



HELWEL TRUST NEWS UPDATE

Issue No: 5

April 2005

Helwel Trust (Reg. Charity No: 271713) supports Rural Development Projects in Northern KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

A message from Helwel Trust Chairman, Howard Mowbray

Dear Friends

This Update brings you the encouraging news of how Helwel Trust is moving strongly forward. You will recall the very sad and difficult time in 2004 when we were forced to discontinue our support for Zisizeni due to the theft of money by their director. Many people kindly wrote, agreeing with the action we took and expressing encouragement to pursue other ways of helping impoverished Zulu people. We have carefully analysed our aims, together with procedures to receive grant requests, and we now strongly commend two well established charities in KwaZulu Natal for the Trust's support - details below. We will seek opportunities to continue our volunteer programme, as well as other projects that might deserve support from us. There is great value in the enterprises we are helping, and we will be most grateful for your continued support.



Africa Co-operative Action Trust (ACAT)

Over 70% of South Africa's poor live in rural areas where they are faced with poverty, resource degradation, malnutrition, unemployment and disease.

ACAT was established in 1979 as a Christian Development Trust committed to enabling disadvantaged rural people to improve and sustain their quality of life spiritually, physically, materially, intellectually, socially and environmentally.

ACAT's target group is the poorest of the previously disadvantaged rural communities - focusing on small farmers, entrepreneurs and learners. However, ACAT does not work exclusively with the poorest but also with the active poor.

To fulfill its mission, **ACAT** implements programmes of:

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Entrepreneurial Development
- Adult Basic Education and Training

In addition to their specialized objectives, each Programme aims to provide the targeted rural families with the opportunities, passion and capacity to:

- become self reliant
- overcome the causes of poverty within their control
- become involved in groups, co-operatives and village banks

Helwel Trust will contribute to **ACAT's** programme in the Nkandla area using entrepreneurship as a means to enable disadvantaged rural families to overcome poverty in a sustainable way and to influence and assist others to achieve the same. This will involve:

- facilitating entrepreneurial development
- stimulating local economic activity
- promoting and teaching sustainable business and development practices

The local community is involved in a public exercise of identifying the poor so that **ACAT's** initial interaction is with the poorest. The role is one of facilitating, encouraging and capacitating those who join a Programme. Participants own their development and success and reap their own results.



Training and Resources in Early Education

TREE was formed in June 1984 and is the largest early childhood Development (ECD) resource and training organisation in KwaZulu Natal. **TREE** has played a major role in creating an awareness of ECD amongst disadvantaged communities as well as lobbying for the provision of greater resources for ECD from both the state and the private sector.

TREE trains approximately 3,000 women each year to implement quality early childhood development programmes for young children in their communities, throughout KZN & the adjacent Eastern Cape. The training provided by **TREE** improves the educational potential of approximately 80,000 children annually.

TREE's vision is see a nation that values and affirms young children and gives them opportunities to develop to their full potential, in line with their development rights and needs.

Research has shown that children raised in an environment of poverty and neglect are the most at risk of infant death, low birth-weight, stunted growth, poor adjustment to school, increased repetition of school years and school dropout. Additional problems include: widespread breakdown of family structures, high rates of illegitimacy, under age mothers and an unbelievable increase in child abuse, child rape and neglect. The above factors are compounded by the crisis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is estimated that more than 7% of South African children will be orphaned by the year 2005. So the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will translate into hundreds of thousands of traumatised young children in the very near future.

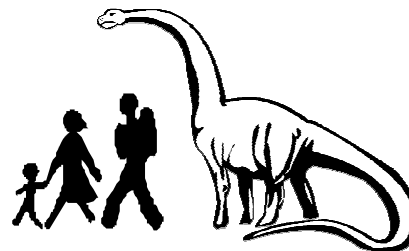
Helwel Trust's funding will enable **TREE's** holistic training programme in the Melmoth area to provide ECD practitioner training for a group of women from 10 communities. Scientific worldwide research bears out what **Helwel Trust** has always maintained and that is that the first 6 years of a child's life are critical to the child's development and ultimate achievement of his or her potential. **Helwel Trust's** funding for training courses will benefit not only the ECD practitioners but also the children they work with and the wider community.



HELWEL HIKE - A JURASSIC JAUNT

Saturday June 25th

Make a date to join us at the Magdalen Project near Chard in Somerset to walk to the Jurassic Coast at Charmouth in Dorset, the World Heritage Site. The Magdalen Project is an organic mixed farm and educational centre (find out more at www.themagdalenproject.org.uk). At the end of the walk you can paddle in the sea or find yourself a fossil (www.jurassiccoast.com)



The Hike is hosted by Claude & Elizabeth Rutter assisted by Liz & Russ Sharp. Fuller details are on a sheet accompanying the mailing of this News Update or from the Sharps, whose contact details are at the bottom of this sheet.

Helwel Trust Volunteers

Unfortunately there has to be a pause in the volunteer programme but Helwel Trust will forever be grateful to all those who have given their time, their skills & their many other gifts for disadvantaged people. They have always managed to deal with whatever came their way.

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Cathy Wilkins and **Jessica Mercer** were at ZAD last August when the storms broke - the devastating fraud that collapsed ZAD brought them experiences that they, and we, could never have imagined. For four weeks they continued, endeavouring to sort out the mess, trying to sort bank accounts, dealing with creditors face to face, finding, noting and copying evidence, potentially a very dangerous exercise. We recalled them when their secure accommodation at the Convent was withdrawn - we could not risk their safety any more. What stars, working far beyond the call of duty.

Cathy and Hlupeki Phiri, from Zimbabwe, were married in the USA this March and they are working and living in Washington D.C. Cathy is working for ACDI/VOCA a rural development and agriculture non-profit organisation.

Jessica was soon off to Mongolia working to gain experience that would assist her in her PhD studies in Australia later this year.

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Clare Morris & Deepak were married in March. Deepak is from Nepal and they are both involved in charitable activities to support the disadvantaged people in that country. Clare also runs the Global Village Club at Hatch Ride School - Years 5 & 6 children learning about working towards a fairer world.

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Lisa Sutton has joined Helwel Trust Council and will be the link person with one of our new KZN charities, TREE. Lisa had dealings with them when she was in SA setting up the Pre-school Resource Centre

Climate Change

In July 2003 John Mead was invited to speak at the Helwel Friends Meeting on climate change. A member of the Helwel Council, mentioned him as a possible speaker to her vicar (the rural dean of Battersea), who invited John to speak to his Deanery Synod in October 2003. John's address resulted in the Deanery Synod drafting the following resolution: 'this Synod asks General Synod to investigate and recommend how best church members can reduce CO₂ emissions by 60% by 2050, in accordance with the recommendations of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change'.

This resolution was sent to Diocesan Synod with the recommendation that John should make a presentation to them. In March 2004 he did so: the resolution was passed, by an overwhelming majority, and sent to General Synod. In February 2005 the General Synod of the Church of England held a debate on the environment. One of the speakers, Vasantha Gnadas, a representative of Southwark Diocese, proposed an amendment based on the Southwark resolution. In the course of her speech she paid a brief tribute to John Mead's enlightening presentations and she claims that, without this resolution, the General Synod debate would never have taken place.

Friends of Helwel Trust - this story shows that **you too can make a difference** on an issue that will affect the world's poor sooner and far harder than it does us.

Catherine Budgett- Meakin



Cathy & Phiri

Annual Meeting of Friends

This gathering will be held on Saturday 22nd October at Partnership House 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1

Friends are invited to attend, as observers, the Annual General Meeting of Helwel Trust Council at 6.00 p.m. followed immediately by an address and a buffet supper.

The name of the speaker will be announced with fuller details of the meeting in the Annual Newsletter next September

East Sussex Schools

Once again, Stonegate C. of E. School in the north of Sussex, has achieved something amazing for us recently. The Headmaster, Mr. Maurice Waller, although sad for the Helwel Trust over the recent events, is determined to keep his links with Nsengeni School near Melmoth in KwaZulu Natal. Nsengeni School had adopted his school crest when it was rebuilt a few years ago. Just before Christmas, he persuaded children and parents to buy sweatshirts (and have the logo printed on them) to send to Nsengeni school. They are on their way. More about this in the forthcoming annual newsletter!

Ann Crowhurst