So much has happened since the last publication. 2007 was a remarkable year in the short history of Children in Crossfire. We held a number of events to celebrate our 10th anniversary with the highlight being when His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet agreed to be the guest speaker at our conference in Derry/Londonderry. It was an experience I, and the entire organisation will never forget.

The presence and support of His Holiness was such an honour for Children in Crossfire. He represents everything that Children in Crossfire is and aspires to be. He is someone who has experienced hardship as a child and throughout his life. Yet despite this he is a compassionate, humble and profound world leader who strongly believes in the peaceful approach. The conference entitled “A Promise for the Future” was primarily used as a way to celebrate ten years of Children in Crossfire’s work. It also afforded us as an organisation along with delegates and other key stakeholders from a wide variety of sectors to focus on issues affecting children today and what we should concentrate on in the next decade. Alongside His Holiness we had inspirational speakers such as, The Minister of State for International Development in Ireland Michael Kitt, Chair of Human Rights Watch in America, Jane Olson, world renowned journalist Fergal Keane and author Jimmie Briggs.

The message was clear, children are often seen, but not heard. Poverty, conflict, chronic social instability and preventable diseases threaten children’s rights and sabotage their development. Children everywhere have the right to survival; to develop to the fullest and be protected from abuse and exploitation.

Over the next few years in Tanzania and Ethiopia, as a very important aspect of our work, we intend to focus on projects, and work with partners, where young people and children’s rights to participation, protection, survival and development are at the core of what we do. These projects will directly improve the lives of children and young people. With your ongoing support we will attempt to tackle many of the issues that affect the most vulnerable young people in these countries. We must make a promise to our children to protect their future by providing them with the necessary resources (food, shelter, healthcare and education) to ensure they are the inheritors of a stable and healthy environment.

Richard Moore
Executive Director
His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet declares to Richard:

‘You are my hero.'
Gripping Richard's hand the spiritual leader of the Tibetan Buddhists said, “Whether you believe it or not, you are my hero, and a wonderful son of humanity.”

“Despite your tremendous painful experience you don't have any anger or hate. You accept what has happened and keep your peace of mind. You are a good example and model.”

During his visit the Dalai Lama met privately with Richard Moore and Charles Inness, the soldier who blinded Richard when he shot him on the bridge of the nose when he was ten years of age.

“It is wonderful to see the person who suffered and the person who caused the suffering become true friends,” said the Dalai Lama. “There is genuine friendship and happiness which is based on forgiveness.”

His Holiness paid tribute to Richard’s “wonderfully happy family, his beautiful wife and beautiful daughters.”

He said, “I told Richard’s daughters this morning how important it is that their father’s spirit of forgiveness and compassion is carried on from generation to generation.”

The Dalai Lama said he was happy and proud to have received an invitation to speak at the Children in Crossfire 10th anniversary conference.

“This is the third time I have met Richard”, His Holiness said. “His spirit is always happy. If the same tragedy happened to me whether I would act like him with such forgiveness, I do not know.”

The Dalai Lama said he hoped that Richard’s story would be told to everyone as a source of hope.

Below: His Holiness the Dalai Lama with Richard’s wife Rita, and their two daughters Naoimh and Enya
A Promise for the Future marked the tenth anniversary of Children in Crossfire and it was a huge success for the charity. It attracted delegates and supporters from all over the world from as far as Nigeria, Germany, the US and from a wide range of sectors and organisations.

The conference put the issues of children to the forefront of people's minds through the words of His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, the other guest speakers and the workshops, all of which were tailored to draw attention to the issues affecting children. Children in Crossfire have a commitment to promoting children's rights and used this opportunity to explore the role that we all can play in making rights a reality.

The feedback from both speakers and delegates highlights the resounding success of the Conference.

"Children are resilient, and they are better at forgiveness and reconciliation than we are as adults. If we are their protectors, they will be our teachers. Together we can create a safe space where our precious children can develop their unique talents, and can give them freely and generously within a safe community. How beautiful is it that we’re seeing that happening here in Derry.”

Jane Olson, Chair, Human Rights Watch

"Ten years ago you wouldn’t have had a conference like this, in this city, addressing itself to the needs of the broader world. The happiness of children is directly related to the happiness of the world, of the society, and of the family that they live in." Fergal Keane, OBE, journalist and broadcaster

"Since my first meeting [with Richard Moore] I really admire [that] as a young boy, that kind of tremendous painful experience has not turned to anger, frustration, hatred—but instead more calm, accepted that unfortunate event, and keep one's own peace of mind. It is really remarkable. [A] good example… you created this opportunity, meeting with more people. So I really appreciate it. Thank you.” His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, Keynote Speaker

"Richard Moore established Children in Crossfire to enable children to see a brighter future, beyond the immediate dissolution of conflict. Children are literally the promise of a better future. Through them we can begin to make that future. Children's rights are a crucial component of the programme for government, and we believe that the fundamental law of our land should fully reflect our commitment to value and protect childhood.”

Minister of State Michael Kitt T.D., Irish Aid

The evaluation of the conference was extremely positive. Many delegates reported it was the best conference they had ever attended and described the speakers and workshops as inspirational and entirely relevant to the conference's topic.

"It was refreshing to be in the company of delegates from such a wide cross section of professional and cultural backgrounds who seemed determined to make a positive difference in the world.” Caroline Owens, Delegate
Devastated by the terrible famines of the 1980’s and the persistent border wars with Eritrea, Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world’s poorest continent. It is ranked only 169th of 177 countries in the U.N. Human Development Index.

The country’s resources have been depleted, and even with the best of intentions, the poor local services and infrastructure are inadequate to cope with the demands placed upon them by the millions of people who depend on them in order to survive.

Drought and famine are still common occurrences. Food shortages, restricted access to clean water, ill health coupled with poor access to health services and limited educational opportunities are all still part of the daily reality in Ethiopia.

- The child mortality rate is at 109/1000
- The average life expectancy is only 51 years
- National spending on health is approximately £1 per person per year
In September 2007, ‘Children in Crossfire’ embarked on a partnership with the Community and District Nurses Association (CDNA) to help address the huge problems facing the health care system in Ethiopia. Together with St. Luke’s Hospital and College of Nursing, we are supporting 13 students to participate in a three year diploma course that will qualify them to be professional nurses.

Students from poor backgrounds, who cannot afford to pursue their education, will be professionally trained, qualified and given the opportunity of full time employment. In turn, they will be able to financially support their own families.

Local health institutions and the general public will benefit from having access to more nurses who are better trained and be able to offer improved health services.

Currently, St. Luke’s is the only hospital in the South West Shoa Zone of Ethiopia, and serves a population of 1.2 million people. This is almost the entire population of Northern Ireland. The addition of these 13 new student nurses will provide a widely welcomed boost in an area which is seriously in need of additional medical care services.

Yeshi’s Story.

Yeshiwork Tefera comes from Wollo, one of the areas in Ethiopia worst affected by the ‘Great Famine’ of the early 1980’s. In 1980, at just 3 years old, she lost both her parents to hunger and was separated from her wider family.

She was taken into a church orphanage, grew up and was educated there. Yeshi is a bright student and had gained a place at university, but was forced to drop out because she couldn’t find support for the fees.

Thanks to the Children in Crossfire scholarship fund, Yeshi now has the opportunity to complete her diploma in nursing, to have a productive career to follow her passion and be given the opportunity to help others.

St. Luke’s Hospital & College of Nursing.

Staff members from St Luke’s have been counselling Yeshi, and helping her to try to trace her family. In February 2008, she finally made contact with family members and amidst many tears and much laughter, was reunited with her grandmother, brother and uncle.

Fighting Illness in Ethiopia.

‘Children in Crossfire’ have been impressed by the services offered by St. Luke’s in spite of a severe lack of resources, and by the enthusiasm and effort of students and staff at the college. However, much remains to be done as death rates for patients with preventable diseases are unacceptably high.

Death Rates for the Major Illnesses in the Southwest Shoa Zone:

- Malaria 8.1%
- AIDS 16.9%
- Malnutrition 8.4%
- Diarrhoea 4.8%
- TB 3.8%
- Anaemia 4%
- Water Borne Diseases
- Eyes Diseases & Blindness

Working together in partnership, we hope to increase the capacity of the college and hospital so that more of Ethiopia’s suffering poor can get the medical care and attention they so desperately need.
Since its foundation 11 years ago many individuals and organisations have supported the ethos of Children in Crossfire. Many people have dedicated their time and efforts to raising funds and awareness to help the most deprived children in the world. Among those is Belfast man Dominic Fitzpatrick who owns the Irish News Newspaper group. He shares his experience of the charity with Insight and his hopes for the future.

“You would think supporting a relief and development organisation would be reasonably straightforward and not a very challenging experience. Well, in Children in Crossfire's case think again! Over the years, they have managed to get me to do things I never thought I would do and go to places I never thought I would go to. From taking part in pleasant strolls across sun drenched fields, climbing over gentle sloping hills in the Aran Islands off the Mayo coast, to giving speeches in Stormont to groups of young people. From being stuck 10,500 feet above sea level in Guatemala surrounded by volcanoes and sleeping in very small two-man tents in sub zero temperatures to walking precariously along cliff edges with a 500 foot drop on one side where one wrong step would have guaranteed certain death.

However, much of my involvement with Children in Crossfire has been unforgettable but not just because of the weird and wonderful fundraising events they got me involved in. I have had the humbling experience of being able to visit some of their projects. I have also met and heard the stories of some of those people who benefit directly from their projects.

I first met Richard Moore, the Director of Children in Crossfire, in 2001 when he arrived at the Irish News office in Belfast to tell me about the deteriorating situation in Malawi at the time. Since then my friendship and association with Richard and Children in Crossfire has grown. I have had the opportunity to travel to Malawi to experience the difficulties facing communities there at first hand. At the time four others travelled to Malawi with myself and Richard – JR McLaughlin, who works for Children in Crossfire, journalist Maeve Connolly, photographer Hugh Russell from the Irish News, and well known comedian John Linehan alias May Mc Fetteridge.

Although a few years have passed since our visit to Malawi the sights, sounds and smells still stay with me. I can still recall the silence in our vehicle as we left the villages. To experience that type of poverty up close was difficult and we all needed time to process our thoughts and feelings.

The trip impacted enormously on us all, but it also brought home, in very stark terms, the need for organisations such as Children in Crossfire. Although the Malawi situation was clearly an emergency, it was also obvious to me there was and still is, a need for a sustainable approach to development work.

Over the years I have been impressed by Children in Crossfire and their partnership approach. Through linking with and supporting local community groups in countries like Malawi, Tanzania or Ethiopia, Children in Crossfire is able to respond to the needs of those communities more effectively. Building the capacity of local groups and supporting the development of local structures, will help provide the resources for those groups to discuss and tackle local problems in a more sustainable way.

I am aware that Children in Crossfire, like many Irish NGO's, receive support not only from the general public but from Irish Aid. I was also grateful for the opportunity to see at first hand, how money raised in Ireland, was impacting on the ground. So whether I’m sitting around a camp fire in Guatemala in freezing conditions, teeth chattering, having a sing song or organising a fundraising event in Belfast, it all has a very serious purpose and I for one have been delighted to do my bit.
The Children in Crossfire Development Education team have recently completed the delivery of the third year of a cross-border training course for teachers entitled TIDAL – Teachers in Development and Learning. This training is accredited through the Open College Network. Over the 3 year period we have had 60 teachers complete the accreditation.

TIDAL aims to provide space for teachers to develop their knowledge and skills in relation to teaching local and global issues in the classroom. As the school curriculum is ever changing and varied, this course is an opportunity for teachers to come together to share ideas and experience. The course provides them with a toolkit to effectively deal with these changes and adopt new and diverse methodologies into their own teaching practice.

Teachers from the North and South of Ireland participate in the course, creating a wide and varied group from different curricula and teaching disciplines. During the four full days of training, the group explore local and global issues, using the Citizenship/ Civic Social and Personal Education curricula as the basis for learning. At the end of the course there is an opportunity for the teachers to review each other’s facilitation skills and critically reflect on their own.

A model of good practice that evolved from the course was the concept of peer education. Mary McCay, from St Joseph’s Secondary School, Derry/Londonderry completed the TIDAL training in Year 1 and then rose to the challenge of training her peers in Year 2. This was an extremely successful method of teaching and a model that Children in Crossfire would like to replicate in the future with other graduate participants.

The external evaluation of the course was extremely positive. The participating teachers on the course over the three year period engage in a lively and enthusiastic way. One teacher commented: “In the context of a revised curriculum, the methodologies, creative ways to express ideas and more active approach embodied by TIDAL are extremely useful. At the same time this course is about knowing how to make learning fun. Learning is not just about putting things on a page, it is so much more.”

Another commented that she is now going back to school with a “spring in her step” and wants to share the skills she has learned with other teachers. She also mentioned how these skills are not just relevant to Local and Global Citizenship classes, but are transferable to all areas of the curriculum and the wider school ethos.

Additional feedback about the programme included

“I now have a terrible lot of hope for the future.”

“TIDAL was one of the best pieces of training I have ever done.”

“Something has clicked in my head; it makes sense now.”

“I now have the confidence to experiment more.”

We are currently recruiting for teachers to participate in the next course, beginning October 2008. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Gráinne O’Neill: grainne@childrenincrossfire.org (048) 71 269898.
OUR WORLD:

We live in a world where almost half the population live on less than £1 per day.

We live in a world where:

- 30,000 children die each day due to poverty.
- 120 million children do not go to school.
- 200 million children are involved in some form of child labour.

We live in a world where annual spending on weapons is forty times more than the amount needed to provide the basic health, nutrition and sanitation needs for all the world’s poor.

We live in a continent, where annual spending on ice-cream is almost double the estimated costs to send every child in the world to school.

Children in Crossfire works in partnership with governments and community organisations around the world to make a significant and lasting contribution to the fight against world poverty and to give opportunities to poor children to fulfil their potential and make the world a better place.

ETHIOPIA: CIC have supported an education programme to provide support to students from poor backgrounds to train as nurses and work in the local health care system.

GUATEMALA: CIC have supported an education and social rehabilitation programme for young homeless people affected by drugs and violent crime.

BRAZIL & COLUMBIA: CIC have helped to build the capacity and strengthen the voice of local civil society organisations so they can better influence policy and promote sustainable development.

GHANA, GUINEA, NIGERIA & THE GAMBIA: CIC have promoted sexual health education amongst young people, as well as encouraging and supporting local government and community groups to cooperate in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

ETHIOPIA:

- Ranked 169th of 177 countries in the UN Human Development Index
- More than 1 in 10 children die before the age of five
- Over half the population have no access to clean water or safe accommodation
- National spending on health care is approximately £1 per person per year
KENYA: CIC have supported a local community development association to plan and implement a variety of development initiatives focusing on food security, access to water supply and income generation.

MALAWI & MOZAMBIQUE: CIC have provided training and counselling services to those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as focusing on the mitigating circumstances caused by the pandemic through supporting provision of clean water sources and support to subsistence farming families.

TANZANIA: CIC have supported the construction and operation of a science focused secondary school for girls, providing an education for many girls who have been previously denied that right.

BANGLADESH: CIC have helped to increase and promote the role of local communities and local government in the prevention and reporting of human trafficking, and assisted in the social and economic rehabilitation of rescued trafficked individuals.

TANZANIA:
- Ranked 159th of 177 countries in the UN Human Development Index.
- 35% of young females are illiterate.
- 20% of children are severely malnourished.
- 70% of children suffer from some form of physical abuse.
‘A Price for Love’ is a song written from the heart and soul, displaying an emotional awareness of how difficult life is in a developing country and how much potential and pride people there have.
On the 3rd of December 2007 well known Irish singer/songwriter Christie Hennessy sent hand made Christmas Cards made by ex street children in Brazil to friends and family. He bought the cards from Children in Crossfire, the charity he had become patron of just a year before.

Christie never received return cards from loved ones as he passed away on 11th December 2007. This was a truly tragic loss for his family and friends, a momentous loss for the Irish music industry and a sad day for Children in Crossfire as it mourned the loss of a great friend and supporter.

Christie was born in Tralee, County Kerry and as the youngest of nine children, music and Irish culture played a significant role in his early childhood. Neighbours and family would join in the regular sessions of music and song in the family home, listening to Christie’s father playing jazz on the accordion and his mother telling stories or singing traditional Irish songs the family all knew and loved so well.

Christie developed his enjoyment of music into a career and became one of Ireland’s greatest loved musicians. His song writing was about life, dreams and the reality of the people in them. It is through his music that he met Richard Moore and became involved in the work of Children in Crossfire.

Christie met Richard in 2006 in London and over coffee Richard convinced Christie to accompany him on a trip to Africa to see first hand Children in Crossfire’s development work. Subsequently a very strong bond formed between the two men. Christie also felt a strong connection with the people he met during his visit to Kenya.

Under the shade of the midday sun in North Eastern Kenya Christie sang and chatted to kids that he could empathise and identify with through his music. He was really at home there. Hundreds of children sat spellbound for hours in the blistering heat listening and singing along with Christie. He was an instant hit with them. Christie not only connected with them through his music but in many ways some of the problems they face were similar to his own childhood difficulties. Most of these children are stuck in a cycle of poverty because of the fact that they cannot read or write. Christie was able to offer them hope for a better future through his own story. As he suffers from severe dyslexia Christie himself was unable to read or write.

Upon his return from Kenya Christie wrote a song called “A Price for Love”, dedicating the proceeds of the single to the work of Children in Crossfire showing a particular interest and connection to the organisation’s literacy programmes.

Over the following year and a half Christie worked with the charity and for the charity, performing on Children in Crossfire’s behalf and promoting the cause throughout his concert tours. On one memorable occasion he asked Richard Moore to perform live on stage with him.

With only months to live he recorded a new album of duets entitled “The Two of Us”. One of the tracks, “When Will We Learn”, featuring Christy Moore and Luka Bloom, was written about Richard and his growing friendship with His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet. Perhaps this song provides a chance for other gifted musicians to help carry on Christie’s spirit and support for the work of Children in Crossfire that Christie knew he would not be able to do himself.

Christie Hennessy was a man who created music with honesty and feeling from his very heart and soul. Children in Crossfire are honoured to have known and loved him as our patron.
Thank you for your commitment

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to Children in Crossfire.

Without your valuable assistance we could not continue to meet our objectives and make commitments to life changing long term projects to help some of the most vulnerable people in the world. For further information about the work of Children in Crossfire, forthcoming events and ways to give please log onto

www.childrenincrossfire.org