intrigued by the prospect of fairtrade cotton. It was for this reason we decided to include fairtrade cotton in our project.



FAIRTRADE
IRELAND

Our next step was to contact various stores to see if they sold fairtrade cotton t-shirts. The first shop we contacted was Penneys but unfortunately they had no particular fairtrade policy. The second shop we contacted was Tesco. The manager informed us that they did not stock a white fairtrade cotton t-shirt. The third shop we contacted was Marks and Spencers. Disappointingly, they informed us that they were currently making **The Big Switch** to an ethnic policy. However, this was not what we were looking for. The final shop we contacted was Dunnes. They informed us that they did have a fair trade policy but most of their cotton stock was in their major stores such as Dublin and Cork. They didn't have an exact price on the t-shirt.

The lack of feedback from the stores proved difficult for us. It was becoming impossible to source white fairtrade cotton t-shirts. It was time to move on to plan B!

Our plan B was to try and source a white fairtrade t-shirt online. We found that there were two main websites that sold fairtrade cotton t-shirts. The first website, Alibaba.com, stocked a number of fairtrade cotton t-shirts in different styles and colours. They were priced at

\$3 each, not including delivery. The second website, micahclothing.co.nz, also stocked a wide variety of t-shirts. However, unfortunately, none of them had a collar. This would not work for us because our junior students are required to have a collar on their t-shirt for their P.E uniform. Overall it was going to cost the school \$501 (excluding delivery) for the 167 junior students. This proved too costly for the school.



We surveyed parents on the purchase of fairtrade cotton t-shirts. The feedback indicated that the majority of parents were:

- Unaware of fairtrade cotton before reading our survey
- Willing to spend more money on fairtrade cotton t-shirts as opposed to standard cotton t-shirts
- Willing to purchase a fairtrade cotton t-shirt as part of the P.E uniform
- Not willing to travel outside their locality to purchase a fairtrade t-shirt

In order to raise awareness of fairtrade and our project we designed and sent home a flier giving an overall insight into our project. We included a detailed piece about our project in our school newsletter. Both of these highlighted our project leading to increased awareness within our school community and many

students, teachers and parents began asking various questions.

A group of students made a presentation to **several primary schools** in our locality. The children displayed a lot of enthusiasm and interest in our presentation which included a powerpoint, DVD, posters, stickers, pictures. Overall the presentation proved to be a success.

On Saturday, 21st April, a group of Transition Year students attended a **fairtrade talk in the Arboretum** in Leighlinbridge. The speakers informed us about their trip to Costa Rica. The talk also covered fairtrade, pineapple, coffee and sugar cane farms in Nicaragua. We learned a lot about fairtrade. As a class group we were even more determined to raise awareness of fairtrade.



This year **Fairtrade Fortnight** was from the 27th February to 11th March 2012. To help raise awareness both of our project and of the difficulties that farmers in developing countries face, we decided to hold several events during this fortnight. We held a **Fairtrade Tasting Day** and students and teachers alike thoroughly enjoyed this. We also organised a **poster competition** for First Years which led to great competitiveness and fun. We had a **Ben and Jerry's ice cream tasting day** which was enjoyed by all. We distributed fliers in relation to fairtrade and our Challenge to Change project. All of these activities were a huge success.

OUTCOMES

The overall outcome of our Challenge to Change project is positive. As a class group we are now more aware of fairtrade. We promoted fairtrade within our school and local community. We learned and informed people that fairtrade products are not only foods such as tea, coffee, chocolate, bananas. We highlighted that fairtrade also includes materials such as cotton. Our main outcome was that we as a class group, along with our teacher Ms. Delahunty, were capable of raising awareness of this within our school and local community.

STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"I never knew fairtrade existed until we took part in this project. It's a wider issue than you could imagine."

"I thoroughly enjoyed doing this project and I hope our project made a difference within our school and local community."

"Before doing this project I never really gave much thought to human rights issues but because of this project I am now more aware of the impact."

"From participating in this project I learned to respect the rights of other people."

WHAT THE ADULTS SAID

"I admire these young people's enthusiasm for fair-trade."

"I think it's an excellent idea to have such a project as part of the Transition Year religion course because it teaches the students not to take things for granted."

"Before being made aware of fairtrade and all it consists of I never really knew that purchasing even one jar of coffee could make such a huge difference to coffee farmers."

"The students of Transition Year have made me aware of how important fairtrade is."

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately we were not successful in implementing the fairtrade cotton t-shirt as part of the current school uniform. The main reason for this is that we were unable to source the t-shirt locally. Our only option was to source the t-shirt online. This proved to be too expensive for parents.

A recommendation, suggested by our school Principal, was to introduce a fairtrade cotton scarf as part of the school uniform.

However, we did achieve the biggest aim of our project which was to raise awareness of fairtrade. We, as a class group along with our teacher Ms. Delahunty, feel and believe that it is very important to raise awareness of fairtrade and we will endeavour to continue to do this. We hope that one day our work might inspire more people to help the fairtrade cause.

Co-ordinator: Yvonne Delahunty

BARBIE VERSUS KEN

Scoil Bhríde Naofa Kildare



Our project is about gender inequality around the world. Gender inequality is when one gender gets treated differently than the other. This can take many different forms. We studied girls in education, forced marriages and maternal health.

AIMS

- To raise awareness about gender inequality throughout our school and the local community
- To raise awareness globally through our blog
- To raise money for a charity that supports the education of girls

TARGET GROUP

Our target group for raising awareness was our whole school community - pupils, teachers and parents.

WHAT WE DID

- We wrote a Christmas play called **It's a Girls' World** about gender inequality and presented it to all our parents and some of the other classes in our school.
- We set up a blog and twitter account called **sbnbarbievsken.blogspot.com**
- We held a non-uniform day and raised €1,020 for the **Harambee Mukuru Education Fund** charity.
- Visitors from the Harambee Mukuru Charity came to our class to discuss their work and they explained where our money would be going. Brian McCormaic spoke about the challenges faced by girls in Kenya.
- We **planted a tree** in our school garden in memory of all the girls around the world who have no basic education.

- We created **SBN News** and made **video reports** based on our project which we posted on our blog.
- We made presentations to all the other classes about gender inequality.
- We made **posters** about Gender Inequality for our presentation board.
- Having discussed stereotyping in Ireland and in magazines, we **conducted research** relating to body image and the pressure placed on girls in particular.
- We created a wooden cut-out called **Hannah** of all the negative media images and headlines that we found relating to body image pressure being placed on girls in our town and around the world.
- We worked with a dance group called **Synergy and Light** who specialise in Laban style dance training.
- The Kenyan Ambassador visited our school for a **Celebration Day** and we performed our dance for her.
- We had a visitor in from **Concern** to talk to us about Gender Inequality.
- We watched a **UNICEF** film called **To Educate a Girl**.
- To mark the Ambassador's visit we taught a welcome song in **Swahili** to the whole school.
- We engaged in an **Art workshop** with the dance group Synergy and Light so that we could express our feelings about the project through art.

WHAT WORKED WELL

- The **blog** was extremely easy to monitor and set up and it cut down on the paper aspect of the project. It also allowed parents to see how the project was progressing.
- The dance company **Synergy and Light** showed another aspect to the project by choreographing a piece with the children based on their emotions whilst doing the project.
- The charity **Harambee Mukuru** visited the class on numerous occasions to discuss Gender Inequality and to show us where the money we raised would be going.
- The **Kenyan Embassy** was very obliging with their visit and schedule. This helped to involve the whole school in a celebration of Kenya.



LINKAGES

- Synergy and Light dance company www.synergyandlight.com Niall O'Connell
- Harambee Mukuru charity www.harambee-mukuru.com Brian McCormaic
- Concern- Liam Barnard was an excellent speaker
- Kenyan Embassy- Cecelia, Personal Secretary to the Ambassador

POSITIVE IMPACT

The school community was directly affected as the pupils made presentations to each class and held a non-uniform day to raise money.

During the Ambassador's visit the whole school community was involved as well as various people in the local community such as the Arts Council, local politicians and the local convent. Local businesses helped us plan the day for the Ambassador's visit and sponsored food on the day. It was like a celebration to mark the end of the project and highlighted the work of the children during the Challenge to Change project.

CONCLUSION

- Excellent topic to do especially in an all girls' class but would be very interesting with a mixed class also.
- The link made with the charity and the personal attention received was definitely a highlight as the children knew the personal stories of the girls their money was helping and received regular updates throughout the year about the progress of the girls.
- The dance group Synergy and Light went above and beyond the call of duty for rehearsing and performance and brought a new dimension of emotion to the project that would not have been possible otherwise. They allowed the girls to show their frustration at the world as well as their compassion through dance.
- The blog was an easy platform to manage and encouraged the children to come up with ideas to put on it.
- Inviting the Ambassador was a lovely way to mark the end of the project and the end of the school year.

Co-ordinator: *Gráinne Nugent*



A Challenging Thought ...

The school enrolment rate of girls aged 6 in Mozambique increased from 58.1% in 2005 to 68.8% in 2011. Irish Aid played a role in supporting this change.

[Irish Aid Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

NEAR AND FAR PRESENTATION GIRLS AT HOME AND ABROAD

Presentation Primary School Waterford



INTRODUCTION

We are Fifth Class pupils from the Presentation Primary School in Waterford. We worked together as a whole class and in individual groups to find out more about the lives of our fellow Presentation students in the Philippines and how their lives compared and contrasted with ours. One of our teachers, Mrs. Kinsella, contacted Binalbagan Catholic College on the island of **Negros** in the **Philippines** so we could interview the girls there and that was our starting point.

AIMS

- To find out more about girls of our age in the Philippines, how/where they live, the type of houses and community in which they live
- To find out more about their school, their school day, their school uniform and the subjects they study
- To find out more about their families
- To find out about the environment, weather, climate, crops and agriculture in the Philippines

- To find out more about what type of food they eat everyday and on special occasions. We provided samples of Filipino fruit on our display stand.
- To investigate feasts and events in the Philippines, when they occur and how they are celebrated.

ACTIONS

We had a brainstorming session in our class so we could discuss what areas we wanted to question the Filipino students about and then divided our class of 24 girls into six different groups so that each group could focus on a different area. The different topics covered many elements relevant to the everyday lives of girls in Ireland but, as we delved deeper, we discovered that not all our questions were relevant to girls of our age in the Philippines.

The different topics included

Events and Feasts
 School
 Family
 Food
 Environment
 Houses



Each group formulated a list of questions and this was e-mailed to the Philippines. We had a visiting speaker, Sr. Anne Healy who worked in the Philippines, and after speaking to her we were able to refine our list of questions.

In order to gather more information we researched the internet and contacted the **Filipino Embassy** in Dublin. A visiting teacher home from the Philippines gave us valuable insights into life in the Philippines and loaned us beautiful artwork, jewellery, clothing and the local Filipino currency (pesos) to enhance our project.

EVALUATION

We feel that we did meet our objectives as we discovered a lot about life in the Philippines. Our interview with Sr. Anne Healy was very helpful and informative and Mrs. Kinsella was very helpful in organising the whole process despite the fact that she retired in March. We really appreciated her time and effort. We had great fun doing this project and are very proud of our work.

DID WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- Certainly, we established contact with a group of girls just like us and hope to keep the doors of communication open in the future.
- We discovered some fascinating information about how they live and through our project shared that information with the rest of our school community and other schools within the Presentation community.

Co-ordinator: Catherine Kinsella

LIFE IS PRECIOUS, SO ARE GIRLS

Coláiste Bríde Presentation Secondary School Clondalkin



This year Coláiste Bríde focused on raising awareness of **gender inequality** in the developing world. In countries such as **India, Afghanistan, Sudan and Bangladesh**, females are treated as second-class citizens with very little opportunity to pursue their dreams - having no rights to an education and a career. Through the Challenge to Change project, Transition Year students aimed to raise awareness of the issue in the school and in the wider community.

AIMS

- To raise awareness of gender inequality in developing countries
- To carry out research in groups on the topic and then present the findings as a powerpoint presentation to the whole class
- To invite a guest speaker from **Plan Ireland** to give a presentation on the topic to our class
- To write a letter and present a petition on behalf of the class to the **Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eamon Gilmore**, to inform him about the Challenge to Change project
- To carry out fundraising activities to raise money for the charity organisation Plan Ireland which is currently campaigning against gender inequality in developing countries

OBJECTIVES

- Students wanted to raise awareness on the topic of gender inequality through doing a **poster campaign** in the school, giving a presentation on the topic to a Second Year CSPE class, carrying out fundraising activities through doing a cake sale and in addition holding a poster and writing competition in the school.
- In doing research, students hoped to gain a better understanding of the topic. In groups, they gave a **presentation** on different aspects of the topic to their fellow classmates.
- Students also hoped to gain a better understanding of the topic by inviting a guest speaker from Plan Ireland to give a presentation on their campaign *Because I am a girl*.
- In writing to Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore, students hoped that he will use his position as Minister for Foreign Affairs to encourage countries such as India and Uganda to implement the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC)** within their countries.

TARGET GROUP

In doing this project, young people were particularly targeted. The fact that Coláiste Bríde is an all-girls school, students were encouraged to reflect upon their own lives in comparison with girls living in developing countries. Challenge to Change students gave a presentation on the topic to a **Second Year CSPE class** who were doing their action project on gender inequality. This enabled the CSPE class to get a deeper insight into what was happening around the world.



ACTIONS

- Students researched the topic of gender inequality in developing countries and presented powerpoint presentations in the class.
- Students viewed various documentary films on gender inequality and we also watched the films *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Blood Diamond* and *Freedom Writers*.
- Students were involved in a class **debate** on the topic of *Children should not be working in factories in developing countries*. Those who were for the motion acted as factory employers and those who were against were acting as protestors.
- A guest speaker from Plan Ireland gave an informative presentation to the class on the work they do in developing countries and how gender inequality affects the female population within such countries.
- Students held a **writing competition** within the class in which each student had to pretend she was a girl living in a developing country having no access to education, being forced to work in harsh conditions and being forced into marriage.
- Students held a poster competition on the topic of gender inequality with the slogan **Girl Power: All girls should be treated as equal**.

- Students held two fundraising events for Plan Ireland by having a lunchtime cake sale and having a green accessories day during Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- Students raised awareness within the school by making announcements over the intercom and presenting their project to a Second Year **CSPE** class

who are also doing their **action project** on gender inequality.

- Finally, students decided it would be important to carry out a petition and write a letter to the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore to highlight their concerns on the issue.

OUTCOMES

- Students actively engaged in doing the project and gained a deeper insight on the topic of gender inequality in developing countries.
- Students thoroughly researched the topic in order to make a presentation to their classmates.
- Plan Ireland provided insightful information on their work in developing countries and provided information on the *Because I am girl* campaign which aims to raise awareness of gender inequality in developing countries.
- Students enjoyed doing the class debate as it provided a forum where individual students could voice their opinions and it also enabled students to **get into the mindset** of how factory employers and governments in developing countries have no regard for children's rights.
- Students really enjoyed the fundraising events for Plan Ireland and they actively got involved in promoting the events through doing poster campaigns and making announcements over the intercom.
- Students gained an appreciation of having the opportunity to receive an education and to be able to make decisions for themselves in comparison with young girls in many developing countries who are subjected to a male dominated society.
- Finally, in doing this project, students further developed their presentation skills, organisational skills, communication skills and research skills.

WHAT WORKED WELL

The topic of gender inequality enabled students to have a genuine interest in the issue as they were able to learn how girls their own age live in other parts of the world. Most students were unaware of how oppressed females were and how young girls are forced into marriage at the age of fifteen. The fact the topic was relevant greatly contributed to the Challenge to Change project working well. In addition, the project was actually **timetabled for Transition Year students** which worked particularly well to enable tasks and activities to be completed.



LINKAGES

- Plan Ireland made a presentation to the class on the topic of gender inequality in developing countries.
- Challenge to Change students inspired Second Year students to do their action project on the same topic through doing a presentation for the class. As a result, UNICEF were invited to the school to give a presentation on their work in developing countries to the Second Year group.
- A letter and a petition were sent to the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore informing him of the project.
- The school community as a whole and the families of students were informed of the project.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The project had a positive impact as a whole school approach was very much part of the campaign. Through doing fundraising within the school, the cake sale and the green accessories day in March, all students were informed about the campaign and encouraged to get involved. The poster competition was open to all year groups. Challenge to Change students had to promote the competition by going to individual classes and informing them about the theme of the poster which successfully contributed to the project awareness campaign. In addition, families of students were informed about the project through doing the fundraising events and doing project work at home.

CONCLUSION

The Challenge to Change project provided the opportunity for Transition Year students to really experience doing something different and to be able to make a difference in society. Many students commented on how much they enjoyed learning about the lives of people living in other countries and they felt they were more aware of the injustices occurring in those societies. Students really gained an appreciation of the opportunities they have in Ireland and the fact they are not treated as second class citizens. Through doing Challenge to Change, many students were able to use a **range of skills** to complete the project and gained confidence in doing presentations. The fact the topic was of interest to students greatly enabled the project to be of relevance in their lives and it had an impact upon them. Finally, the Challenge to Change project was worthwhile as students really engaged in the project and it enabled students to realise that young people can make difference in the world in speaking out against injustices.

Co-ordinator: Michelle Abbott

HOMELESSNESS - AT HOME AND ABROAD

Presentation Senior Primary School Mullingar



We started the project by first discussing our own knowledge and awareness of homelessness, both locally and globally.

GOALS

- To understand the causes and effects of homelessness
- To understand the role of the **Ombudsman for Children**
- To raise awareness about homelessness in our school and in our community
- To raise money for a local charity involved with the homeless locally
- To become empathetic towards the homeless

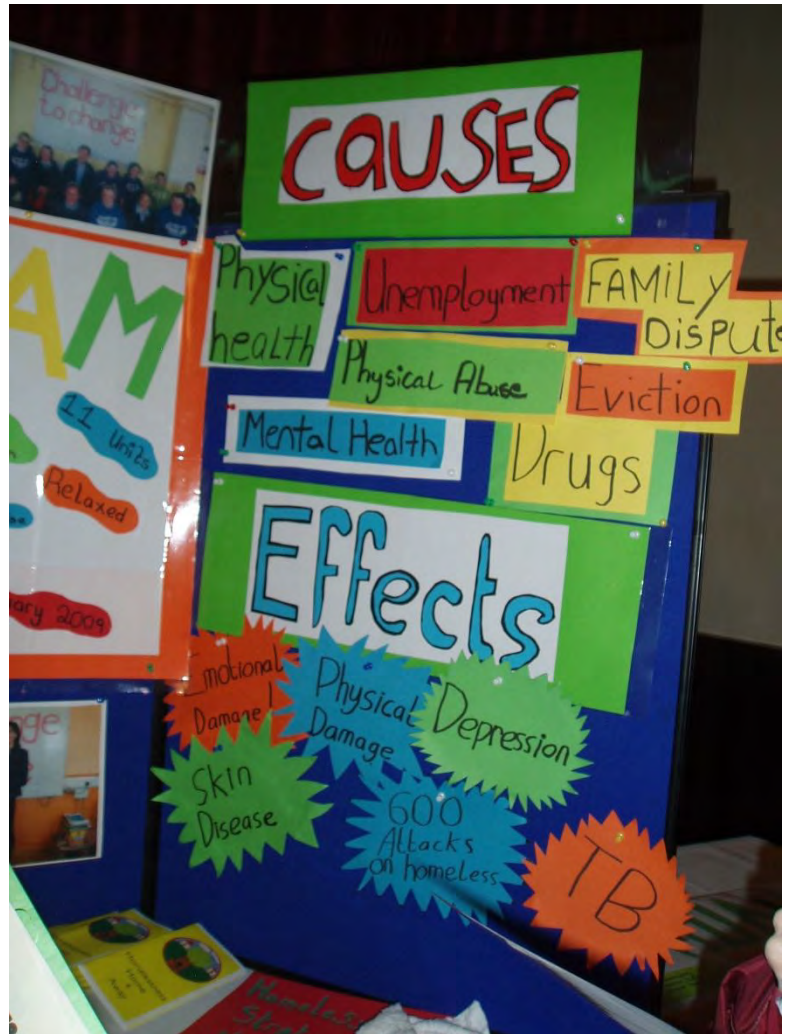
TARGET GROUP

- Other students in our school
- Our families
- Our local community

ACTIONS

- We contacted a number of different charities by email, phone and letter. The following charities sent us information: **De Paul Ireland, Focus Ireland, DePaul International, TRUST, Citizens Information Board, National Alliance to End Homelessness, Global Poverty Action Fund, Homeless World Cup, St. Vincent de Paul, Simon Community, Habitat for Humanity and Trócaire.**
- We discussed the issues affecting homeless people and we discussed how to raise awareness of these issues among the school population.

- We designed and presented powerpoint presentations to each class in the school on the topic of homelessness.
- We had a school disco to raise money for **TEAM** (Temporary Emergency Accommodation Mullingar) - we raised €300.
- We watched a **Prime Time** documentary on homelessness.
- We did a workshop with **Cormac Lally** from the Simon Community - we learned that the main cause of homelessness is not having a job.
- Fr. Paul Crosbie made a presentation on **homelessness in Haiti** after the earthquake in 2010.
- We investigated children's rights and the role of the **OCO** in relation to homeless children.
- We wrote poems inspired by the stories of homelessness we had heard.
- Ann from **TEAM** talked to us about homelessness locally.
We were shocked to learn that there are at least two people sleeping rough in Mullingar each night.
- We did a workshop with Lydia from **Trócaire** on homelessness in developing countries.



OUTCOMES

- We raised awareness about the causes and effects of homelessness
- We are much more aware about the issues involved in being homeless
- We learned not to believe in homeless stereotypes
- We raised money for TEAM

THOUGHTS ON THE PROJECT

"The project was very interesting and taught me a lot too. Thanks to it I know how much homeless people suffer and I can't go past a money collector without donating money."

"The project made me more aware of the existence of homeless people around me and the inaccuracy of the stereotyping that occurs. I now know that even a small donation can make a big difference."

"The project was very enjoyable and at the same time very educational. I now know not to judge homeless people."

"My class benefitted enormously from taking part in this Challenge to Change project. The project inspired teamwork, improved research skills and gave the children a sense of what it is like to be homeless. They are now much more understanding of homeless people."



Co-ordinator: Elaine Burke

DUMPING OUR WASTE ON OTHERS

Scoil Áine Clondalkin



For our Challenge to Change project this year, we chose the theme of **Electric Waste**, specifically **mobile phones, music devices and computers**. Almost every child now has at least one of these three pieces of electronic equipment and many have even more. Technology is developing so fast that models become **obsolete in months** and there is a culture of '**must-have**' - you must have the newest, best, most expensive model to be accepted. People now are '**trading up**' so quickly that a huge amount of electrical waste is being accumulated. In our project we looked at how technology has developed over the years and what happens to unwanted items, how they are re-used or recycled or what happens if they go to landfill.

AIMS

- To identify the life cycle of different types of electronic waste such as mobile phones, computers and televisions
- To identify what happens to our electronic equipment when it becomes waste
- To visit a recycling facility to see how and what can be recycled
- To raise awareness of the quantities of waste created as technology advances and to understand the theory of consumer obsolescence
- To participate actively in promoting recycling and re-using

TARGET GROUP

This project involved the participation of the three senior classes in the school. Each class looked at the evolution and the recycling of one aspect of technology:

- Fourth Class: Mobile Phones
- Fifth Class: Televisions
- Sixth Class: Computers

ACTIONS

Throughout the year, the three classes

- Attended a presentation by **WEEE Ireland** where pupils learned about what happens to different types of waste. They also got to see what different appliances looked like when melted down into plastic or metal pellets.
- Visited **Ballymount Civic Amenity Centre** which is responsible for the sorting and recycling of waste in the local area.
- Looked at their own piece of technology - timelines showing their evolution to their current state were depicted, surveys were carried out within the school on pupils and teachers to identify how aware people are of electronic waste.
- Identified what happens to electronic waste. What facilities are available?
- Depicted their results on graphs.
- Explored the reasons new technology is produced by companies so frequently and whether or not this was beneficial to consumers, the companies or the environment.



OUTCOMES

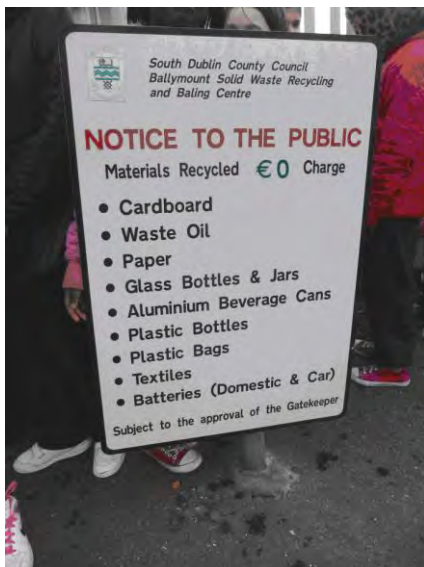
By way of this project, pupils' knowledge of the evolution of technology and their awareness of how much each of them uses it has certainly improved. The results of the surveys and questionnaires proved most interesting to the students, for example,

- 78 out of 80 surveyed had a mobile phone
- 74 of these 78 people were at least using their second mobile phone
- 34 of these people had had at least five mobile phones
- 50 out of 80 people did not know what happens to their phone if they give it to a mobile telephone recycling company
- The term "**consumer obsolescence**" was a new term for the pupils
- Pupils were shocked to learn about what happens to electronic waste in many parts of Asia, especially in **Guiyu, China**.

Pupils were disappointed to learn that manufacturers do not take responsibility for the recycling of the products that they produce.

Pupils' **awareness of their own personal usage** has increased for definite. Pupils have promised that they (and their families) will "**stop and think**" before buying the next new model of phone, television or computer. They have also promised to make sure to recycle their old items and to do it through an approved company.

WHAT WORKED WELL



Pupils were very interested in this project as it was asking them about their own personal usage of items that they are familiar with and use every day. They enjoyed the presentation and the trip to the **Ballymount Amenity Facility** (or "dump" which many of them preferred to say!).

The item that certainly proved most successful was the **surveys**. Pupils enjoyed telling others about the survey and they got great enjoyment in putting the results together. They were shocked at some of the outcomes as outlined above.

One item that was difficult to overcome was finding out exactly what happens to the technology that we recycle. Several calls and emails to Irish recycling companies were not very successful in getting information on what Irish companies do with the items they collect. There was no specific data or numbers. Research in libraries and on the internet always brought us to find out what happens in the USA. There is a growing campaign there as a lot of the waste is taken illegally to many parts of Asia and China in particular.



LINKAGES

The school established successful links with **WEEE Ireland** and the **Ballymount Amenity Facility**. As previously mentioned, it was difficult to find out what happens exactly to Irish recycled goods. The company that proved most helpful was **Folamh** who sent some information about what they do with the items that they collect.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The pupils really enjoyed working on the project that was relevant to them. They also realised that they can influence and educate others about the amount of electronic waste that is being created and that each one of them can make a difference. Ultimately, we have created an awareness of the pupils' usage and, hopefully, this will have a positive impact on their lives and the lives of others.

CONCLUSION

This was a most interesting topic to work on with the pupils. It is a topic that is very pertinent to them and one in which they are interested in. It is definitely a topic that can be revisited in time as one can speculate that our usage of technology will grow and grow and more and more items will become redundant.

There is a lack of official information and data concerning the recycling element. There is a lot of evidence in Asia of what is happening to many of the items people (from Europe

and USA) genuinely recycle. However, very few companies are admitting that this is where their waste goes. This electronic waste is going somewhere and it is not all being properly dealt with. The pupils of Scoil Áine will watch this topic evolve carefully!

QUOTES FROM PUPILS

"It is very bad what happens to some phones. They are taken to developing countries to break them up. This can poison them. Children also work in these conditions."

Leah

"It is important to recycle and reuse whatever you can because then the world would survive longer and be more green."

Iza

"In Kilkenny, we told our visitors about what really happens to your electronic devices. So many people wanted to fill out our survey that they were all gone!"

Amber-Kate

"Lots of people have mobile phones. They keep buying new ones every year but you really don't have to buy new ones every year! You can have the same one for a few years."

Sophie

Co-ordinators: Karen McKeivitt and Mary Hurley



A Challenging Thought ...

"Climate change is the biggest human rights challenge of our time."

Mary Robinson, UN Climate Summit in Doha

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

MANY CULTURES – ONE WORLD

St. Joseph's College Lucan



AIMS

- To promote the celebration of interculturalism in our school
- To celebrate the diversity and similarity of cultures and to look at how all cultures enhance our school community
- To promote respect and tolerance for all the cultures, faiths and nationalities in our school

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Firstly, the Transition Year class of 4A1 split into groups and each group undertook to investigate a different world religion. Each group then developed a powerpoint on their chosen religion and presented them to the class thus ensuring a wide knowledge of the major world religions we have in our world and in our school today. We then conducted a whole school survey to establish the countries of origin of the students and parents of students of our school. We also ascertained how students celebrate their culture and religion and how important they are to them. We got great feedback from these and found that we have students from over 25 countries attending St. Joseph's. From the results then each student in the class researched a separate country and produced a

poster on the culture, customs, religion, population and festivals of that country. We displayed all of the posters around the school hall and devised a quiz for all students. Finally, we held a food fair with the class cooking dishes from all over the world. They then decorated their station, displayed facts about the country and some really got into the swing of things and dressed up in traditional dress from their chosen country.

STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"This project was great because I now have a greater understanding of all the different cultures in my school."

"I felt very proud cooking a traditional dish of Pakistan for others and I received great feedback on how good it tasted."



"I really enjoyed learning all about Indian culture, it is so colourful and vibrant and I now feel I can relate to the Indian girls in my school better."

"The quiz and food fair were great fun. I tasted so much food that I had never tried before and it all tasted so good."

"From the quiz I learned loads of facts about over 15 countries that I never knew before."

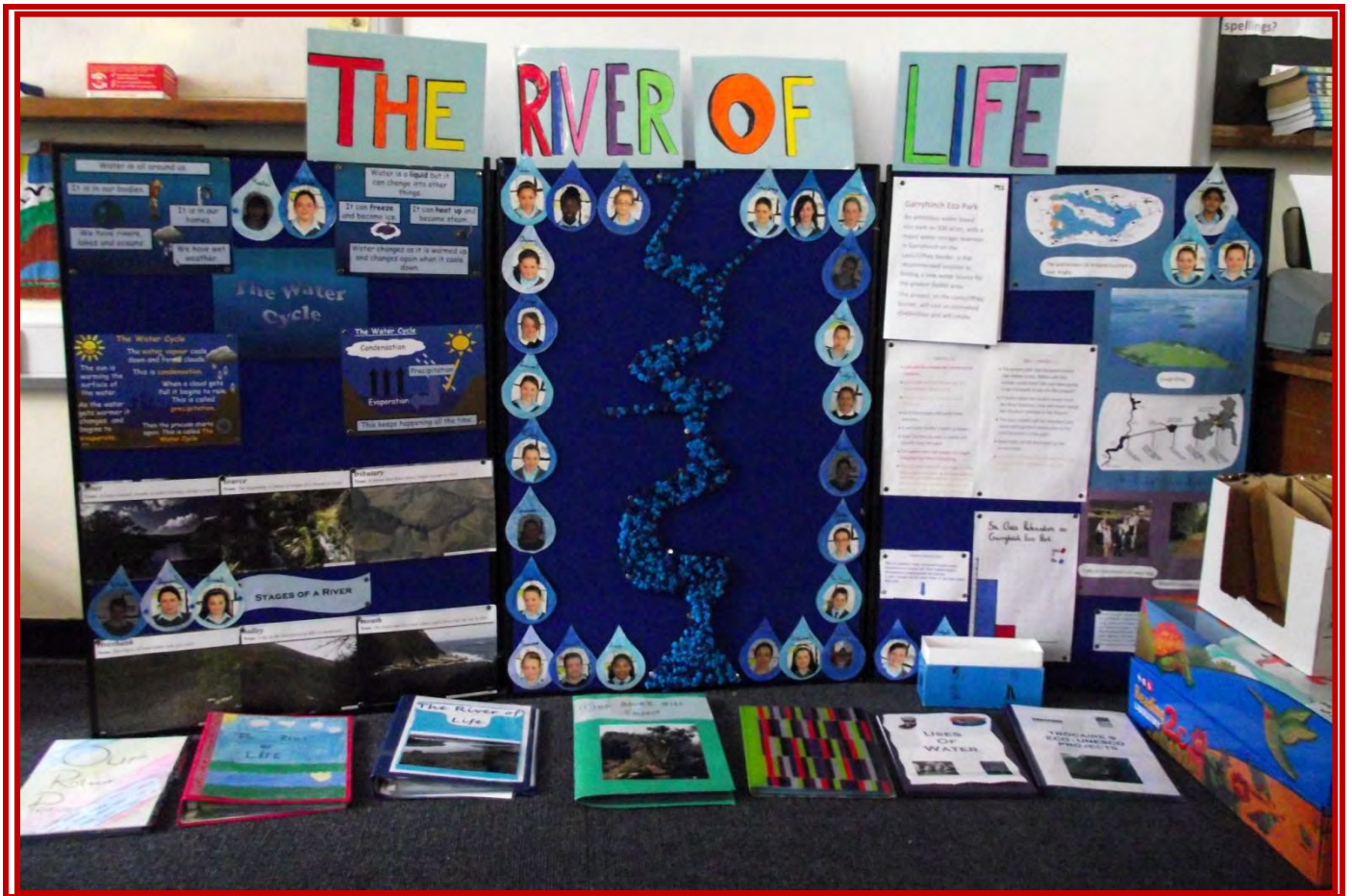
CONCLUSION

Overall the students learned so much about many new countries and the international students loved having information about their cultures displayed and a greater respect for all cultures was fostered.

Co-ordinator: Ciara Whelan

THE RIVER OF LIFE

St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick



This year the Fifth Class girls from St. Joseph's G.N.S in Mountmellick, chose **The River of Life** as the theme for their Challenge to Change project. Clean healthy rivers are the lifeblood of communities all over the world and are vital to our health, safety and quality of life. All of our drinking water comes directly or indirectly from rivers and streams. Water is necessary for life. We depend on water in countless ways. Without water there can be no life. Through our work on this project we have developed a deeper appreciation of the importance of rivers and have challenged ourselves to be aware of and to do more to protect and conserve this precious life-giving natural resource.

We took the theme The River of Life and examined many different aspects of it. In doing this we integrated the theme throughout our schoolwork. These are some of the activities we were involved in.

We

- Examined the rivers of Ireland
- Studied the river Nile and completed our own individual projects on the River Nile
- Studied the **Water Cycle** and drew diagrams
- Examined the journey of a river
- Made posters based on the uses of water

- Located rivers in our locality, our continent and the world
- Participated in a **water workshop with Eco-UNESCO**
- Examined the water **shortage problems in developing countries**
- Researched the work done by **Trócaire** to improve the supply of clean water in developing countries
- Held a sale of work to raise money for Trócaire to assist in bringing the gift of water to those who need it
- Learned, sang and recorded *The River* by Garth Brooks
- **Debated** the issue of the **Shannon drainage proposal** and held a **class referendum** on it. We used a **graph** to display the results.
- Wrote articles/summaries/descriptions of our activities on this project
- Wrote **poems** about rivers
- Took **photos**
- Drew and **painted pictures** of rivers.



Working on this project was an invaluable experience for the pupils involved and it had a very positive impact on the holistic development of each child. The children came to a deeper appreciation of a serious issue that impacts their lives and the lives of others. **It challenged the children to take action and embrace the topic in a variety of ways.** They realised that even at a young age they have a part to play in working towards making the world a better place for all people. It was a very enjoyable and positive experience.



Co-ordinator: Helen Chambers

PREJUDICE AND INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny



We were inspired by the **educational vision** of our founder Nano Nagle. We wanted to continue in this spirit and promote educational equality by **raising awareness of inequality in education today**. We linked with the Presentation Sisters in the **Philippines**. We wanted to learn about the work the Presentation Sisters do in other parts of the world to bring education to all.

ACTIONS

- We continued the educational vision of Nano Nagle of quality education for all.
- We raised awareness of **prejudice and inequality in education** in our school by creating a notice board in the Fifth Year social area and beginning a **blog** where people could access additional information. This allowed us to involve the wider school community and get their opinions on our issue.
- We raised funds for the Presentation Sisters in the Philippines by holding a quiz for the First Years before the Christmas break. The Second Year Challenge to Change group organised the venue, questions, prizes and collection of the papers at the end of each round.
- We compiled a book of emails, photos and memories from our experience of Challenge to Change.
- We held a bake sale in January 2012.

OUR EXPERIENCE OF CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

We enjoyed participating in Challenge to Change. We helped to make a difference by raising awareness about this issue and also by raising funds for the Presentation Sisters in the Philippines.

As a result of our participation in this Challenge to Change project we are now more aware of this issue and the huge effect it has in the world and we will continue to try to make a difference.



Co-ordinator: Aileen Hanrick

FAMINE THEN AND NOW

Presentation Primary School Maynooth



In our project we studied the Great Irish Famine 1845-1848 and compared it to hunger in East Africa at present.

GOALS

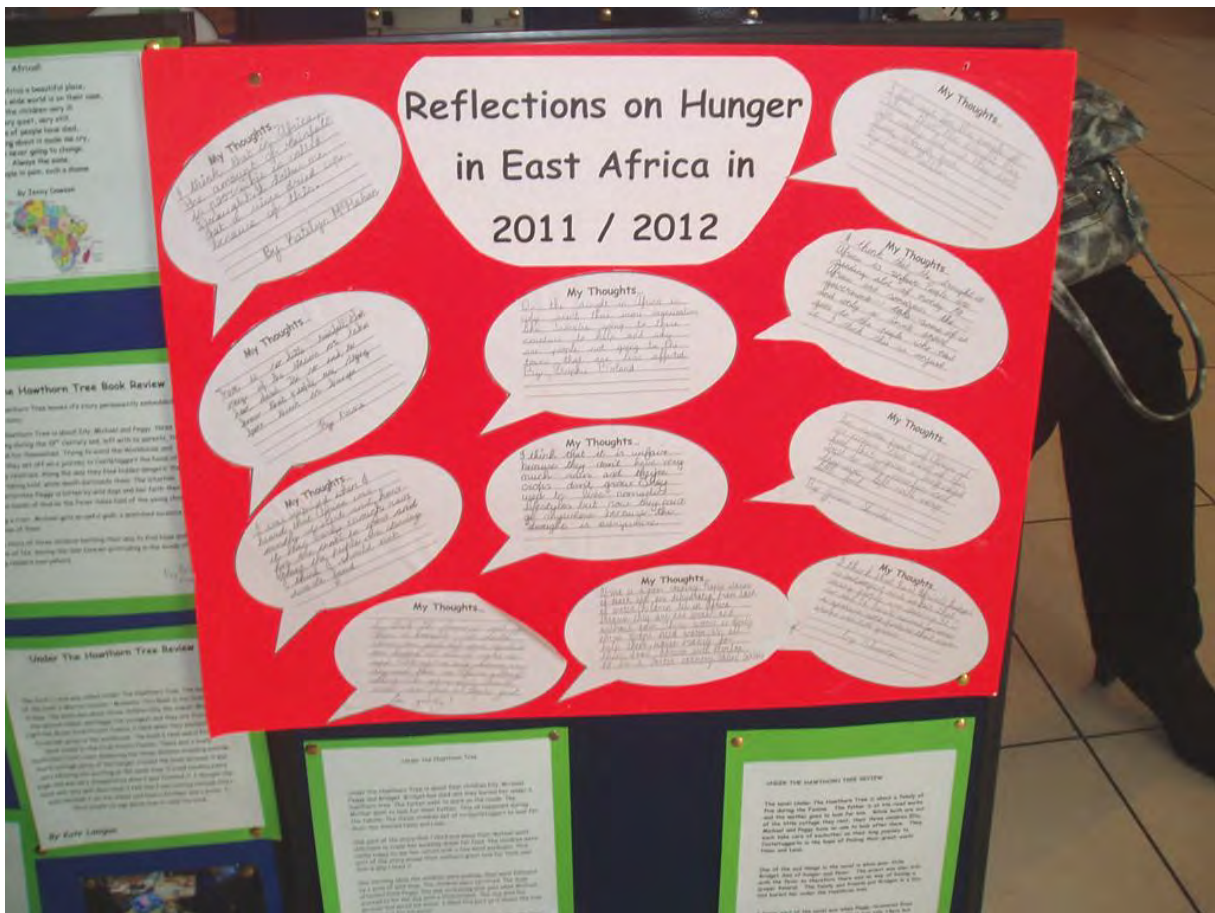
- To understand the causes of the famine in Ireland in the 19th century
- To develop an appreciation of what life was like in Ireland during that time
- To become aware that famine isn't a thing of the past
- To develop an awareness of hunger in East Africa in the 21st century
- To identify practical ways in which we can make a difference

TARGET GROUP: Fifth Class

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Children read and reviewed the novel **Under the Hawthorn Tree**
- They undertook detailed projects on aspects of the Great Irish Famine

- They engaged in **workshops** with **local historians** and the Education Officer from **Trócaire**
- Children sourced **potato-based recipes** and compiled a **class recipe book**
- **Famine journals** were compiled from the children's own newspaper reports
- Children sketched **famine scenes** from Ireland and Africa
- They explored **songs and poems** on the theme of Famine and Africa
- They undertook detailed projects on key countries affected by hunger in East Africa - **Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya**
- They **reflected** on their learning, committing their thoughts on Famine/Hunger (then and now) to paper
- They enjoyed a variety of **art activities** based on the theme



OUTCOMES

Engaging in this project has been a stimulating and worthwhile experience for all involved. Firstly, it has developed the children's self-confidence as evidenced by their engagement with their peers, parents (School Open Day) and the general public on the review day in Kilkenny. They also gained experience in researching and compiling detailed projects. It has fostered an interest in and love of history/geography and a desire to engage in further work on the topic.

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- Working in groups
- Stimulating the children to research and engage with a topic
- Visiting speakers

- Local history - linking national topic to our own locality
- Creating awareness of injustice in the world and the unequal distribution of resources
- Creating awareness of hunger in Africa today

LINKAGES

- Invited speakers, Sr. Alphonsus and Amy Carton, spoke on the famine in our local area.
- Aoife McTernan, Trócaire, presented a workshop on injustice in the world and how it contributes to hunger in East Africa
- Brendan Matthews, historian, facilitated a Famine walking tour of Drogheda, location of National Famine Commemoration 2012.

POSITIVE IMPACT

- Spirit of goodwill and support among colleagues and children
- Interest and involvement of parents and support on our school presentation of the project
- Community links were fostered through the invitation to and engagement with local historians
- Created awareness among the children of injustice and inequalities in our world today
- Fostered an interest in buying Fairtrade produce where possible

CONCLUSION

It was a very worthwhile and enjoyable project. The children developed a wide range of skills: working in groups, undertaking research on their specific topic and presenting their work in a public forum. It also broadened their interest range and fostered an awareness of the world around them.

From a teacher's perspective, the project enabled us to teach curricular objectives in a fun and interesting way for the children.

Co-ordinators: Maria Keary and Cora McGorry



A Challenging Thought ...

In Zambia, 64.3% of the population lives on less than \$1.25 a day. The richest 20% of Zambians are reported to earn over half of all income, while the poorest 20% share just 3.3%.

[Irish Aid Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

CLIMATE CHANGE ITS EFFECTS ON POVERTY IN EAST AFRICA

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel



The First Year group, 1.11, studied the effects that climate change has on poverty in East Africa as part of our Challenge to Change project. We looked at two areas;

- **Climate Change:** What it is and what we can do about it.
- **East Africa:** Why does poverty exist there? What effect poverty has on the people who live there? What can be done to help?

AIMS

- To investigate climate change
- To identify how energy used in the developed world is linked to the problems in East Africa
- To fundraise to help people effected by climate change in East Africa
- To raise awareness of the problem of drought in East Africa
- To educate students and teachers about climate change and its consequences
- To inform the school community on how to reduce global warming
- To hold a bake sale as a fundraiser
- To invite guest speakers to speak about climate change

TARGET GROUP

We hoped to educate the students and teachers within our school about climate change and its impact on East Africa. Furthermore we wanted to highlight the different ways we can help combat climate change and make people aware that their actions can have global consequences.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We researched information on **Climate Change and East Africa** through the use of newspapers, books and the internet. We combined this information on a large wall display in our classroom.
- The students worked in groups, each taking a particular task to research, organise and complete.
- We displayed **posters** about climate change and how to reduce it around the school. The posters contained information that would be used as questions on a **quiz** thus ensuring that the school community would read the posters.
- We invited a **guest speaker** to come to speak to our class to help inform the students on what they can do to make a difference.
- We held a **Bake Sale** to raise money. This was given to Transition Year students who are **travelling to Africa during the summer as volunteers**.



OUTCOMES

- The students learned that climate change has a global effect as well as the particular effect it has on East Africa.
- The students' **awareness** of their waste of natural resources increased as did their understanding of the other factors that contribute to global warming.
- The students **worked cooperatively in groups**, in particular on their fundraising effort and on mini-projects.
- The students have now become **more open to other cultures** and their way of living.
- The students accessed different **websites** and studied the photographs to discover information for themselves.

- We have become more environmentally conscious and reduce, re-use and recycle as much as we can.
- The students learned that **education is the key** to preventing climate change becoming an increasing devastating problem.
- Skills the students used included higher-order thinking skills, questioning, research, creative and artistic skills along with presentation skills.
- The students learned about the link between climate change and crop growth.
- The students' self-confidence improved through group work, interviewing and questioning.
- The eight girls who went to Kilkenny thoroughly enjoyed their day and learned a lot from the other participants.

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS

"Challenge to Change was a great opportunity for our class. It was really fun. I learned a lot! The main thing I learned was there is always someone worse off than myself. My favourite part of the project was when we had a visit from a guest speaker who explained so much about the life of people in Africa." Ciara

"I really enjoyed the Challenge to Change project. I learned so much! I learned to be more aware of others and to be more energy aware in order to stop climate change. It is interesting to learn about other cultures. I even learned some African words!" Rachel

"The guest speaker, Carmel, told us about life in East Africa and I thought I knew all about life there but she told us things I didn't know like how they got their food and how they help their fellow people. We learned how to save the environment. I really hope we can do the Challenge to Change project again next year." Stephanie

WHAT WORKED WELL

- The positive and open attitude of the school community. The management and staff were all very supportive in helping to develop ideas, set goals and in particular, work to a timeframe.
- Use of I.T. skills to develop two slide presentations for use as teaching tools
- Group work
- Using many and various resources to enrich learning experiences
- Creative work - writing, poems/song, sketching and making posters

USEFUL WEBSITES

- www.selfhelpafrica.org/ClimateChange
- www.careclimatechange.org/files/.../GWI CVCA CS Sept11.pdf
- www.wwf.org.uk/ClimateChange
- www.practicalaction.org/Climate

Co-ordinator: Catherine O'Loughlin

SWITCH ON THE LIGHTS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Holy Trinity N.S. Fethard



Our project is all about developing Human Rights awareness in our school. We focused on the plight of the Roma community in Slovakia and placed particular emphasis on education and poverty.

GOALS

- To enlighten ourselves and those around us to the meaning of human rights infringements with particular reference to education and poverty in the Roma community in Slovakia
- To develop an awareness of the work of the Presentation Sisters with the Roma community in Slovakia
- To develop an awareness of the work of Amnesty International in highlighting the plight of the Roma
- To welcome the Roma culture and embrace their traditions

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Interview and knitting workshop with Sr. Maureen
- Visit to Irish Aid Volunteering Centre in Dublin
- Cooking Roma style
- Artwork - constructing a model of a typical Roma house
- Powerpoint slideshow of Roma culture
- Timeline on human rights
- T-shirt printing
- Poetry and Posters

OUTCOMES

- Greater understanding of human rights issues
- Increased awareness of human rights violations
- Greater tolerance of ethnic diversity
- An enlightened consciousness of minority European cultures

WHAT THE PUPILS SAID

"Participating in this project was an enlightening experience and opened my eyes - I now know that they have been closed for too long. Doing the project made me feel sad because we got to see the conditions that the Roma live in."

Courtney

"During the project we learned how lucky we are."

Harry

"Doing work in classroom was amazing, looking at other projects in Kilkenny was extraordinary."

Jack



WHAT WORKED WELL

Working in groups with a particular focus was a great way to become experts. Sharing the knowledge with the other groups was an essential part of our learning. Connecting with Sr. Maureen and benefiting from her knowledge was a key part of our learning experience.

LINKAGES MADE

- Sr. Immaculate and the Presentation Sisters in Slovakia
- Amnesty International
- Irish Aid Volunteering Centre

POSITIVE IMPACT

It was agreed by all who were touched by the project that there was a general awakening to a life less privileged than ours.

Parents were supportive of our work from the outset. They provided materials, searched the internet and shared information with their children.

CONCLUSION

Challenge to Change was an amazing experience for me and my students. We learned a lot and enjoyed the journey.

Co-ordinator: Sarah O'Sullivan

FEAST OR FAMINE?

Sacred Heart Primary School Portlaoise



The project is based on **famine past and present**. We began by brainstorming the topic of famine. We undertook web-based research about the famine-affected regions in the world at present with particular reference to the horn of Africa which is topical at present. We have located the countries on our maps and have sourced and studied images of victims living in these famine-stricken countries.

AIMS

- To investigate the causes and effects of famine
- To raise awareness of the contributions we can make to alleviate the problem
- To offer long-term solutions to the causes of famine

ACTIVITIES

- We invited a speaker, Ms Maeve Seery, from **Goal** to make a presentation to the class
- We held a cake sale and presented the proceeds to Maeve
- We prepared a video of ourselves singing the Band Aid song - "**Do they know it's Christmas?**"
- We created images of life in famine-stricken countries through the medium of **pastels**



Our steering committee was made up of girls from Sixth Class and our teachers, Ms Coleman and Mrs Rafferty. Our target group was every family in Sacred Heart School and in particular the senior girls from Third Class to Sixth Class. We used the school newsletter and our local newspapers to spread our message to the wider community.



Co-ordinator: Deirdre Coleman



A Challenging Thought ...

Ireland provided over €66 million in emergency and recovery aid in 2011. In 2011 there were 47 deployments from Irish Aid's Rapid Response Corps, helping those in need in crises in Somalia, Kenya, Syria, the Philippines and North Africa.

[Irish Aid Report 2011]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

LESS EDUCATION LEADS TO MORE EXPLOITATION

Presentation Secondary School Mitchelstown



As part of our Challenge to Change project, we investigated the progress of **Millennium Development Goal 2** to provide primary school education to all of the world's children.

AIMS

- To investigate how the Millennium Development Goal of providing primary education for all developing countries is progressing
- To establish an increased awareness within our school community about the effects of limited education in developing countries and how it contributes to the cycle of poverty
- To assist a young child in **Ethiopia** to receive an education and to support established programmes that assist other young children attending primary schools in developing countries

TARGET GROUP

We completed this project as part of our Transition Year programme. We targeted the Second Year classes within our school and we enlisted their help for our fundraising campaign. We wanted them to gain an appreciation of the fact that they have an opportunity to receive an education and that they can make a difference in the lives of children less well off than themselves.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

ALMAS WORK

In November, we made contact with Fr. Brian Kavanagh, one of the founding members of a charity called Almas. He visited our class and provided us with background information about the charity. The charity was established in 2004 and its main aim is to help children affected by AIDS, HIV and poverty in developing countries. They also fund children's education in these countries. He informed us about the devastating impact HIV and AIDS has had on a whole generation of people in Africa. In many cases it is grandparents who are looking after their grandchildren because the parents have died of AIDS.

The education of these children seems to be way down the list of priorities. In some instances grandparents cannot afford to pay the school fees because they are already struggling to provide the basics (like food) for these children. A lot of these children have to work to help provide an income to sustain themselves and other siblings.

The funds raised by Almas, through various fundraising initiatives, are used to fund mainly education and health projects in Africa and India. For six weeks leading up to Christmas we sold Almas Christmas cards. We enlisted the help of the Second Years and we sold the cards in our local communities. On Thursday, 15 December, we went carol singing in our local Tesco store. We raised a total of €575 which actually meant we could sponsor two children. In the interest of gender equality we asked if we could sponsor a boy and a girl. As a result of our efforts, **Henok Girma** and **Rute Abebe** will be able to attend school for a year. They will also receive a nourishing meal in school each day.



WE BECAME TEACHERS FOR A DAY!

Having discovered so much about the impact little or no education has on the lives of children in the developing world we decided to highlight the issue within our own school community. We sourced a lesson plan from the Irish Aid agency. The lesson plan focused on street children and it linked to the Millennium Development Goal of Achieving Universal Primary Education.

To begin with we asked the students to list the things they enjoyed by virtue of having a home. Using a map, we pointed out the country of **Bangladesh** and the city of Dhaka. We explained that many of the 9 million people who live in the city of Dhaka are very poor. We pointed out that some of those who live in greatest poverty are the street children. Up to 1 million street children in Dhaka live and work on the streets. **We asked students to imagine living on the streets. What would they do each day, each night? Who would they have contact with? How would they get food? What would they look forward to? What would they fear?**

We then grouped the students and we asked them to come up with a list of the 10 most important problems the street children would encounter. We distributed a worksheet which listed the top 10 problems in order of importance as identified by street children in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh in South Asia. (This worksheet was originally sourced from www.globalfootprints.org)

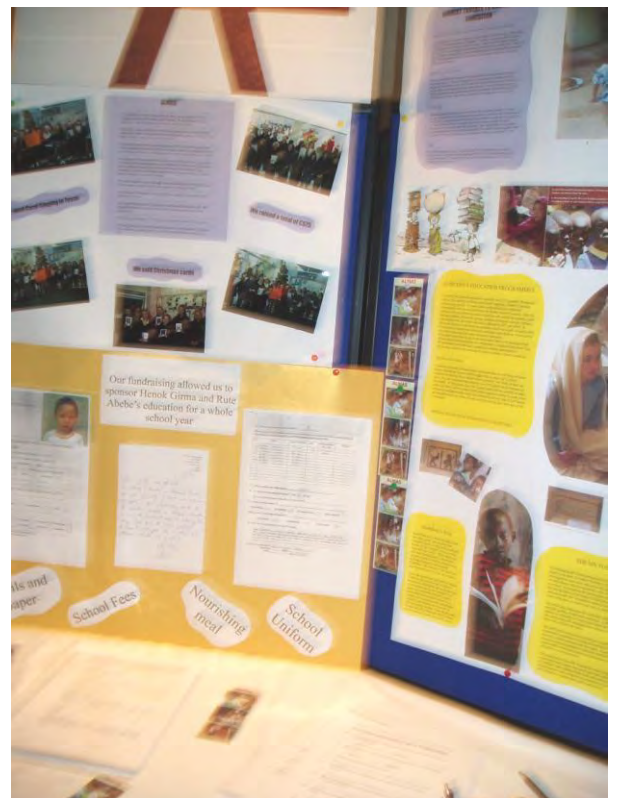
We held a **class discussion** based on what the groups had discovered when they compared their imagined list of problems to those of the actual street children. **We pointed out to them that many of the most serious problems identified by the street children do not concern food and shelter but reflect more closely children's rights, as referred to in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.**

POSTER COMPETITION

To encourage the students to reflect on what they had learned we held a poster competition. We asked each student to design a poster about something they had discovered as a result of partaking in our presentation.

OUR CONCERN FAST

Each year in our school, students from all years participate in the annual **Concern** fast in November. We raised a total of €2,369.11. As Transition Year students we have been involved in the fast for four years now. **As part of our Challenge to Change project we decided to investigate where Concern spends its money.** A speaker from Concern came



and spoke to us about their various projects. We were delighted to discover that many of their high profile projects involved the education of children.

OUTCOMES

As a result of our research, we were amazed to discover that up to 72 million children of primary school age are not enrolled in school and the majority of these are girls. We discovered that the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education will not be achieved by 2015, its original target date.

This project gave us the opportunity to do something meaningful. It is amazing to think our efforts will enable two children to receive an education this year. Our experiences have changed our attitude towards others who are less well off than ourselves and we have a greater appreciation for things in our own lives that we had taken for granted.

STUDENT'S COMMENTS

"It's made me think more about other people and not just think about myself, my life and my needs. It made me realize that I'm very lucky to have what I have compared to a lot of people in other countries who have problems dealing with basic things in life, like food, water and receiving a basic education." Shania



It has been said that Ireland's Celtic Tiger began not with joining of the EU in the 1970s or with direct foreign investment into the country in the 1980s but with the introduction of free second-level education in the 1960s.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26: Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education should be compulsory ..."

Irish Aid White Paper on Aid, 2006: "Education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty."

Co-ordinator: Martha Kent

"Education is not just a way of escaping poverty it is a way of fighting it."

THE SLUMS OF INDIA – A MORAL ISSUE

Scoil Chríost Rí Portlaoise



Our project looked at the slums of India. We believe this is a major moral issue in the world today. We discussed the unfair reality of the slums and how disgraceful it is that people are actually living in these sorts of conditions in the 21st century. We talked about what slums are, how they have come about, what is being done to help the people of the slums and how WE can help.

The number of people living in slums in India has more than doubled in the past two decades and now exceeds the entire population of Britain.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aims and objectives were to raise awareness about the harsh reality of the slums and to highlight how people are affected by these awful living conditions. We wanted to encourage charitable giving and volunteer work through NGOs such as Hope, Goal and the Smile Foundation. People **NEED** to know about these Slums, they **NEED** to help, **IT IS A MORAL ISSUE.**

India's economy has grown by an average of 8 per cent annually over the past four years, and yet a quarter of its population (1.1 billion) still lives on less than \$1 a day.

TARGET GROUP

We wanted this project to appeal to everybody. We wanted to make sure that absolutely everyone is aware of conditions in the slums of India. The aim of our project was to highlight the issues in the slums and to appeal for help from the public. In order to change these awful living circumstances, these people need all the help they can get.



India's slum-dwelling population had risen from 27.9 million to 61.8 million in 2001, when the last census was taken.

ACTIVITIES

- We produced a **Powerpoint presentation** outlining what our project is all about. It included the history of the slums, why they exist, who is to blame, what is being done and how we can get involved to help!
- We presented this to the entire Transition Year, our Year Head, and both Class Tutors. We held an **in-house competition** to see which group got its message across best. Luckily, we put a lot of time and effort into researching for our project. Our presentation went extremely well with a lot of people becoming interested in this major moral issue.
- We researched the topic and learned more and more heart-breaking facts each day. We displayed these facts on our **information board**.
- We worked closely with the **Hope mini-company group** which was set up in our school this year. The business is run by a group of Transition Year girls who are raising money for Hope (a Calcutta-based NGO that caters for the poorest of the poor). The girls sold Hope chocolate bars, wristbands, pens and hampers in order to raise money for the people of Calcutta.
- To raise awareness about the Hope Foundation, we decided to include a **Case Study** of their work in our project.



Co-ordinator: Deirdre Farrell

SCOIL MUIRE IN BLOOM

Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin



Scoil Mhuire in Bloom is a **whole-school project** based around our **school allotment** in Corcagh Park.

AIMS

- To expand and develop further our existing allotment
- To sow and harvest a variety of fruits and vegetables
- To learn about and implement a system of companion planting to get the best out of our allotment
- To draw up a long-term plan for the development of the allotment in the future
- To learn about biodiversity and sustainability

ACTIVITIES

- We have had a very eventful year as we had to completely **redesign our allotment** as the council reclaimed some of the land due to public demand for allotments in the park. This included moving some of the raised beds.
- Junior Infants planted **daffodils in the raised beds** and we were delighted with the results.
- **Millie and Justin**, our resident scarecrows, had a makeover by the Senior Infants and wintered in the school until the onset of Spring.
- First Class pupils prepared the beds for their **carrots** and **spring onions** by digging ridges of soil.
- Second Class planted **sunflower** seeds.

- Fifth Class **chitted** their **potatoes** to prepare them for planting. The seed potatoes were placed in a tray in a light and cool place with a little water. All but three or four of the "eyes" (sprouting parts) of the potato were removed, leaving the strongest growths only. Once the sprouts were about 1 inch (2.5 cm) long, the seed potatoes were planted in the ground.
- Sixth Class planted **crocuses**. They also grew **mushrooms** in their classroom.
- This year we applied for our **Fifth Green Flag for Biodiversity** and the Senior Classes learned all about biodiversity, habitats and sustainability.



Co-ordinators: *Siobhán McKiernan and Naomi O'Dowd*



A Challenging Thought ...

Even though enough food is produced currently to feed an estimated 10 billion people, the effects of climate change are already being felt in vulnerable communities, especially those that host small-scale farmers who produce the majority of the world's food.

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR COMMUNITY

Scoil Mhuire Portlaoise



This year our project focused on sustainability. We examined the production of food products at home and abroad. The Sixth Class pupils put together a **Buy Irish** display and presented it to other classes in our school. Now children in other classes recognise the **Love Irish Food** symbol (as well as other promotional symbols) and are therefore enabled to choose Irish products in the local shops. We believe that buying Irish products will promote employment locally and nationally thus sustaining the economy in difficult times. We also know that buying Irish products has benefits for the environment as it **reduces the carbon footprint**. We have all written a report, entitled **Buy Irish**. We compiled a **recipe book** featuring Irish products.

FOCUS ON FAIRTRADE



Keeping with the theme of sustainability, we studied **Fairtrade**. We now know that Fairtrade products give a fair price to farmers for their products. We encouraged children and their parents to choose fairtrade goods in the shops to sustain a good standard of living and working conditions in poorer countries. We looked particularly at foodstuffs we import such as Coffee, Bananas, Cocoa and Tea. We had great fun tasting fairtrade products in school. We organised a **fairtrade coffee morning** in the staffroom and now the teachers are buying only fairtrade tea and coffee. In groups, we worked on our own fairtrade projects which we presented to the classes.

AIMS

- To create awareness of Fairtrade in our school
- To promote Irish products which, in turn, sustains Irish jobs and the economy
- To highlight how purchasing fairtrade products can help sustain good living/working conditions in developing countries
- To create awareness of how buying Irish food is good for the environment as it reduces the carbon footprint

ACTIONS

- We completed a Buy Irish display
- We produced our own Buy Irish recipe book
- We compiled individual reports on Buy Irish
- We held a Fairtrade tasting afternoon in class
- We hosted a Fairtrade coffee morning
- We presented our Fairtrade projects to other pupils



We hope that children in our school now understand the link between the products they buy, be they Irish or Fairtrade produced products, and how they contribute to sustaining a just and fair economy.



Co-ordinator: Anne Marie O'Hara

KNIT A SQUARE FOR AFRICA

Scoil Mhuire Thurles



As part of their Development Education, the children in Third/Fourth Class, Scoil Mhuire, Thurles, have been involved in a **Knit a Square** project. They have been knitting 20 cm squares which are sewn together and made into blankets for children who have been orphaned in Africa due to the **AIDS** virus.

TO BEGIN ... LEARNING ABOUT AFRICA



Prior to the project, the children learned a little about the problems facing children of their own age in Africa. They were particularly moved by a **UNICEF video presentation** where orphaned children spoke of the difficulties they face in their daily lives. They also saw some images of children wrapped in blankets already donated by the charity. As a consequence, they were highly motivated to help.

This particular project allowed young children to contribute, in very tangible way, to the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. It helped them to realise that their efforts, when combined with others, take on a substantial value.

BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP

Teaching a large number of children to knit is, in itself, a challenge. It would not have been possible without the great help offered by some women from the local **Active Retirement** group who gave readily of their time, coming every Tuesday to teach in small groups.

Initially, the intention was to carry out the project between September and December. At Christmas, with the project coming to a close, the children learned to bake and they entertained the volunteers with a cuppa and some buns to say 'thank you'. By this time, however, the Tuesday sessions had been so successful that neither children nor adults wanted them to end and so we found ourselves still knitting in the New Year!



It is hard to measure the impact of this project. Apart altogether from learning that they are part of a global community and can be part of the solution to problems, the children have a great appreciation of the skills and friendship of older people in our community. They have learned a skill which, for some, may give lifelong pleasure. Importantly, they have had to take on a task which has required effort and a sustained commitment on their part to produce results.



Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine!

Co-ordinators: Anne Griffin and Anne Lanigan

ENERGY USE – HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Presentation Primary School Kilkenny



In this, our first Challenge to Change project, we took a close look at how energy is used in our school and investigated if our energy usage could be reduced.

AIMS

- To make the children aware of how energy is used in our school,
- To explore how much we use
- To identify ways of reducing energy usage
- To look at energy use in our own homes

TARGET GROUP

All the children in our school

WORK UNDERTAKEN

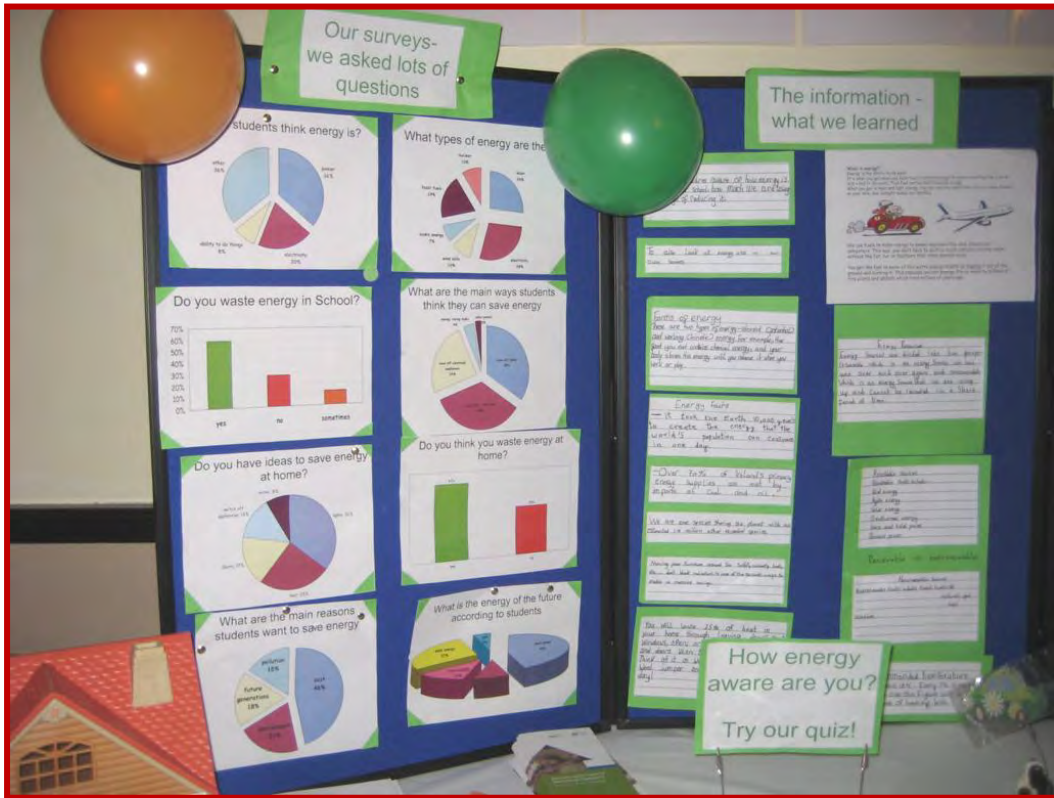
- We undertook a school-wide environmental audit. During this process we counted all electrical appliances and lights in the school.
- We surveyed all our students to get their opinions on school attitudes to energy usage and energy conservation.
- We devised and launched a poster competition for both Junior and Senior Classes. The chosen theme was "Turning off lights" / "Closing doors."
- We compiled an energy checklist and displayed this in each classroom



- We checked that the school boiler had been serviced
- Appliances were upgraded
- We organised a quiz for the seminar

OUTCOME

There is an increased awareness of energy use in school and at home. We are conscious of ways in which energy can be conserved. The response to our Challenge to Change project from all involved has been very positive.



Co-ordinator: Elaine Carrigan



A Challenging Thought ...

The target set out by Millennium Development Goal 7 of halving the proportion of people in the world without access to safe drinking water has been reached.

[UN MDG Report 2011/2012]

... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?

INDIA IN OUR EYES

Presentation Secondary School Thurles



As a year group we decided to explore **human rights** issues and **interculturalism**. Our school has a very strong involvement in overseas projects. This year we decided to focus on **India** and as our school has a strong link with the **Hope Foundation** we decided to raise funds for charity.

AIMS

- To raise awareness among students in our school of the plight of the poor in India.
- To encourage active student involvement in our cultural day
- To support and encourage a group of six students who are travelling to India with the Hope Foundation
- To raise much needed funds for the Hope Foundation and for the students travelling to India at Easter

TARGET GROUP

Students and teachers in our school

ACTIONS

Our entire year group attended a talk by a speaker from the Hope Foundation on the issues affecting the Indian people on a daily basis. We also had a discussion session with

the girls from our school who have travelled to India. We all watched **Slumdog Millionaire** to give us a flavour of the poverty in India. Through discussion, we decided that as a way of raising awareness within our school and of raising funds to assist the six girls from our year who are going to India that we would hold an Indian Awareness Day in our school - **India Day**.



Four groups were involved and each group had a specific job

Group One	Organised a Bollywood Disco Each student learned the Jai Ho Dance from Slumdog Millionaire
Group Two	Organised a display and tasting of Indian food
Group Three	Displayed Indian clothing Produced a slide show presentation and memory book
Group Four	Organised a Poster competition and a talk from the students who had travelled to India last year

For years Sr. Theophane has been fundraising for the Hope Foundation selling chocolate bars. We decided that we would carry on this tradition and we raised €250 towards the travel fund for our six students to go to India. We also held a table quiz for members of the public where we raised €960 towards the fund. We held a cake sale at break time in school and we held a rock night in Thurles. We organised a bag pack and a bucket collection in various supermarkets in the town at the weekend.

PUPILS' COMMENTS

"I loved taking part in this project. It gave me the opportunity to mix with the other girls and to broaden my knowledge on India and its culture. I really enjoyed learning the Jai Ho dance and look forward to teaching the other students in the school."

"Challenge to Change is a great experience. I was shocked by what the guest speaker from the Hope Foundation told us. The girls who travelled to India last year had fantastic stories to tell us."



Co-ordinator: Susan Max

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Presentation Secondary School Waterford

Turn Off the Red Light

End Prostitution and Sex Trafficking in Ireland



This year's Challenge to Change project involved our entire Transition Year group of 65 pupils.

AIMS

- To raise awareness about human trafficking in Ireland and abroad
- To educate our senior students about human trafficking, its effects and where it takes place
- To learn about human trafficking ourselves and to be able to tell other people about it
- To develop new skills - communication, teamwork, teaching

TARGET GROUP

Our target group was our Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Year students, the senior students in our school. We also wanted to give information about human trafficking to other young women in our local community.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We organised a **debate** on human trafficking.
- We made **posters** to raise awareness about human trafficking in the school.
- We **researched** human trafficking on the internet.
- We read **personal stories** about people who had been trafficked.
- We watched **documentaries** about human trafficking to help us understand how trafficking takes place and how easily it can happen.
- We encouraged all of our senior students to sign a petition against human trafficking.

Co-ordinator: Mary McNamara

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY BECOMING THE PERSON YOU'RE NOT!

Presentation Secondary School Warrenmount



The focus of our Challenge to Change project this year was to make students and teachers in our school more aware of the injustices towards children in India and the Ivory Coast. In addition, we wanted to raise awareness of the work of Fairtrade and the Hope Foundation.

AIMS

- To carry out extensive research and investigate Child Labour in India
- To explore what child slavery means
- To investigate why it happens
- To find out where child labour takes place
- To research where cocoa for our chocolate comes from
- To make people aware that child labour is happening
- To tell people about the bad conditions children have to work in

TARGET GROUP

The students and teachers in our school and our school community

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We researched child labour and the countries where it takes place
- We decided to research two countries - Ivory Coast and India
- We created a poster display highlighting everything we learned
- We designed a **leaflet** which was given to students, teachers and parents

- We decided to have a **Fairtrade Week**
- We contacted Fairtrade, who sent us stickers, leaflets, posters and a big yellow banana containing the Fairtrade logo
- We created a **Fairtrade powerpoint presentation** for students
- We held a Fairtrade hot chocolate and chocolate bars tasting event
- We carried out a **child labour simulation activity** which was boring and repetitive. This allowed us to experience what children have to do for several hours every day.
- We invited a speaker from the **Hope Foundation** to come and tell us about her experiences in Calcutta.
- We organised a '**Go Casual for Hope Day**' to raise money for the Hope Foundation and the work they do for street children in India.



OUTCOMES

- We informed people about child labour.
- We made posters and gave a presentation about child labour to students
- We made leaflets to let students know about child labour and to bring them home to their parents.
- We had a Fairtrade Week, with chocolate tasting and hot chocolate tasting.
- We raised €400 for the Hope Foundation.
- On our 'Go Casual for Hope Day', everyone had to wear something yellow for the Hope Foundation to show a sign of hope for the street children of India.
- Our class worked together as a team.
- We learned not to take things for granted - such as food, clothing and education.
- We now realise how lucky we are not to live in a country where we are exposed to work at such a young age.
- In our child labour simulated activity we really got to experience what the children in these countries go through. Our teacher was so strict with us but this was good.
- We used a lot of skills, such as communication skills, presentation skills, listening skills, problem-solving skills.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF OUR PROJECT

Our project had a positive impact on the whole school community. We displayed posters around the school showing information about our Challenge to Change project and students

and teachers learned more about child labour. We found that people are now more aware of the chocolate they are buying, searching for the Fairtrade sign on bars of chocolate. As a whole, the school is more aware of child labour. The students are more aware of how lucky they are to have an education, and not being forced out to work at a very young age.

CONCLUSION

This project was extremely interesting. We really enjoyed doing it. We learned a lot about the work of other children and how their rights are not respected.

We enjoyed doing our child labour simulated activity as it gave us an idea of what the children have to do for several hours every day.

We enjoyed going down to Kilkenny to tell others about our project and making them aware of what goes on in some parts of the world. It was good to look at projects similar to ours as we learned a lot from our experience.

Co-ordinator: Gemma Delaney



A Challenging Thought ...

The U.S. has less than 5 percent of the world's population, yet [has] been responsible for 29 percent of the world's cumulative carbon dioxide emissions ... In the U.S. today, the average person emits 19.74 tons of carbon dioxide per year, compared to 4.92 tons in China, 1.38 tons in India, and 0.05 tons in Mali (West Africa).

[Baumbert, et al, Navigating the Numbers]

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

POVERTY IN IRELAND

Our Lady's College Drogheda



The vision of the project was to define poverty in its broadest terms, to the extent of encompassing spiritual poverty in the definition. By becoming aware of issues relating to poverty in our own community, especially in the light of the current recession and by doing something to make a difference, the students developed a heightened awareness, an understanding and sensitivity to the plight of others, a social consciousness and a broader vision of life, hoping by bearing the words of Jesus in mind, to make a difference to others on their journey of life.

"I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me a drink. I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes, naked but you would not clothe me. I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me." Then they will answer him, "When Lord did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and would not help you". The king will reply: *"I tell you, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me."*

Matthew 25:41-46

AIMS

- To broadly define poverty
- To develop empathy for the poor in our community
- To learn about the work of voluntary organisations that help those in need
- To be inspired to incorporate Christian values into our daily living

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Researched the work of voluntary organisations including St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Discussed the real meaning of poverty and explored related issues
- Interviewed **Br. Kevin, Capuchin Day Centre**, Dublin 7, about his work
- Visitors to the classroom included speakers from **Homeless Aid**, and **St. Vincent de Paul**, Drogheda.
- A lunch gig of music and fun activities was held in the gymnasium. €800 was raised and presented to the local branch of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Consideration was given to the setting up of a school-based society of St. Vincent de Paul which would focus on our school community.



Co-ordinator: *Eileen O'Sullivan*



A Challenging Thought ...

Out of an EU population of about 500 million people, 80 million people live below the poverty threshold (people earning less than 60% of the national median income) and 18 million people live in jobless households

[European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)]

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

A Word from the Education Office

The Summer of 2012 saw the world powers meet in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. The goals of the conference were to bring about a new phase of global commitments to environmental protection, poverty reduction and the promotion of equality. Opinion differs on how effectively these global commitments will be met.

Also in Summer 2012, the students of the 28 schools taking part in this year's Challenge to Change project converged on Kilkenny. For those students this was the chance to tell others about the very worthwhile work they had been doing in their schools on issues of justice, human rights, interculturalism and sustainability. The stories told by those students were nothing short of inspiring, as they explained in their own words the part they had played in making our world a better place to live in. Granted, the work they had been doing did not have the razzamatazz of Rio but it could be argued that it was just as worthwhile and relevant. The honesty and passion of these young people was refreshing as they recounted local actions which had touched their school communities, their local communities and, indeed, communities further afield.

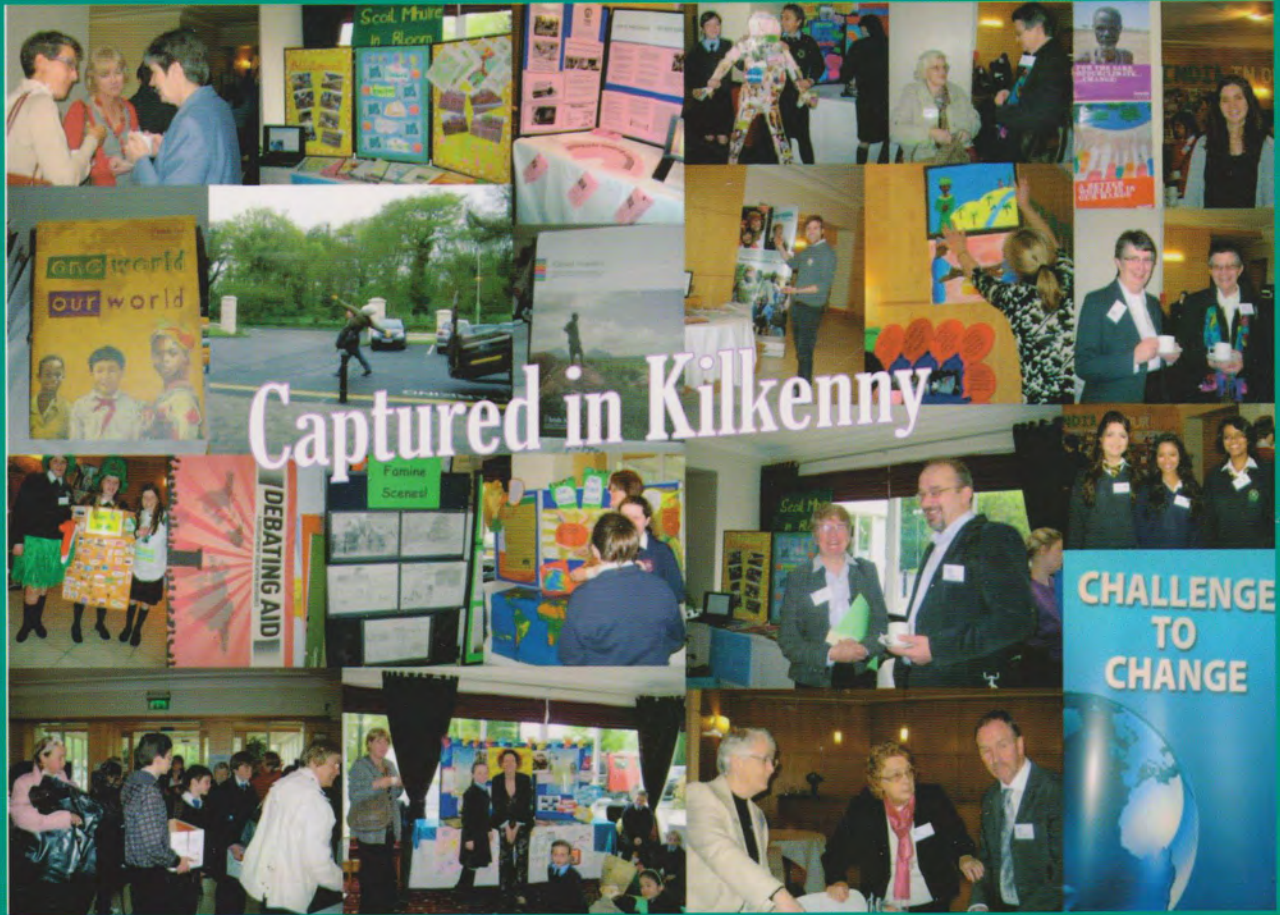
We extend our thanks to all our students, teachers, co-ordinators, Principals, parents and all associated with this year's projects for their active involvement and participation. The funding provided by Irish Aid and Presentation Trustees is much appreciated. We look forward to making a difference for the tenth successive year with **Challenge to Change 2012-2013**.

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The views expressed herein are those of Presentation Education Office and project schools and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs.