

Irish Independent 

# INTUITION

**BRINGING THE WORLD INTO THE CLASSROOM**The Irish Independent  CSPE supplement for Junior Certificate

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**FADING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTERS**

A young woman cooks for her siblings at a camp in Muzaffarabad, Kashmir. As relief organisations such as GOAL struggle to get help to the needy, foreign governments have failed to match their pledges with hard cash for the earthquake victims. Pakistan's government says it has received just \$9.5m (£5.4) out of \$2bn pledged by foreign donors for earthquake relief. The UN has received just \$130m of the \$550m it needs for earthquake victims.

## Is there a danger of donor fatigue?

**→ BY PAT HUNT****Earthquake in Pakistan**

Last month a giant earthquake in Pakistan/Kashmir killed more than 73,000 people and left a further 4m in desperate need of shelter and food. With the bitter Himalayan winter now getting a grip on the area, survivors face death and starvation unless the international community comes to their rescue. Pronto.

**Hurricane Katrina**

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita upturned the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the USA. The US government and people will repair the damage, but will Americans have dollars to spare for disasters elsewhere in the world?

**Disasters in Central America**

So far this year 14 natural disasters including hurricanes, floods and mudslides befall poor countries in Central America such as Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador. Most of these disasters did not make world news headlines.

**Africa's silent famines**

Let's not forget Africa's ongoing silent famines. Silent because the international news media pay little attention. Famine is engulfing Niger. In Malawi the rains have again failed to fall. The food situation is worsening in Uganda and Zimbabwe. The list goes on... HIV/AIDS for example.

**Key Websites:**

• [www.goal.ie](http://www.goal.ie) • [www.un.org/news](http://www.un.org/news) •

**Why the drop-off in aid donations?**

The Irish response to the tsunami disaster was magnificent: the people donated €80m and our government gave €20m.

But are people in the developed world becoming immune to images of natural disasters appearing in the news media? Are they tired of disasters? Is donor (aid) fatigue setting in? Should there be a renewed effort to raise money in the run-up to Christmas? What do you think?

**Tireless Tiernan**

This week we feature the tireless aid work of Tiernan Dolan, a Co Longford teacher, photographer and outstanding GOAL fundraiser and volunteer. Tiernan enjoys wonderful support from the boys in St Mel's College, Longford and his local community.

Says GOAL Director John O'Shea: "Tiernan Dolan's contribution to GOAL over the past dozen or so years has been truly prodigious.† His commitment to the poor, despite a heavy workload as a full-time teacher, is awe-inspiring."

**CSPE Core Concepts:**

• Development • Human Dignity •

# How Tiernan found his GOAL

## → BY TIERNAN DOLAN

At the beginning of the 1990s it was hard to avoid seeing Africa on the media. A savage war coupled with a massive famine raged in Somalia. South Sudan was no better. A few years earlier, images of starving innocent children emerged from Ethiopia. Yet, the international community seemed to be doing nothing.

Radio ads from small Irish agencies like GOAL appealed for money and help. How could I do nothing? Like thousands of others, I sent some money. And still the haunting images of death, starvation and hopelessness continued to appear nightly on TV screens.

### First steps

A few of us got together and organised a fundraising Disco in the local GAA Club. We were hoping to light a small candle, rather than curse the darkness.

I was utterly amazed at the amount of goodwill it generated locally. The club didn't charge for the use of their facilities, the DJ played for free; businesses donated spot prizes without being asked. But best of all, the night was a massive success, raising thousands of pounds (pre Euro times) for GOAL's work.

### Visit to GOAL headquarters

More such nights were to follow and the funds rolled in. Before one such fundraiser, I went up to Dun Laoghaire to collect some posters at the GOAL office. I was blown away by the utter dedication and work rate there. Here was a small band of young people beavering away to help those less fortunate than ourselves: ordinary people doing extraordinary work.

### Photo's fit the bill

The following year, I volunteered to help overseas. I was a keen amateur photographer and I thought the photos might help promote GOAL's work. I was lucky to be able to pay my own way and all expenses incurred if I was accepted.

### "You may be opening a door..."

They took me on, and before I went out to South Sudan, I bumped into John O Shea, GOAL's Chief Executive Officer. He was busy and didn't have time to say much but his few words were prophetic: "Remember, you may be opening a door which you won't be able to close".

### A scary time in Sudan

It took five different flights from jets to small cargo planes and three days to get to South Sudan. It could easily have been the other side of the moon.

Seeing the GOAL Ireland logo, in such a remote hostile area made me incredibly proud. Listening to and watching the GOALies at work was an incredible experience. Their dedication was beyond words. A war was raging but there was no-one else to care for these people. When



Tiernan Dolan with one of the many teams in the Developing World that sport the colours of Longford Town soccer club.

the fighting got too close, the people and the GOALies would have to move on. There was no point in taking stupid risks. Sometimes the drone of a passing plane would be heard and a silence would envelop the entire group. And then from the clear blue African sky, government planes would drop bombs...

### Tears in my eyes...

But it was the long never ending lines of tiny, innocent and silent children that did it. The tiny tots were sitting waiting patiently to be fed their twice daily ration of food - a porridge-like substance and a high energy biscuit. As they viewed me with their huge brown eyes, some with swollen bellies, many stark naked, I felt like bursting into tears.

### Moving images

These were the TV images staring back at me, these were the countless thousands, and these were the grim statistics. But they were all human; they all had names, hopes and dreams. They were all hoping someone would help them. And GOAL was there. As the volunteers fed the hungry mites, I started to take my photos; photos which I hoped would inspire people at home, to continue their support for these unfortunate innocents.

### Door will never close

Since that first trip to South Sudan, there have been numerous conflicts, wars, natural disasters, droughts and famines and GOAL is still responding. John O Shea was right too when he told me about opening a door and being unable to close it.

It has been my privilege to walk through that door, a door which hopefully will never close.



Lively students in a GOAL classroom in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Photo: Tiernan Dolan



Co Antrim nurse Emily Begg attends to patients in Darfur, Sudan.

Photo: Tiernan Dolan

## All about GOAL



GOAL is an international humanitarian agency dedicated to the alleviation of suffering amongst the poorest of the poor. It was founded by John O' Shea in 1977.

GOAL works towards ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable in our world, and those affected by humanitarian crises, have access to the fundamental needs and rights of life, i.e. food, water, shelter, medical attention and primary education. GOAL is non-denominational, non-governmental (NGO) and non-political. Apart from offering practical assistance to the poor, GOAL also tries to convince the international community to honour its obligations to the poorest of the poor.

Some of the topics that GOAL has campaigned on include: Third World corruption, the international arms trade, the need for an international standing army to protect civilians in time of war, the importance accountability in the handling of overseas aid, child trafficking, street children and HIV/AIDS.

GOAL has responded to almost every major natural and man-made disaster in the past 28 years and is currently operational in 15 countries in the developing world.

Once emergency situations have been resolved, GOAL implements a wide range of programmes such as primary healthcare, repair of homes and infrastructure, clinics and schools and water and sanitation programmes. Long term development programmes are implemented in such areas as health, nutrition and education.



A young student takes a break from his classwork in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.  
Photo: Tiernan Dolan

# St. Mel's College boys are GOALies

→ BY DIARMAID MURPHY, student, St. Mel's College, Longford

GOAL is big with St Mel's College students. The recent GOAL Jersey Day raised nearly €1,500 to help street children in Calcutta. We organise a GOAL soccer tournament every May.

Support for GOAL also extends into the broader community. GOAL car stickers are almost as numerous as the "C'mon De Town!" (Longford Town FC) slogans that adorn the rear windows of cars in the area.

The immense level of support for GOAL would not exist, were it not for the admirable work of Tiernan Dolan among the people of our town, and especially within our college community.

He marshals all the fundraising efforts in the school.

I enjoyed a further opportunity to learn about GOAL during my CSPE project. We helped put devastated communities back on their feet after the Indian Ocean tsunami. We also studied the development aid provided by GOAL for the building of schools and hospitals, the construction of wells, the provision of medicine and crops...

GOAL has blossomed into an integral and well-loved movement in our school and local community.



Diarmaid Murphy who carried out a CSPE Action Project on GOAL



GOAL nurse Sinead O'Reilly at GOAL's clinic in Manono, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Photo: Tiernan Dolan

## How Longford supports GOAL

Here are some of the fundraising schemes organised for GOAL in Longford:

- ▶ A classroom 'car boot sale' raised enough money to build a basic school in Ghana. Infinite variety of goodies on sale.
- ▶ A raffle paid for 'Mel's Well' in Vietnam, a water well that serves three villages.
- ▶ A second year boy (a talented artist) suggested that the other students should collect jokes, which he illustrated, and when published became a local best seller.
- ▶ A second year group wrote and produced a CD, recorded in a garden shed.
- ▶ Many past pupils went on to work as volunteers for GOAL in Ethiopia, Kosovo and Kenya.
- ▶ Before Tiernan went to Honduras after the devastating Hurricane Mitch in 1999, a group of local builders gave him enough money to build six houses, which are called 'Via Longford'.
- ▶ Prior to going to Afghanistan in 2002, a particularly successful former student presented him with enough money to rehabilitate a school. It's a long way from St Mel's College in Longford to a remote rural school in Afghanistan, but the link is there now forever.
- ▶ Longford Town FC donated their FAI Cup winning set of jerseys, and they are now worn by less fortunate children in Kampala, Uganda; Calcutta, India; Darfur, Sudan and Hambantota in Sri Lanka.
- ▶ In May 2005, Shane Brennan, a 24-year-old Longford man, was tragically killed in an accident. In his memory a group of family and friends set out to raise €2,000 for a GOAL street children's project in Honduras. Over €16,000 was raised and now projects are being started in Shane's memory in Honduras, Nairobi and Calcutta.

# AND FINALLY... AND FINALLY... AND FINALLY... AND FINALLY...



This group of teenage boys were quick to spot and take photos of members of the All-Blacks rugby team who were visiting a sports shop in St Stephen's Green.

## Tiernan's tips for student photographers

- 01. Always carry your camera.
- 02. Keep spare batteries and keep your lens spotless.
- 03. Make a scrap book of your favourite photos from newspapers and magazines.
- 04. Study your favourite photos so that you, one day, can do better.
- 05. Join a camera club in your locality or school; if there's none, start one.
- 06. After each shot write down what you expect from that photo. Compare the results with your earlier expectations.

- 07. Treat yourself to photographic books by master photographers; they are expensive but in the long run they are better value than magazines.
- 08. If taking photos of plants, pets or children, don't squash them by using a high angle... get down to their level.
- 09. Always fill your frame, make your subject important.
- 10. The best lens is your two feet, so move around to get a better angle.

- 11. Always remain focused when taking your photos and enjoy yourself.
- 12. If you know professional photographers, ask plenty of questions; if they love their job, they'll love to talk about it.

select how much compression is used by selecting from among the Standard, Fine, Super Fine or other quality settings offered by your camera.

### Send us a Photo

Why not send us a brief account of your Action Project and a photo to illustrate it? Email us one or more JPEG format digital photographs. Most digital cameras use JPEG compression to pack more images on to memory cards. You can

Remember that a small k image (e.g. 50k) will look very well on a computer screen, but such a size is unsuitable for printing. So try to select a setting that will give you at least 150k or higher. The higher k the better. Or you could scan a hard copy photo into JPEG format.

### Action Project

A GOALie will visit your school to give a first hand account of the lives and living conditions of young people all over the globe. The visit will include a photographic and video presentation.

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