



AUG -Dec31st
2019 Plus
year Review

Issue 7

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IN THIS ISSUE

Le Cheile Africa Newsletter August to December 31st / Year Review 2019

In This newsletter we aim to give you a insight into what we do, Life here in Kenya and a Snippet of events in 2019 so some stories post you may have seen before

(Apologize in advance for spelling mistakes)

Le Chéile Africa

Le Cheile Africa Nakuru CLG, Reg Number 633699

We are Glad and proud to announce we have achieved Charity Status in Ireland .REG NO RCN: 20204974 , Special word of Thanks here to Paul

Sharkey for all his help in getting this across the line a long slow tedious process (Not Forgetting we are a registered NGO in Kenya)

"Le Cheile Africa was established as a non-profit organization NGO Reg No in Kenya , **OP.218/051/17-250/10860** / Charity No. In Ireland RCN: 20204974

Together we are working towards a better tomorrow. A better place for the children of Kenya to call home, a place



where people are supported despite their medical needs, a place where people are safe and able to provide for their families. A place where no child cries in hunger or pain.

We are working, learning together and moving forward with local communities.

Our four-pronged approach to this is as follows;

- * Encourage community participation.
- * Build healthier lives by enhancing the dignity and quality of life.
- * Identify projects, resources and assist in their coordination.
- * Enable self-sustainability to all we assist

Le Chéile is a non-profit organisation governed by an active 6 member volunteer board of directors (including two of the organisations founders). We offer a variety of services to meet the needs of those we serve.

Our programs include:

* Provision of quality healthcare services through medical clinics/outreaches, mental health clinics, physical and occupational therapy, wellness programs (Yoga & Mindfulness), mother and child care, Immunisations & HIV/AIDs support programs.

* Education for disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

* Disability care programs which entails early intervention programs for children born with disabilities, physio and therapy services, social groups, home visits and carer to carer training sessions.

* Reproductive health & menstrual health management: Family planning, menstrual health education. Youth-friendly services and counselling

* Community development projects like environment conservation, de-worming programs, micro-loans, sustainable IGAs, WASH programs, community sports activities, peer education and

mentorship programs for children.





Gael Scoil De Hide

When I was asked would I be interested in chatting to some of the pupils in Gael Scoil De Hide about Le Cheile Africa when I was back in Ireland a few weeks back, I said be great to give kids a wee insight into how different the culture, education process, lifestyle, healthcare and most of all the day to day life of living in poverty .where living in a mud hut , carrying clean (well cleaner than river water) up to 6 miles to home all this after a day a school is the norm for 90% of the Solai community After our chat (presentation of photos etc.) which lasted approx. 25/30 mins it was followed by a question and answer section which I taught would be max 10 mins , It lasted over 45mins some great questions fired at me , Did my best to answer as clearly as possible taking into account the age of the pupils.. An experience I have to say I enjoyed..

Then they said we would be the beneficiary of their Cake sale. I said that's amazing... remember every euro really does help..as the average daily wage is 2/3 euro in Solai .so not to be under pressure re any set amount .It's the gesture and the willingness to help is a great start alone ..

We also hope to roll out an old school pen pal program where the kids in Ireland and Kenya can exchange letters more so class pen pals than individual . Maybe in time if possible a Skype link up between same as well..

Really is unreal support, from a truly amazing bunch of kids. I know yer parents/ guardians are so proud off every one of ye. well so are we all here in Le Cheile ...Hopefully in 2020 we can link up some partnership/ program with Gael Scoil De Hide



ACTS OF KINDNESS

Join our family of Le Cheile Africa in our quest to change at least over 100 very needy families in 2020 by being part of our monthly giving. I would love to welcome you to join us in our acts of kindness initiative in our quest for changing a family, educate a child, empower a woman, donate a physio session to a needy child, feed a malnourished family etc. Join us in the next few days as we engage and involve all our friends, supporters, families and everyone who wish to join this beautiful family of change makers. Let's own the projects

Feed A Family

Feed a family this Christmas was a major success (See Photos etc. in Disability Notes) with our aim to grow this project and over time once funds allow run this on monthly basis. It's so hard seeing the daily struggle for survival, at times I wish I had a magic wand as the solution is so easy but without your support we can't make that magic happen

So to those of you who supported this campaign Thank you (and Our ongoing Monthly Donors) so much its lovely feeling making sure everyone has a dinner to enjoy. Feel loved, No hunger, watch those kids eyes light up. Its the best present they could receive this Holiday season it really is, Christmas Dinner

Education Program

Help us Keep Children in School by Sponsoring a Child €25 a month

Currently Children in This program are being Supported by Le Cheile Directly

Regular Reports will be sent to Sponsors re the Child they are supporting via this education program

A sample case

This is **John (Not Real NAME)**. He is 7yrs old and is the fourth eldest child. He lives at home with his mother and 5 other siblings. Two of his older siblings live with the grandmother. **John** comes from a single mother family as it's alleged the dad is deceased.. He Loves football and playing. He is a teacher, a doctor or a pilot. He is a carer to his younger siblings and lovingly looks after them. He prepares and serves whatever food is left at home to his siblings. **John** is very protective of his brothers and sisters. His siblings at home are aged 10, 5, 3 and half, 2 and half and 9 months old. The 10yr old. Goes to school and **John** minds the others at home. He has never been to school and has been attending our day centre where he. Gets help to mind the children and an opportunity to play and read at our library.. He would like to go to school, achieve his dreams and give back to his siblings and a needy child in future. He is a leader, a change maker and he will save the world. He is fighter and a future leader. Yes he can by just a little push and a family/sponsor to build this bridge for him. The cost to join a school is €15 monthly, uniforms and shoes €20 (every three months) this is an average of €25 a month.

Dreams are limitless and opportunities should be too. Every child deserves the right to education. Let's make this happen

for Sylvester. Would you like to sponsor **John** to achieve this dream? Get in touch with us and go to our donate page. It's only €25 to keep John in school

Malnourished Families Program

Malnourished Families an example of one case. (**Simon** Not real name / full details available to sponsors on a private basis on the family they are supporting)

A sample case

This is **Simon** He. Is 2 and half years old? He comes from a family of 9. His mother is a single widowed mother.. **Simon** suffers from severe acute malnutrition and this has led to delayed milestones in his development.. **Simon** was recently hospitalized thanks to the help of Deirdre Quinlivan covering costs of same due to his condition. His family survives with only one meal a day which is ugali (staple food made from corn only) and black tea. This has led to Elijah not growing properly and with many many health conditions like kwashiorkor and marasmus. **Simon** needs a sponsor to cover for his special meal at €0.75 cent a day and three sessions of occupational therapy @€1.50 to help with his development milestones. That's gives a monthly donation of €22 for his food and €18 for his physio.

We are in need of two monthly sponsors for **Simon**

Monthly Food sponsor €22

Monthly Occupational therapy sponsor €18

Agriculture Fund –

: Goats

We are looking for supporters of our monthly giving for our agriculture fund. Goats are great and can change everything. Their special and nutritious milk provides great protein to help kids grow healthier. The family can also sell extra to get cash for other things like medicines and other necessities. A healthy dairy goat can give up to 13 cups of milk a day and the milk makes it easier to digest than a cow's milk. Goat milk is a rich source of calcium, protein and other essential nutrients which are vital and really needed in our fight against malnutrition which is a leading factor in disability among children. Growing children are in need of goat's milk. Help us get goats for those needy families in Solai by just giving a special donation of €85. You can give the goat a name and we will ensure that this gift reaches a family in Solai

: Sheep

Solai is a very hilly area with very fertile soil and a very conducive environment for animal keeping. People here love to keep sheep. It's known that one healthy ewe is able to give a family highly nutritious milk for essential proteins, vitamins and minerals. Also plenty of wool to enable women knit warm sweaters and blankets. Here most sheep often give birth to twins or triplets and this can be sold for income or bred to give more wool and milk to the family. Sheep milk is twice

as rich as cows milk in nutrients like proteins calcium and B vitamins. It's a wonderful way to show love and share the love of Jesus, the lamb of God. With your monthly donation of €50 enables a family to have a sheep that changes their lives for the better

: Cows

We are looking for 10 very special supporters to donate €500 each and partake in our Dairy Cows for Solai campaign. It's believed that one cow gives up to 5,000 gallons or about 80,000 glasses of milk in its lifetime. Isn't it a powerful way to change lives for the good? In Solai women are tasked with low paying and low level jobs.. Your gift of a cow is very important to our community... Help a family by buying a cow and you will provide an entire economic support system. 10 great supporters could be your business, a class, individual gifts in memory of someone, could be your local church, individuals etc. You get to name the cows as we send you updates etc.

: Chickens

Sometimes miracles come with feathers. Healthy Chickens and their eggs give hungry families nutritious food and are easy to breed. A beautiful gift of €25 a month will enable a family buy 10 chicks which will grow and multiply to give an income, share with others and enable families make a better life for themselves. Chickens require very little money, space or food to thrive and grow making it an ideal business venture for a single mum or vulnerable family..

Disability Programs

Le Cheile Africa runs a monthly disability program (OVER 100 MEMBERS) where carers and their loved ones with special needs gather together, cook and enjoy a meal together, receive medical care and treatment.. The members of this lovely group also get to receive. Therapy sessions as well as trainings on different topics. Would you like to be part of our support groups by supporting our socials, Table banking, treatment and trainings.. By giving a monthly donation of €25 you enable us improve the quality of life.

We are looking for 20 friends to give towards this social every month. Your donation will help us Le Cheile continue the work with this group in Solai and Kiremba

Lets keep the true Magic Spirit of Humanity alive and Help us grow this Act Of Kindness Campaign

So If you can join our amazing team of Monthly Supporters and are able to give €25/50 a month Or Whatever it will enable us Roll out this Act Of Kindness Program

Making a Real Difference In Real Lives

Any query contact us via email at lecheileafrika@gmail.com

See link below to sign up via PayPal

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=X9S8QYGCHAZ36&source=url



Sport For All Program

Our sport for all proram has evolved where we now support Local community Groups via supply of



Footballs , Equipment etc and visit each Group on average once a month ,This way we get to spread the love of Sport ,Equality to more Kids and using our resources more efficiently

A post from 2019

Days like this make you beam., smile realize how lucky we are in the western world. ..

Yesterday we started the distribution of footballs boots (screws as called here) to the kids in our Sport for all program. "Solai Sharks" (Another batch of boots will be distributed next week)

The utter joy .the amazement ,tears o my it's would put a lump in your throat .wow , Thank thank you to all who supported Watergrasshill United and GAA in our football boot appeal ..

To be honest most of these kids don't even have shoes to wear. To get a gift of a pair of football boots

(Screws) is like winning the lotto a miracle. ..

You should hear them . Buzzing with excitement..

.I will wash them after training and won't even put them out as they will be robbed

., I am going to sleep with them on

., This is the best day of my life .really is. Mr



Derry .and Mary ,,, Wow we really are professional now Screws (football boots) we can keep ..we have Bibs with our badge on them IE logo (Thanks to the Knapp's) ,jerseys

and footballs to play with . ,,, I have Screws (football boots) and your telling me I can keep them. Yells of utter joy ..



Bibs



A lovely gesture where these Jerseys will see a new lease of life in our sport for all. Program The game of Hurling really has caught the kids imagination in this program. They call it wackers. . A game for warriors...real warriors..

The game. Of. legends And Giants .IE Cú Chulainn , and a few of the Heroes who wore the red of Cork with pride Christy Ring, Brian Corcoran ,Diarmud O Sullivan , Patrick Horgan.

.This program is all about inclusion, equality via fun based activities. IE Soccer GAA (hurling /football) Rugby , Rounder's. Athletics Etc.

A special word of thanks to Rob Knapp for all his support with this initiative and also to the Knapp family for Donation Of Solai Sharks

about long may it continue Making a real difference in real people's lives.





We also Showed the kids a video of this Ancient game to grasp the idea of how it's played. which is claimed is over 3000 years old. GAA itself was formed over 100 years ago and a bit of structure added to this game..The game of legends and giants..

The kids were fanisateted with the game. Hard to believe I am now a GAA coach ha ha. As for years have been know as a soccer man ..but anyone that's knows me will know I am a keen supporter of all sports



Disability Program

Our Disability group is going very well, going from strength to strength a major success story to be honest. This group really have progressed and now the next step is rolling out of the remaining chicken program to members and other sustainable training program in 2020.

We now also have a second group in a local village outside Solai called Kiermba as on our home visits say the hardship, conditions people with disabilities are living in. Honestly some are locked up all day and night do mean. Locked up.... Main reason for a second group is people can't afford to travel to Solai (1-2 euro each way) so we have decided to head to them as it's very rural right on the Solai mountains. Really is a beautiful place scenery, some mad roads..it's like a forgotten world.. We now have our physio going 6 days a week and really is beneficial to members of our Disability group. (On sat we do home physio visits to those who can't attend either clinic due to these conditions some are bed bound etc.)

The Solai Disability Group meets the 1st Friday of The Month with the Kiermba Disability Group meeting the 1st sat of every month / Here we hire a Matatu (Mini-Bus) here to transport members to meeting for the sat Group for now. Always on the lookout for someone, organization, company. To support this Disability program approx. 500 euro a month. Main cost of this Program are Members Therapy Physical /Mental plus Meds and cost of monthly Social itself. It really is a program that is making a real difference in people's lives.

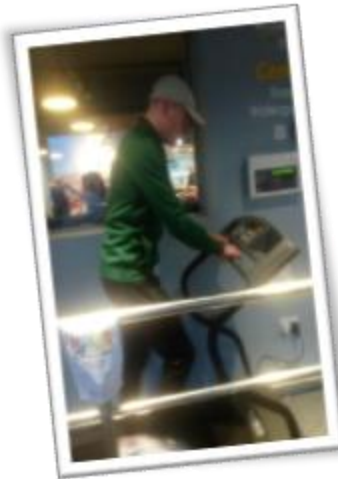
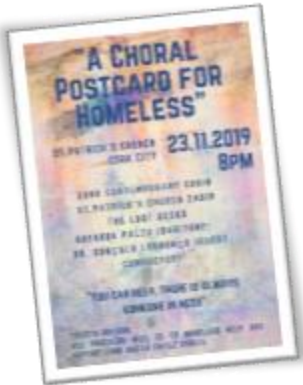
We are glad to say we have officially brought Bonfast (Kurier) on board as our community liaison officer in 2019 for Le Cheile Disability group which he is a member of himself.

Feed A Family 2019. / Disability December Update

What an absolute success during our last disability social in 2019. We had an incredible day, so much love and gratitude; the truest Christmas spirit a person could ask for. Yesterday was the day our members were getting their dividends from their table banking savings and so the spirits were high and everyone happy..festive mood😊😊😊😊 We decided to do something different and pampered our ladies and gentlemen by doing their hair, hair cuts and giving massages from Raha Home Care therapist and our very own therapist George. Some of our members have never had a hair done, massage or just been treated to something nice so this was an opportunity to give them hairdos. They absolutely loved it as many still were unsure of what's up for Christmas for them. It's our first feed a family and we hope to continue making this a tradition. Thank you so so so much to everyone who made this happen. Truly, every little bit makes the biggest difference, words can't describe.



Just Some of the Fundraisers
over the last the last year in
Photos .Thanks for your
ongoing support Funds raised
from these events help us
maintain and over time grow
our Projects



A different insight into what we do in Le Cheile

The notes below are From Deirdre who volunteered with us for 9 weeks (Part of The Le Cheile team now) also during this time we had 2 Italian Doctors with us for 10 days Francesco and Luigi

Might be a long read But well worth it

Deirdre is a Pharmacist and really has become a key member of the Le Cheile Team in her 2 months plus here still another 2 or so weeks with us,

Today (Sunday)Derry, the 2 Italian doctors and I went on a local road



trip to Subukia shrine, it's a Catholic shrine modelled on Knock. We went for a walk/hike up lots of steps to the holy well and where Mary has appeared before. Pope John Paul II visited here some years ago! There

was an amazing view from the top, it was very peaceful there and a relaxing place.

On the way to the shrine we crossed the equator! Solai is very close to the equator, just below it in the southern hemisphere, the shrine is in the northern hemisphere. After the shrine we travelled back by the Solai lake, about 40mins from the clinic we came across an accident on the road, there was a boy and he had fallen off his motorbike. He was lying on the side of the road. There were some people gathered round him. It had only just happened I'd say. So we stopped and tried to help. Mary wasn't with us as she was working in the Clinic today, so there was a bit of a language problem! From our assessment of the situation we could see that the boy had badly cut his knee and it needed stitches. He couldn't bend his leg and he seemed in shock at what happened and probably in shock at what would happen now! After some sign language and speaking very English slowly.... He understood what we were trying to say!!! We offered to take him in the van to the clinic, he accepted and his friend came too. We lifted him into the van carefully and Derry drove us to the clinic.

He was cleaned up and his knee all stitched, about 10stiches I think. Given painkillers and tetanus inj. He was only 17, he had a little English but not much. He was very grateful, he has another 2 yrs in school and when we asked what he would like to do he said he would like to be a doctor! If we hadn't come along when we did, he would more than likely have gone home and maybe turned up to the hospital a few days later with an infected wound. He seemed happy leaving and was saying he was grateful for what we did.

Derry dropped him back close to his home and a motorbike was picking him up to go the rest of the way. Let's hope he'll keep the leg straight for the next while and it heals!

So a nice end to the day and it was great to be able to help! 🙏🏻

So as the week goes on. The story continues

Another day - which made me think about how lucky we all are.... Every day here makes me think and appreciate the family I was born into and everything I have in my life- I really can't stress this enough!

This lady sitting on the ground was one of the people we were taken to. More than 20 yrs ago she and her mother were raped by the same man - a supervisor in her mother's workplace (the big farm that employs lots of people incl the widow) her mother was so afraid she was going to loose her job they didn't tell anyone about what happened. After this, the lady gave birth to a daughter.

Ever since she gave birth she has been depressed. Still to this day. Her daughter has 4 children now. So definitely in her 20s. The lady is so withdrawn, didn't even look at us, greet us or speak to us today.

She is in a very very depressed state and has been for that length of time. She doesn't take any medication or attend any health care. She lives here with her aunt. Very rarely she might get up and go out on the farm with a hoe but won't be there for long. Most of her time is spent like she is in the picture.

Another lady we met today was a 35yr old called Mary, she was married and has a 12 Yr old son. Her son lives with the dad. Shortly after the boy was born her marriage broke up and she met another man some time after. From whom she got HIV When she was told her diagnosis she suffered a stroke about 10yrs ago.

She has been affected on her right side. She can walk but it is affected and her strength in her right side is affected. Her sight in her right eye has also been affected. She was living with her mother in the family home but she had to move out as her mother was awful towards

her. And telling people about her condition, if someone comes to visit her, her own family tell that person she has hiv and turn people away from her because of her condition. When Mary was telling us her story, she broke down she was so so upset and found it so difficult to tell us about how her own family were the worst culprits in this discrimination... Imagine!

We were all affected by Mary and her situation. And how she is being treated by her family and the local people.

She now lives in a room in a mud house. She has no money for food, she makes soap and tries to sell it but finds it very difficult due to how the stroke has left her. She bought some chickens but has no money to feed them so she is giving them away to her family. She is a very strong brave lady to share her story with us. After meeting her we are going to help her to receive physiotherapy next week. And give her some medication for her stroke. She is on hiv medication which is dispensed by the government hosp. Two brothers we called to. See they are 7 and 11 I think it is. They don't talk. They have some sort of mental health problem but they haven't been diagnosed. Their family has never brought them to be assessed or checked out for a diagnosis. They don't go to school or play with other children.

It's very difficult to say what condition they might have.... Maybe autism/genetic condition. Adhd of some sort.

The family think because a dowry wasn't paid for the daughter (mother of boys) that's why the children are the way they are. Some of the beliefs here are a bit crazy.... (Some people are thought to be witches too) The family have now paid the dowry so they think the problem should be fixed should they have another child. Mary spent quite a bit of time trying to educate the mother about how important it is to get a diagnosis for the children and how it is very likely it may be a genetic condition and to

get this checked before having more children.

The mother appeared quite ignorant. How you could leave the 2 boys like that.... I don't know. When she has gotten a diagnosis for the boys, Mary has told her we will help with medication for them. I wouldn't be very confident that she will get this diagnosis but hopefully she will. inly time will tell

The last visit of the day was to a lady, a local pastor told Mary about. This lady is a grandmother to twin boys, her sons children. The son and his wife have split up and have left the children. The grandmother doesn't know where her son is. The twin boys are 7 yrs old. They live in a one room house on Patels farm (the big farm I talked about earlier - big employer in the area)

The grandmother was employed by Patel but has been laid off. Now one of the twin boys - *7yrs old* has been employed by Patel on Saturdays to work on the farm. If this boy wasn't employed on the farm - they wouldn't be able to stay living in this room! The pastor told Mary about this case and asked if we could help out medically.

When we called to the room this evening, the grandmother wasn't there - she was out looking for work. Her 17 yr old son Tyson was there and one of the twin boys - Victor (who looked underweight) the 2nd boy Denis came home from work a few minutes later. He looks to be a bit stronger than his brother.

As schools are on holidays now - he's working for them. He gets *a sweet* at the end of the day. We asked Tyson how much he gets paid, he doesn't know but the grandmother knows.

When we asked them what they had eaten today - they hadn't had anything.... This was around 4 or 5pm.

The only thing they had was black tea in the morning!! as they didn't have any food.

We had a discussion between us as to what we could do.... We went to a

local shop with Tyson and bought food for them, ugali, eggs, rice, butter, bread, milk, soap, cooking oil, porridge. We spent about 19 euro, the food should last for one week at least and we gave him some money to buy veg in the market. He was very grateful. I'm just thinking.... the number of times we say "I'm starving" And believe me from what I'm seeing here... we don't know what it is to starve that's for sure.

I didn't think to take any pictures of the twin boys or the room they live in.... (I have included one below). my mind was on the reality of the situation..

- 7yr old employed - this being the only way they can stay in that room/house

- no food all day.... only black tea These boys came to the clinic today where they were seen by the doctor and the minor conditions treated. Now a long term plan will need to be set in place. .

Second Post from Deirdre's notes

"Today we visited Kiremba, the area in the Solai hills. We met with some of the people with disabilities and their relatives, some we met on the last visit over a week ago, some we met today for the first time. The purpose of the visit today was to discuss setting up a disability group. (le cheile have one running in Solai for close to a year now, so this would be a 2nd group)

The Solai disability group is doing so well, Derry & Mary have witnessed very positive changes in the members since the group started, in their health, in little businesses they have started, empowering the members. They meet once a month (I sent the pics of it on Wed) and have a social meeting, table banking (similar to a credit union small loans/savings) members of the group cook lunch.

After a long discussion with the people about when and where to hold the meeting, discussion about the importance of treating people with disabilities with dignity, respect and as equals. We also talked about

the importance of helping yourself before expecting help from others e.g getting a diagnosis for a child with a disability etc. It was decided that the disability group will meet in Solai on the 1st Saturday of the month, so I'll get to attend the first one! ☺

Next visit was to an old lady She's not sure what age she is, her husband died this year and they think he was 97. And she said there wasn't much of an age gap between them.

She's blind, she lost her sight about 12 yrs ago, she was attacked by chickens when she was trying to catch them. And the treatment she received in one hospital actually made the situation worse. But by the time it was realised at another hospital it was too late, her sight was gone.

She has diabetes, hypertension and arthritis. She has been bed bound for 3 yrs but boy did she lift our spirits today.

She was so happy and full of joy despite everything. She was thrilled with our visit even though she couldn't see us, she was delighted to see us, she wouldn't have us leave empty handed, so we were given a big bag of bananas leaving. She really was an inspirational lady and was receiving great care from her daughter. They have a wheelchair for her and bring her outside in it. She also has a catheter in, she really is being cared for so well.

It was so great to see as so often we come across situations where family members are ignorant as to how care for or what to do for people with disability particularly mental illness. Quite often families don't have the means to either. Luckily for this lady she has raised great children. It was an honour to meet her today ♥☐

Our last call today was. To a lady She is 65 yrs and suffers with mental illness. She was in a mental institution but after the post election violence in 2007 (which I need to research! ☺) her family were displaced and could no longer afford to keep her in the institution. She



now stays in this room with the door locked as her family fear she would leave and she is vulnerable, this happened in the early 90s when she was raped.

She has been suffering with mental health issues since the mid 70s. She isn't on any medication and all her medical notes etc were destroyed in a fire around the time of the violence in 2007.

This was an extremely tough situation to see. You could see she was happy to have people visit her. Her sister doesn't have a house to keep her in, she too stays in a very small house with her family. It was so sad to see, when you think if she had received medical treatment - medication /counselling etc, she could have had a very normal life as opposed to spending it locked inside this room (for her protection) where there is nothing except a bed. If you saw it in reality! It was awful.

It was consoling however to see her sister is very good to her but needs help. We advised her to bring her to the hospital in Nakuru and get a diagnosis from a psychiatrist and then le cheile might be better able to help.

So please God she will and she might get a day out with the disability group too."





John Mulcahy

(A Man of few words on paper but as ye all know a man of Action)

Just home from my trip to Africa where I stayed in the company of [Derry Desmond](#) and [Mary Kigo](#) and their organization Le Cheile Africa located in Solai Kenya ...the work they do for the people of this area and its surroundings has to be seen to be believed the services they offer are of enormous benefit to the locality.. From their medical clinic , , the home help, disability , outreach , children's daycare , sports for all programmes nothing is too big and nothing is too small they get the job done . My trip for start to finish was simply amazing and all those I met along the way from the programmes above and Le Cheile staff enriched and encouraged my time in Solai. The people we helped along the way last week all struggle in various ways from physical , mental , nutritional and social exclusion issues but that said they very welcoming and feel themselves empowered under the guidance of Le Cheile. Given the struggle that these people face everyday they always offer a smile and a friendly " how are you ". The local kids never stop smiling and as soon as you stop and say hello more appear from every nook and cranny and all they want to do is play football and be your friend. I could honestly fill a book on the positives of my trip and the only negative I would say is that its tough to take when you see these people struggle and the kids who turn up at the door looking for food because they are so hungry and knowing that we here at home have so much its hard to understand but as Derry says this is



Africa you just pull out all the stops and help . As hosts Mary and Derry (Marys Homestay / Eireanns Way Solai) were a pleasure to be around and the 2 boys Kamu and Nderitu (whom they rescued from a terrible situation) filled the days with fun and laughter. Hopefully the photos will try and bring my experience to you but nothing beats being on the ground and I would recommend anyone and everyone to do a stint volunteering with Le Cheile its an absolute uplift and heartwarming experience. In more simple words I had an amazing venture.



Another different insight into what we do in Le Cheile

Living The Dream (Derry's Mind)

ye might enjoy the read ,ya may not

Rain rain waiting for the rains to pass roads impassable for now.. Poor Mary getting bits for clinic etc at least I am sitting here in d van ...

An insight in to my mind dangerous I know I know so don't go there

Over the last few week's months seen many a good person taken from us too early .life can be cruel. Heart breaking. But we do what we can to help and support each other when times are difficult, when our friends need us us most..we are all one big family

One looks at the world. .the western world USA , Europe.. Biggest issues are homeless, healthcare, education. All of these can be solved especially in Ireland if the political will was there. Sad to say it's not..Simple maths really for less than 15% of a countries budget one could solve these issues. Community, social housing liked we had in d 70/80's .s healthcare system with more nurses (pay them correctly) and yes free education.. Actually free But the will is. Not there. .but saying that we are to blame .with an average of only 50% of people voting ,one can't change the status quo... Yip those who do not vote .I know people so why vote. I tell u why. People died for our right to vote , equality, and if one votes u are more than entitled then to give out about the system , government. Till then u are only a tyre kicker .so if ya want change all it takes is people to step. Out of the comfort zone, hey 1st off just vote. Simple as. Then change might just happen... I also see people giving out about refugees getting this that .and non-nationals. Well folks if you were

fleeing war. Starvation. I hope Ireland will always be the place of a 1000 welcomes Remember we can afford to help but it's the lack of political will to help our own by politicians that got voted in .yes voted in is d issue not the less well-off who are always the easy target for the keyboard warriors.. Never forget we the Irish are the world over and 99% of the time accepted with open arms. On a yearly basis the young travel to work see the world and a certain % remain in their new homes for various reasons. So that my take on it .don't go ranting if ya disagree it's okay to agree or even disagree that democracy folks..

Still raining folks so we write on... Over the last 7 months or so as ye know Kenya is my new home. Ireland always home and am blessed to get home as often as I can.. But saying that miss my lads big big time In the months I have been here seen unreal poverty ,hardship ,times are tough , emotionally, what can one do.. Hands tied, no answers coming..Get frustrated, so at times I sit in the night sky looking up at the stars ,the heavens hoping for a miracle . Faith..Faith. That miracle always comes. One has to have faith ... define Faith it is whatever we need it to be . Love life here it's tough .but glad we are helping people via Le Cheile projects and programs. Every day we see a smiling face thanks to our projects. Not all rosy here re myself heart scare _ don't ask I do have one. .long story but grand now.. In the last week or so shot down with malaria. Wow knocked me back a bit but back up and going today, so all good happy days. Last week on one of our home visits Mary and Deirdre came across a very disturbing case, so decided to follow it up the following day. To our shock it was worse than we could ever imagine Found 2 boys locked in a house , so with the help of there grandmother broke ,burst in the door .what waited us will haunt me till the day I die .covered in their own poo.,,

house covered in poo, urine, the dirt ,smell o my still haunts me..so bad I would not go back in as we had boys out .how these wee lads are alive ..Just to note ,local chief ,health workers notify through the whole process. Mary and Deirdre clean the boys as best as we could on site .off to police station . . Talking taking chief, health officials. Two options. 1/put them in care. But will be split up ..One boy just over 2 the other 3 and a half with some disability issues...they would. Be lost in the system and hope for the best 2/ suggested by chief we take them as both are malurished..o my so so bad ,sick. Their eyes tell the story .so option 2 it was with us now over a week .a big big improvement in their health but a very long road ahead of then to go especially the older boy .has a few extra hurdles to overcome but we will do what we can Now is all about building them back up ,healthy meals ,love ,baths (don't think they ever had one there skin like a 90 year old) care .won't lie they are a handful really are but now are part of our family and dreading the day they might leave us. .but we are really blessed with Deirdre a rock of strength and support ,Mary likewise (Mary is a saint 1st off to put up with me ha ha ask my lads and always thinking giving to others even when we don't have ourselves .don't ever change girl) I do my wee bit too hands on re nappy changing, dinner etc. A long rd. of recovery here both will need therapy , yip it has knocked us for 6 as they say .the days are hard to plan with two wee lads that need ongoing care are like newborns they have been so neglected it's 24/7 care they need. Financial we live a simple basis life on a tight budget .they two boys have blown all that out if the water. Ha ha..what life without a challenge.. life throws us many curves balls down through the years so far have caught them all and glad I did .really am glad life through us this one...love them. To bits. Great wee boys. (Tears here in my eyes excuse spelling etc)oo meant to say they see their mother whenever she.

Wants too only called once so far
(rant on the way. Here) there lovely
grandmother calls most days as it's
important they keep that family link.

..

Raining outside and inside. .sorry..

As said my mind, so hopefully ya
enjoy the read. Rains hopefully gone
soon..

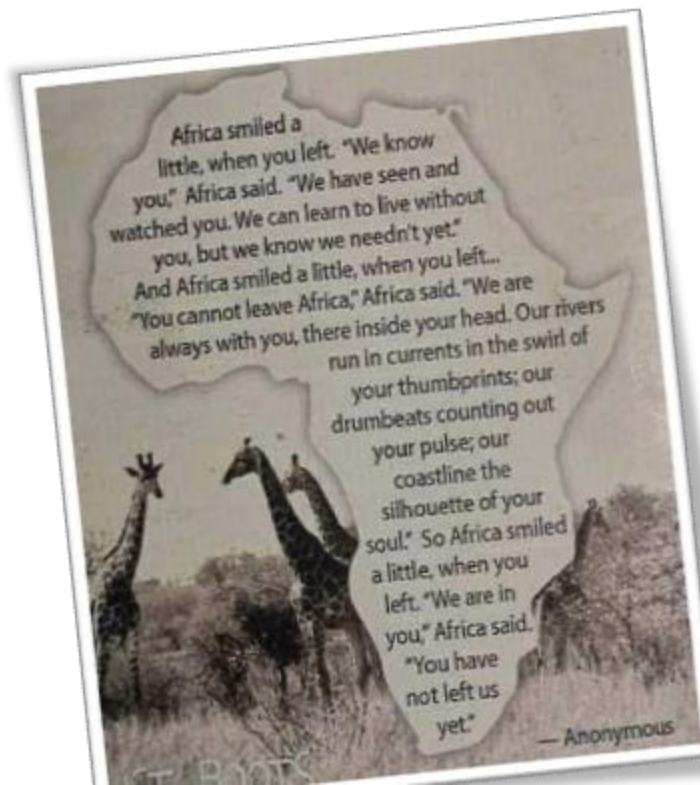
...

Have our community programs
(Disability, Sport etc) to look after
as well along with a new project
that's we will announce soon. A lot
of work here over the last few
months on this one with amazing
support all to be revealed soon
So as you see we are chasing
shadows but glad we are doing so .
Nothing is possible without the
support of our friends and
supporters. So don't ever forget ye
are the foundation of everything we
do so thank you all so so much.
So rains easing so better get in the
road before the next downpour. And



darkness setting in..
Some mad read I know but that's d
mind of mine. Never stops thinking..
A said a post about what on my
mind killing time waiting for the rain
to pass..
Hope ye enjoy d read all the
same...

Remember living the dream..
Making a real difference in real
people's lives..
As we say share the love



“ On Daily Inspired Life”

A real Insight into the night of the Solai Dam Disaster and how Mary really saved many lives



,Know it is a bit of long read but really does give an insight in to that tragic Fateful Night Real life hero story

. In one night Mary went from being a shy, unknown volunteer in her community to the "The Lady That Saved Many Lives" When the police car arrived at the clinic with the first survivor, a one-month old baby boy, I had no idea what would lay ahead for myself and the clinic as the night unfolded. I looked down at the lifeless body of the child. White foam dripped from his mouth. His breathing was faint. I was shaking, confused. I had no doctors to call on. The two doctors scheduled to work at the clinic had fled the scene to safety. I prayed, "Oh God, please help me. Don't let this precious baby die in my arms!" I was so scared. That child was in my clinic, depending on me for survival. The commotion had started that evening around 7pm. There had been a loud bang, a massive blast. Next came an unusual breeze followed by another mysterious sound - like an ocean viciously roaring, banging against a rock face. I walked outside to investigate the sound. A panicked group of local women and children were gathering. There were more women arriving - terrified mothers with crying children clutched to their backs. With them, they brought the terrible news. Patel dam, located close to the village of Solai, 190km (120 miles) north-west of the capital, Nairobi, Kenya, had burst. The waters were sweeping away homes and claiming people with it. The news was devastating. Shouts and screams grew louder. Phones started ringing. People were calling friends, family

and neighbors, alerting others of the impending doom. I looked around the clinic. Inside and out. So many women and children had rushed to the clinic for refuge. What could I do to help them? Could they swim? How was I going to swim? I don't know how to swim. My mind raced, my thoughts tormented me. I thought of Derry. I thought of the Solai community and my family. And what about Le Cheile Africa, and all the efforts we'd gone to, to raise money to open the clinic. We had just opened the doors of Le Cheile Africa five weeks earlier. Anxiety gripped at me as I prepared for death. My hands shook as I texted my fiancé Derry. I wanted to hear his voice for one last time. I was too terrified to call my parents. I knew my dad would be devastated by what was happening. I prayed silently, "Oh God, please forgive me for my sins". I continued to shake uncontrollably. I was having trouble breathing. Was this going to be the end? I took a couple of puffs from my Asthma puffer. Breath in, breath out. I took deep breaths and then I heard a voice speak from my heart, "Mary, you may feel terrified inside, but you have to be strong. These women and children, and the elderly gathering at the clinic are frightened and desperate. They need you." I looked down at the precious baby boy in my arms. A renewed energy engulfed me. I felt a presence guiding me on how to act. Thoughts and ideas began flooding into my mind like the dam waters that had brought this child to me. I held the baby close to my chest to transfer the heat from myself to him. I started clearing his airways and removed the mud and debris from his fragile body. I patted him on his back. I pleaded and begged that child would not die in my arms. It was dark. The electric lines had been knocked down by flooding waters. One of the local women held up her phone light as I tried resuscitating the baby. I asked her, "Please, go boil water for us so we can clean the baby. It will be easier to clear his airways". She ran next door to her home and started a bonfire. She placed a big pot on it to boil water. A few minutes later we completely cleaned the baby. We wrapped him with my duvet and I held him close, cradling him in my arms. Next, the baby came out with a burp. Murky water came gushing out of his mouth. His airways were clear. I wouldn't lose this child. Slowly, slowly he started breathing and his body temperature returned to normal. I thanked God for this miracle. Seeing that baby boy come back to life in my arms gave me the energy to keep going. Inside the clinic on the night of the disaster. Our clinic is very small - Each room 9 by 9, so we worked with the space we had. We had children, men and women in their own rooms respectively. As

the co-founder of Le Cheile Africa, I knew I must take charge. Our small clinic, that we'd struggled so hard to get off the ground, would become the rescue place for the community. We must fight for survival as a community. Within minutes another police car pulled up with another screeching siren. Three more children were rushed into our clinic. Their state was horrifying. They were covered in mud and mud everywhere with no clothes. Two of the children were hypothermic. I gathered all the courage left in me. I prayed the children be brave and that no lives would be lost. Finding Courage From Within The community say they saw a totally different Mary that night. Though I had cofounded Le Cheile Africa, I personally, was very much an unknown in the community. I had always been a quiet person, working in the background. I never imagined I could take on the role of a leader. I was so wrong. I wondered how it could be possible, but the courage came when I needed it. To the community's surprise, when the survivors came pouring in, I gave instructions with authority. I directed the abled-bodied on what to do. "Please, sister get the boiled water!" "You, brother, please bring the blankets from the neighbors and give them to the families outside." "And aunty, please take this child. Hold her close, keep her warm." I was shaking, moving with speed. The clinic was like a scene from an ER movie. I watched our clinic supplies fly off the shelves. I told myself that our clinic isn't about the supplies. We are about saving lives. And that is exactly what we did. By the end of the night I'd lost my voice, sense of smell, and I couldn't taste anything. But it was worth it! Everyone brought to our clinic, left stable and alive. No one died at our clinic that night. We saved lives. When I Feel Like Giving Up While those that sought refuge in the clinic survived the dam disaster, so many others didn't make it. People I had treated previously at the clinic were no more. One family who I dearly cared for, lost all their four children. It was not easy mentally. We spent every night and day offering counselling and psycho social support to that family and others that needed it. I was breaking into pieces and fell into a spate of depression. I had no one to release my emotions to, bar my fiancé Derry, who kept me sane with his loving advice and counselling. Even now, there are times when I feel like giving up. Running a small organization can be draining and stressful. Le Cheile Africa is still on its baby feet with no source of funding or support except for friends and family. It's difficult going back to the same people for support all the time. In my day to day journey I see much poverty, suffering and disease, and that motivates me to keep helping those that are in dire need.

When I feel like giving up, I look to them. I personally, have been through much suffering in my life. In a way, my character and inner person have been shaped by these experiences. I know the taste of poverty, homelessness, bullying, unemployment, sickness, being a family breadwinner at the age of 18 years old, looking after my dad and siblings. In experiencing these sufferings, I have vowed to myself and God, to always do good, treat others the way I would want to be treated. My desire when starting the clinic, was to see it grow and impact the community in Solai. The clinic is living up to its dream and making a difference in people's lives. We continue to support the survivors of the dam disaster, through healthcare, counselling, disability and mental health programs and also empowerment programs through small micro loans. A Big Surprise - A Call From The Governor Two weeks after the disaster there was mass for the victims. Entire communities gathered and the event was attended by high-end politicians including the president of Kenya and his deputy. I received a surprise call from the Governor, "Mary, will you be in attendance at the mass prayers? We'd like to recognize the clinic's efforts on the night of the Solai disaster." I never imagined, I would be called by the president and awarded for Distinguished Service Rendered to the Country with a Head of State Commendation (HSC) award. It still feels like a dream come true. When I was saving lives that night, it never crossed my mind that I might be recognized for my efforts. No, no. In my opinion, I did what was humane. That is all. There were many heroes who did amazing work during the tragedy. Many risked lives for others. People from different regions set aside their differences and came together. They shared compassion, supported one another. There were men helping in the rescue mission, pulling people out of the deep waters. Women carrying children on their chests- kangaroo style. Others looking after the elderly and keeping them warm as people fled their homes. Many others spent the night looking out, to watch if waters were heading in our direction. In my opinion, the whole community gathered as heroes that night. The way we all worked together was a testament to humanity. Our Dream Expands Since the official recognition, I have become a hero for the Solai community. I feel so humbled. Many people come to the clinic looking for help, others come to see the lady that saved many children. With more people coming to the clinic for support, we need more funding to expand. It is our intention to expand the clinic to include a maternity and in-patient ward for children and adults. We have some equipment and hopefully, we will get wellwishers that will support us with

badly needed monetary donations. We also want to build a community centre that will house a library, computer room, sewing room, daycare with therapists for disabled children and adults and counselling for children and adults suffering from trauma. We are also looking to do fun sport days for kids to help with trauma, escape their daily harsh realities for a few hours, and at the same time learn social skills. We need funding, partners, more friends, supporters and volunteers to help us realize this dream. There are big lessons in experiencing uncertainty and calamity with a sober focus - the most chaotic moments are the ones from which we can learn the most. I myself have learnt so many lessons ... • We are so much stronger and courageous than we can ever imagine • Humanity is full of compassion and ready to help where there is a need • With hard work & determination, we can leave the world a better place than we found it • That it is through many failures, you eventually find success Today, though there is still so much to do, I thank God for the miracles that night. I'm so honored and humbled that the clinic saved so many lives. And I pray we will save many more in the Future

Container Finally Arrived

At last after 5 weeks at sea and over 6 weeks at port in Mombasa the container finally arrived in Solai A very tiring, Stressful process not one we will be taking up any time soon again or ever to be honest Thanks to everyone in Ireland and Kenya for their help getting Container across the line was a really tough one to be honest Once again Thanks to everyone for their unreal generosity towards our Container appeal The Goods Donated will really have a positive impact on the community of Solai and surrounding areas, From Clothes/Toys /Books donated to the larger items of Fridge-Freezer, Hospital Equipment ex Bons Secours Not forgetting our New Mode of transport Le Cheile Van Kindly Donated By McMahon's Builders Providers In Ireland which has already has been used in an emergency really was the difference in saving a life Being a small organization help like this is priceless.. Thanks to Noel O Shea for use of his yard in Ireland to load Container and the Bons Secours and staff for their ongoing support from Container Donation's to their support throughout the Year



Serving the Community of Solai and surrounding Areas

Health Care Centre /Clinic

In Solai (Full Out Patient /Lab/ Emergences/Physio)

Outside of Full Clinic services the following are our Community Health Care Programs to ensure affordable (Free in certain cases) Health Care to All

- Home Visits - Doctor (These we offer free to members of the community who are bed/House bound etc. Home visits are done 2 days a week plus if an emergency case arises)
- Malnutrition Program : Where we currently are supporting 10 families

with Food and health care (Some extreme Cases here and on the rise every week Frightening: aim is to help families become self-sustainable over time via a project to supplement their monthly income)

- Disability Support program i.e FREE Medical /Physio etc. to Members of our 2 Disability Groups i.e Solai and Kiremba groups
- FREE Medical Out Reaches. Every month .where we bring our services free into outlining areas of Solai (Ensuring all have access to Free Health Care)
- Palliative CARE Program : Where we offer FREE medical support and care to members of the community suffering with long term and terminal illness



Disability Program

The amount of people with Disability in our Community here is Frightening with us finding many members being locked up all day in the past , this is where we are changing people perspective's that everyone has something to offer society Via OUR Education/Health Care /Training programs

- Solai /Kiremba .Offering cover to member's medical needs related to their Disability. Monthly Social , Table Banking , Training Programs , Self-Sustainable projects per member's needs (Meet 1st Friday Solai and Saturday Kiremba of every Month)

This program is running just under 2 years

- Improvement in members re being more active in the community .Self

sustainable has been amazing



Sport For All Program

A simple program where we run a Simple Fun program via Sport for Kids mainly under 14 Boys and Girls Currently in Kwa Bota and Endao with the aim to set up in Solai and Kiremba as well

A simple program to give kids something to look forward to on a weekly basis leaving the harsh reality of day to day life behind them for a few hours at least

(We have distributed over 200 pairs or Scroos/football boots to kids along with jerseys etc.)

- All about Fun and Inclusion via sport .Fun games like Soccer /Volley Ball/ Hurling (GAA) / Rounder's
- Aim here is to provide each group with basic equipment (Footballs) to run this Program every week /with the community

taking ownership of same overseen by ourselves

- 3 to 4 Times a year bring all Groups together for a fun day of activities



Day Care Centre

Kindly supported by
WHISTLES

The purpose of this Centre is to provide FREE Care and Education to kids with Disabilities who are left at home all day. This centre mainly will provide early intervention for children born with special needs, free therapy sessions and play activities that contribute to healthy child development as well as promote inclusion and awareness.

- Improve each child's ability to lead a normal life as possible
- Enable Parents /Carers an opportunity to work earn a living while Kids are in Day Care Centre 8am to 3pm
- Provide an Environment of Inclusion through Education /Fun /Social activates
- In time open a Library to Provide all the kids

access to Books
/Education and
Computer studies

- Children spending time with therapists and special need assistants as well as carers.
- Provide informal employment to people with disabilities with an aim to empowering and promoting sustainability to persons with disabilities



Education Program:

In this program we support Families (Children) with Education Fees etc.

As Education is a key Factor to a person moving out of Poverty.

Our aim is to run it on a Sponsorship basis where the sponsor will get regular Updates on the Child they are supporting

Currently All Children in this program are being Funded By Le Cheile directly in the Short term.

Le Cheile T Shirts

Only €15

Via Just A Ball Hop

See Link Here

<https://www.justaballhop.ie/product-category/polo-shirts/le-cheile-africa>

Stan will look after you just be sure to allow 10/14 days for Delivery



As we wrap up our Newsletter for 2109 ,Its been an amazing journey for myself (Derry) and Mary from when we started in Jan 2018 to this very day ,Along this journey we have had many trying days where we really didn't have the answers, our backs to the wall, sometimes with what seemed no light at the end of the road .But every time we hit a wall somehow we overcame it .This we are able to do thanks to our Board members in Le Cheile and you the very people who support us on this journey to continue to make a real difference in real lives. We would love to Thank you all by name but our worry is we might just forget someone .

From our Family ,Friends ,Our Le Cheile family ,supporters thank you so so much for your support to date and hopefully in 2020 we can with a bit of luck advance our dreams in Le Cheile to better the lives of All we serve and help in Solai and the surrounding communities

We are always as a small organization looking for all the help and Support we can get be it a Fundraiser,(Idea what ever) Monthly Donations or lining us up with a possible Donor for one of our Programs

So if you think of something no matter what it just might be that idea, contact we are looking for.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year, Thanks again for everything

Mary and Derry

Le Cheile Africa

