



Community Business Scotland Network / COMMACT UK

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CBSN/COMMACT NEWSLETTER July 2008

This Newsletter is a joint venture between Community Business Scotland Network (CBSN) and COMMACT UK (Commonwealth Association for Local Action and Economic Development). The first section below gives news and information about overseas projects and our partnerships with colleagues around the world. The second section details current CBSN work in Scotland and the UK.

At the joint COMMACT UK / CBSN meeting at the end of March, COMMACT UK was formally drawn into CBSN and is now an integral part of the charitable company.

This Newsletter is being circulated – only by email – to all members of CBSN and of COMMACT UK and to all our various partners in the COMMACT and other networks overseas. The Newsletter will also be posted on the CBSN website. Please feel free to share this newsletter with other friends and colleagues where you are.

Overseas Projects and International Links

COMMACT INTERNATIONAL

Registration opened at the end of June for the COMMACT International Conference 2008. It will take place in Brisbane Australia on 28, 29, 30 and 31 October 2008. Its aim is to provide an *“opportunity to create practical links between projects and organisations involved in people-centred development in the North and South regions”*. COMMACT International hopes to establish international solidarity partnerships wherein Australian, British, Canadian and NZ NGOs will each sponsor one participant from a developing nation to travel to Australia to attend the conference. It is thought that sponsorship is likely to cost around AUD \$5,000 (say £2,500 GBP) but this will of course depend on air fares as well as attendance costs.

Check out the COMMACT International website for details of how to register or

participate in a sponsorship arrangement www.commact.com Please let us know if you are interested in participating and preparing an item for a future Newsletter.

COMMACT UK LINKS

As always, COMMACT is what it does and how it does it. Staff from Community Campus 87 in Middlesbrough who were holidaying in NZ broke into their holiday to present at a regional youth housing forum with COMMACT network member Peter Vink. The seminar held in Christchurch looked at the housing and development needs of young people in the area and examined the potential for the campus type renovation/build model. Since the meeting Pete has engaged a local philanthropic trust and is confident that the working group will now progress the development over the coming year.

COMMACT India

Sam Chelladurai from the READ Centre in Bangalore facilitated a meeting of COMMACT India at the end of April. Along with friends and colleagues from across India, David Thomson from COMMACT International also participated. It seems that there is a determined endeavour to re-energise COMMACT India and the meeting eventually got around to the practical task of prioritising actions for the future. The list of familiar and perennial topics is included below for information

COMMACT INDIA TASK LIST FOR 2008 / 9

- A profile of the member organizations to be created on the Comract International portal.
- Sasha will host a conference on behalf of Comract which will be open for Comract members.
- RGM and Jagran would conduct a training on traditional medicine and practice in which Comract members could participate.
- READ will be willing to assist any of Comract members with documentation techniques.
- Devasmita is willing to assist any of the Comract members with consultative services, free of cost, on establishment of micro enterprise and evaluation or assessment.
- Sasha would function as the secretariat for Comract for one year, until March 09.
- Joseph Scaria Jr offered his fund raising skills which any Comract member is free to make use of free of cost.
- Johny Joseph offered his service to coordinate placement of volunteers at Comract Member organizations.
- Comract secretariat would endeavour for promoting greater level of Governance of Comract India. A secretary will be appointed on a part time basis from 15th of May, 2008.
- Cooperation between in India and Nepal Comcracts.
- Training of RTI to Comract members on request by Mr. Bhanwar Singh and Mr. Sam.
- A resource directory of members to be created for which the format will be provided by Mr. Sam.
- KSSS will take care of publishing a quarterly news letter.

Social Enterprise World Forum – Edinburgh September 2/3/4/5th

COMMACT UK put forward the names of six of our COMMACT India colleagues for bursaries to the Social Enterprise World Forum. We are delighted to hear that four of them – Sam Chelladurai from READ Centre in Bangalore, Johny Joseph from Creative Handicrafts in Mumbai, Ganesh Purohit from Jagran Jan Vitas Samiti, and Mrinalini Shastri from Hyderabad – have been selected and will be participating in the conference. While here, they will be hosted by COMMACT UK members in Scotland.

www.ceis.org.uk/events/sewf for details of the Forum

COMMUNITY BUILDING VENTURES – CBV

Also in April – a busy month for COMMACT India and UK! – Archie and Susan Thomson from Renton Community Development Trust (RCDT) spent three weeks in Bangalore. They visited the Jambo Savari School (see previous newsletters) and made the trip with Sam to Hulyar again to discuss the proposal to build a community hall and housing units there as the next phase in the CBV project. CC87 and RCDT are continuing to fundraise for the school in Bangalore and have just provided funds for a computer and continue to sponsor 2 teachers. They hope to move the planning and development for Phase II on when Carl, Archie and Sam have the chance to connect in Scotland in September at the World Social Enterprise Forum in Edinburgh. A clear plan for Phase II will emerge over the coming months and we will report on it in future newsletters

The HiLDA TRUST and the AKSHAYA FEDERATION

Fantastic news! Our colleague Rafel Ruiz in Catalonia (a former volunteer with the Hilda Trust) has raised nearly three and a half thousand pounds towards the Akshaya Housing Programme. He held an “Indian” 40th birthday party – Bollywood songs, Catalanian puris and much dancing.

BUY A BRICK FOR AKSHAYA - Kay Caldwell and Alan Tuffs are organising a fundraising dinner in Glasgow in support of the construction of the new Headquarters Building for the Akshaya Federation of self help groups in Wayanad, Kerala. It will be on **Sunday October 26th** from 7pm at **Dakhin**, the award winning South Indian Restaurant, 89 Candleriggs in the Merchant City – check out the menu at www.dakhin.com - they will be preparing a special menu for us.

For more details about how you can either take part in person or (less dramatically and culinarily) from a distance, contact kayprobable@googlemail.com or alan.tuffs@btinternet.com

READ CENTRE - Bangalore

Here's Sam's report on Archie and Susan's visit in April

READ Centre - Community Building Venture (CBV)

A brief report on CBV activities during April 2008

Report by: Sam Chelladurai READ Centre, Bangalore.

READ Centre has actively carried out the Community Building Venture (CBV) activities, with the help of Community Campus, Renton Community Development Trust and Community Business Scotland Network (CBSN) in 2007. The first phase of its successful event was construction of a school block for a government run higher primacy school in Bangalore. India.

Mr. Archie Thomson M.B.E from Renton Community Development Trust (RCDT) with his wife Mrs. Susan Thomson along two other friends Ms. Liz O'Neil and Mr. Kevin Mullen came to READ Centre On 8th April 2008. Though they did not come to READ exclusively on CBV activities, they took most of their time in spending time at READ administrative office at Bangalore to learn the details of the organisation, since Susan, Liz and Kevin visit India for the first time. Though good deal was explained by Archie earlier as well as at Bangalore, Sam took some time to explain about the origin, history, philosophy and futuristic plans and approaches to the friends from RCDT.

Visit to Jamboo Savari School:

At the first instance the RCDT team visited to the Jamboo Savari Dinne government school to have look at the school block. The new headmaster Mr. Ashwath welcomed the team, where they met other teachers too. Archie and team gave away sweets to all students. Archie, Susan, Kevin presented the calculators, pencils and note books to the headmaster that was donated by the well-wishers from RENTON community. Ms. Liz was busy was distributing sweets to the students till the bag was emptied. Sam explained about the school activities that were supported by READ. He also showed the books donated by the Community Campus and the Cupboard that was donated by the Lanark Church Women's Guild through Ms. Heather Chapman. The RCDT team also met the two volunteer teachers who are rendering service to the school.

Visit to Hulyiar:

Archie and team with Sam traveled to Tumkur the district head quarter of Hulyiar and stayed over night. They visited a forest area and a mountain temple pilgrimage centre called Devarayana Durga. They were fascinated to see temples at top oh hills surrounded by thick forests. A monkey manhandled Susan, it opened Susan's vanity bag and tried to pull out things from the bag. Though Sam was standing next to her did not venture to save her from the monkey, instead he took photograph of both. They visited the herbal garden in the forest. The next day morning they started their journey to Hulyiar.

At Hulyiar the community welcomed them with folk drums and dance by the youth and children. They were invited to the Dalit community where they held a public meeting. The Dalits requested Archie and team to help them to construct their community hall

named after their stalwart leader and Human Rights activist Dr. Ambedkar (who also wrote the Constitution of India) Archie was moved by their request. He said that it may be possible for RCDT to raise funds for the completion of community hall. Archie said that he might be able to raise GBP2500 within three months. We feel this is another milestone in CBV activities.

Visit to Gollarahatti Village:

Community Campus and Renton Community Development Trust, selected this village for housing project during last two visits as part of their exposure visit. The community belongs to a Tribal sect called Gollas. Their main occupations are hunting and agriculture (dry land). The state government many years ago allotted the house land. But they have no enough economic support to have safe house, as they are poor and marginalised. Susan, Liz and Kevin were invited to visit a hut made out of mud wall and coconut palm leaves for the roof. The Scottish friends were astonished and could not accept that is a houses five members without electricity, water and safety.

Few men and women came forward and asked about Carl and team too. During their interaction with Archie and team expressed their eagerness to get their safe houses with lights and other amenities. They said that they are ready to do the manual labour in constructing the house as well as contribute their own saving of Rs.8000/ (around GBP102) as they are daily wage earners.

Archie said that RCDT would like to start raising money soon and construct at least five to ten houses to start with. Mean while Sam was asked to find out possibilities of getting Solar powered lights for the houses. Sam mentioned that state government may give subsidized price on the solar panels and lights. Kaduraiah of READ - Hulyiar unit will prepare the list of people in that hamlet immediately.

Public Meeting at High School campus:

The teachers, students and parents had organised a public meeting at the main village. They welcomed the team from Scotland with garlands and (Arathi) colourful water mixed with auspicious leaves and flowers that is prepared traditionally to welcome dignitaries. Following which the Principal of the high school requested Archie to inaugurated the summer school programme jointly organised by School Management Committee and READ Centre that was aimed at teaching skills and extra curricular activities during their long summer holidays. The state education department has come forward to sponsor lunch for all the children attend the summer school. Where as READ Centre has agreed to meet the cost of tea, water and snacks provided to the students.

While speaking to the public Archie said that this is an encouraging event to participate. It would be possible for RCDT to link the school with another in Renton in the near future. He said that we all should work together to bring development among the needy and the poor. He mentioned that Community Campus also would be happy to assist the school and the village activities shortly.

Susan was invited to speak few words. She said that she will be happy to link the women's groups in Hulyiar with her women's groups in Renton, as she go back to Renton she would have meeting with the women's group on this matter. She wished all children best of luck in their studies.

Kevin gave a brief speech to the audience. He explained that Renton has as many as three schools. He narrated about his native town and living condition of people over there at home. He aspired to become a police officer so that he could serve his people well. Every one appreciated his speech.

After that Archie, Susan met the schoolteachers and village leaders and handed over books, pencils, calculators and torches that could be used by the students and teachers. A teacher requested the visiting friends to consider some funds to build a small room that could fulfill the need of a library. Sam replied that if it is possible or some one would like to donate funds READ could assist the construction. He also said that there should be local contribution raised by the people for this purpose.

Visits to Kodaikanal (the Hill station)

This hill station is situated in the Western Ghats hill range at altitude of 15000 ft high. It is a beautiful summer rest place for all. Hundreds of foreign tourists visit every week. READ Centre is working in this place since 1996 on various community based activities from rehabilitation of Sri Lankan repatriates, Tribals, promoting community business development initiative (was supported by CBSN for three years) and formal and informal education activities in 45 villages and hamlets. Sam suggested to Archie and team that it would be good to visit this place. Though the journey was quite difficult (due to heat and 600Km long travel) some how they made it. After a good rest we visited to one of women's group promoted by READ Centre. Mrs. Josephine and Jasmine are incharge of the programme. They hosted a meeting at Rifle Range village (earlier the army used this area for practicing shooting)

The women's group explained about their activities carried out among the workingwomen's population since 1997. They have savings, community based income generation, linkage with local banks, awareness on local governance and networking etc. Mean while Archie asked Sam to explain, why women's groups to be formed. Sam said that since women are vulnerable and sidelined in all aspects, they do not have much say in family and local decision making, they need to depend on husband or father or son on everything they need. That is why we need to assist the women to form their group.

Susan and Liz had interaction with the children who came for the meeting. The children sang songs for them. They were asked by Susan what will be the future of children, what they are going to do, what they want to become after completion of their studies and so on. After their replies one of girls stood up and said that they will study well because their parents are working hard in the fields and forest to feed them (working in the green pear orchids, fruit fields, vegetable gardens and coffee plantation as well as wood cutting from the forest owned by the government). Once they study well and get a job, they will look after their parents well. Another young lady said that they have not gone to school but they want to see their children do well in their studies. She said that resources for sending their children school without dropping them is a crucial issue, since they do not have employments for six months once the monsoon starts (June till December) life shrinks to silence.

While replying to their experiences and lives Archie said that RCDT would strive to help READ Centre to assist the community especially the children to improve their studies and health. Susan mentioned that it would be possible for her to motivate women's groups at Renton help the women and children at Kodaikanal. Archie asked Sam to enumerate the names and other details of children soon. He mentioned that RCDT would try to support around 50 children for their education and health facilities.

Feed Back from RCDT team:

Liz: I felt humble when I met the children, women and men in the villages. They have beautiful smile always. I was moved by their affection and hospitality

I feel I have some thing to do for these people, when I go back home. I will share my experiences with my family and friends. I will try to mobilize some funds for the development of children in India where READ works.

Kevin: I feel sympathy with the children in the villages. I feel humble and realise that there are many children do not have enough food, shelter, cloth and other facilities. I have been lucky to have many things in my life.

I would speak to my family, friends and share my experiences while I was in India. I thank Archie for motivating me to come with him. Definitely the children and women need lot of support from all corners.

Susan: Till I came to India I was under the influence of media that pictures of poverty and misery. Where I see many more positive things in India. I admire the smile and happiness on the faces of many poor. They are very affectionate, willing to support each other. Their life style is unimaginable and they have strong will power to manage their lives. I will do level best to help as many children and women as I can. I will work with Archie and help him always.

Archie: I will have to work hard, will have to meet many people in Scotland and speak to them on our future plans. Certainly there is hope for future partnership with India. I expect READ to become self reliant rather than only depend on external support or project support. I do not feel sympathy I do rather empathise with my brothers and sisters in India.

Jagran Jan Vitas Samiti

Patrick Boase and Alan Kay spent a pleasant week in Udaipur, carrying out a monitoring visit for the Lloyds TSB project in the tribal villages affected by the phosphate mining and processing. Work was progressing well and Jagran have made a useful link with a nationally-funded agency, the Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development (SPWD), who are strong on environmental analysis. "Wasteland" is a former colonial

classification for land that was not useful for commercial agriculture. Much “wasteland” is essential to rural people’s livelihoods, and this is the case in Southern Rajasthan. JJVS are starting a new project in collaboration with SPWD, with funds secured by CBSN from the Network for Social Change to document the social, economic and environmental conditions of the tribal people in the mining area, with a comparison with villages less affected by commercial development.

While Alan and he were in Udaipur they carried out a one-day seminar on social accounting for JJVS and some of the other organisations they work with, which was well-received.

Their work with herbal medicine and traditional healers is going well, and staff and practitioners will be taking part in an exchange with Finland this August.

Social Accounting Masterclass in Hyderabad

During the same visit, Alan and Patrick moved on to Hyderabad and conducted a 3 day workshop on social accounting and audit for over 40 people who had come from a wide range of organisations across India. This workshop was a challenge to manage but the feedback was very positive and may lead on to other work with our main partner organisation there as they are looking to set up the equivalent of the Social Audit Network in India. Several people who attended these workshops are planning to participate in the forthcoming World Social Enterprise Forum in Edinburgh in September. This will be a good opportunity to follow up on the work and discuss a funding proposal which has been submitted to Lloyds TSB.

CBSN in Scotland and in the UK and Europe

Social Accounting and Audit

The Scottish “**Social Accounting Roadshows**” The Social Accounting Roadshow programme will conclude with two final events in September, one in Dundee in association with the LSE Partnership and the other in Stornoway in association with Voluntary Action Lewis. All participants in the Roadshow events held over the past year will be offered a free place at the Social Accounting and Audit conference on 7 November in Edinburgh.. If you wish to know more about these events please contact John Pearce at j.pearce@cali.co.uk These events are being funded by Communities Scotland and CBS Network.

Really Telling Accounts!

The report of the recently concluded research project undertaken by SAN was launched on **25 June 2008 at The Mining Institute in Newcastle-upon-Tyne**. Speakers included Rob Williamson of Northern Rock Foundation, Jane Gibbon of Northumbria University, Peter Furmedge of the Merseyside Social Enterprise Network and the Research Team.

Key recommendations include the proposals that:

- Social reporting should become an obligatory requirement for social economy organisations and that the social accounting and audit process should be developed as the basis for a common reporting framework.
- Social Accounting and Audit (SAA) and Social Return on Investment (SROI) should develop as complementary processes, based on a set of agreed common principles
- The verification of social accounts using a Social Audit Panel is an essential part of the process for which high training and quality assurance standards must be maintained
- Government and funders alike should ensure that the Social Audit Network is adequately resourced both to continue its development of the social accounting process and to expand its programme of training and quality standards for approved social auditors

The report includes a proposed re-wording of the *Key Principles* for social accounting and audit; a recommendation that all social accounts should report, in addition to performance and impact on their Objectives, on certain *Key Aspects* about the organisation (human resources, good governance and accountability, asset lock and use of profits, environmental policies and practices, local economic impact and financial sustainability); and a new *Verification Checklist* to be used by Social Audit Panels.

The research report can be viewed on the SAN website (www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk) – click on *Manual & CD* and then on *Really Telling*. You can download the report plus any appendices you wish to study. If you would like to receive a *hard copy* of the report (containing a CD of all the appendices) please send an address label together with a cheque for £5 to cover P&P and handling to the SAN office in Exeter.

The report will be presented and discussed in **Edinburgh on 7 November** at a conference sponsored by the Scottish Government Third Sector Division. Keynote speakers will include Professor Jan Bebbington from the University of St Andrews and Geoff Pope of the Third Sector Division. The conference will also provide an opportunity for social accounting practitioners to debate the findings of the research and the recommendations made.

Details and booking arrangements for the 7 November event' which will take place in the Thistle Hotel, St James Centre, will be available shortly. Contact John on j.pearce@cali.co.uk for further information.

CEST - EUROPEAN TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT

CEST Transfer: Sustainable Further Training and Competence Strategies for the Social Economy

CBS Network is a partner in this action research project. The project is looking at the competencies and training requirements for social economy organisations in Europe and plans to write a curriculum and examine common training methodologies for the social economy sector. The lead partner is Technologie-Netzwerk Berlin e. V. So far two workshops have been held - the first in February and the second in June 2008 – attended by Alan Kay and Carl Ditchburn for CBSN.

Following each of the workshops which are held in Berlin, the participants from Germany, Poland, Italy and Scotland then consult with relevant organisations and individuals in their own countries and feed back reactions and suggestions. This leads to a refinement of the curriculum which consists of four main themes:

- the Future of Work;
- the Future of the Economy;
- the Future of the Community; and
- Social Enterprise Strategies.

For further information on this contact Alan Kay alan@mkay88.freemove.co.uk

CBSN website www.cbs-network.org.uk

We always welcome constructive criticism of the website as well as news and information that you might like to send us.

STRATEGY, MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

Our strategic focus remains on our international work, primarily with our partners in India, and on promoting and developing the practice of social accounting in Scotland so that social economy organisations can better demonstrate the impact they have on people and the planet.

Membership of CBSN costs £45 (including VAT) for which members receive six issues of New Sector as well as receiving this quarterly newsletter. Members are also encouraged to join in the activities of CBSN and to make proposals for future projects. We look forward to welcoming COMMACT UK members after the proposed merger. As a small development organisation CBSN depends on its members and volunteer directors to initiate and manage projects – if you have an idea get in touch with us!

Alan Tuffs

For CBS Network and for COMMACT UK

July 2008