



# CAF News

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## CAF EXPANDS HORIZONS IN 2002

As the year draws to an end, we've looked back over the events of the last 12 months to take stock of our achievements and successes.

Perhaps our greatest accomplishment this year was the launch of the One Charity One Family concept. The scheme allows families in Europe to help families in India in a sustainable way by becoming investment partners in a micro business. The Indian family can use the money generated from the business to send their children to school, one of the founding principles of CAF as enshrined in the United Nations' convention on the rights of the child. You can read more about this project direct from the frontline in a report by CAF's coordinator in India, John Britto, on page 2.

One of CAF's objectives for 2002 was to expand our horizons to support projects outside India and our first nominated destination was Africa. So CAF is very proud to announce that we have founded our first project in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Following extensive research both here and in the Congo, CAF's Secretary, Anja Duchateau and Karen Hoehn (CAF Strategic Planning Officer) put together a project proposal to build a health centre for disadvantaged and malnourished children in Kinshasa. We are overjoyed to tell you that the proposal has been kindly accepted for co-funding by Cordis (Johnson&Johnson).

Within CAF Brussels, we have also reached a number of milestones during the past year. Our small team of five volunteers has grown to a squad of 17 talented helpers who have all worked extremely hard over the last year raising funds and awareness of the rights of the child.

On top of that, CAF has launched a membership scheme in 2002 to introduce a regular revenue stream that we can depend on to provide sustainable support for projects in the forthcoming year. With this positive tone I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and all the best for the coming year.

Pia Lovengreen  
President of CAF



## CAF TO BUILD HEALTH CENTRE IN CONGO

Children Are the Future (CAF) is pleased to announce plans to establish a Basic Care Center for malnourished and sick children in Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. CAF's recent Pub Quiz provided Euro 1,200 for the project. Cordis (Johnson&Johnson) also donated Euro 750 for the center.

The CAF Basic Care Center will operate in the densely populated commune of N'djili, on the border with the commune of Kimbanseke, which includes some of the poorest neighborhoods in Kinshasa. In Kimbanseke, 42% of children are malnourished, while global malnutrition rates for the area reach 18.3%.

The CAF Basic Care Center has two aims. To provide health and day care services for malnourished and sick children, as well as to educate their mothers regarding nutrition, health and hygiene practices to prevent such diseases and malnutrition in the future.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the poorest countries of the world, where the average life expectancy is 47 years. Kinshasa's population has seen an explosive growth in recent years due to civil war in the east of the country and war in neighbouring Angola.

Both disputes have led to displaced poor villagers migrating towards the city in search of a better life. Most formal aid programs have prioritized care for war refugees. As a result, local Kinshasans have suffered a relative lack of attention by most international aid organizations.

## IT PROJECT MOVES AHEAD IN INDIA

One of CAF's first projects is an ambitious one, the launch of an IT college in southern India. The school aims to provide local teenagers with computer and IT skills so that the youngsters will be able to find jobs in India's mushrooming IT sector, allowing the college's students to break out of the poverty cycle.

The project also incorporates CAF's principle of sustainability: the school's graduates agree to provide a percentage of their income to pay for the school's running costs and also to spare some time to teach the next crop of students.

Malcolm Alessi raised the lion's share of the funds needed through sponsorship of his successful attempt of the Crocodile Trophy mountain bike race, a muscle-tearing 15 day slog round Australia. We asked CAF's iron man how the project is progressing.

'We've got the budget, 20 pupils have been selected for the two year course and John Britto, CAF's coordinator in India, has found the school building,' Alessi reported. 'In fact, we hope to open the school when we visit India in January,' he added.

Alessi explained that a panel of five people selected the class of 2003-2005 from around 80 applicants. Each member of the panel examined a different aspect of the potential student's application. One panellist

looked at the applicant's level of education while another focused on language skills. One member of the selection committee assessed the candidates' ability to travel, an important aspect in the IT labour market. The level of the applicant's family income was another factor in the decision process; the places were open to the most able students from families with the lowest incomes. Lastly, the panel looked at the applicant's overall ability to make the most of the opportunity.

Britto is supervising the refurbishment of the school building and Alessi highlighted some special challenges involved in setting up an IT college in southern India. The five computers and the server must be protected from the heat and the dust and CAF has included an electricity equalizer in the budget to deal with the surges and shortages of electricity typical to the region. CAF has also bought electric fans to keep all the equipment cool. 'And the students too,' laughed Alessi.

CAF is still looking for a volunteer teacher to come to the school once a week until the college's future graduates will be able to mentor new pupils. But Alessi pointed out that many IT skills can be learned by following CD ROM as well as self teach textbook-based programmes.

## ONE CHARITY BRINGS BACK LAUGHTER TO ONE FAMILY

Paul John Britto, CAF coordinator in India

Pandithurai, a 10 year-old boy from the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu is full of laughter now. He plays with his seven year-old sister, Pandiselvi, as soon as they both return from school. Their mother Anjalai, arrives home around the same time after a hard day's work feeding and tending the 18 goats she bought with the money she had saved along with funds provided by her CAF partners through the One Family One Charity scheme.

Gone are the days Anjalai would spend crying after her husband deserted her and left her to raise their two children single-handedly. In those days, she made just enough money to feed her children once a day by working as an agricultural labourer. During the rainy season the family had to shelter in other huts, as their own home was so badly in need of repair it flooded with water with every downpour. Anjalai's children could not go to school, as money was so tight she did not have enough to buy the neat clothes and schoolbooks they needed to attend.

But today her children study in the local school every day and the leaks in her house have been repaired. Everything was made possible through Anjalai's hard work and effort, along with some help from CAF. Anjalai came and shared her problems with me one day and I discussed ways to help with CAF's president, Pia Lovengreen. The One

Family One Charity project evolved from our discussions.

CAF's concern for poor and oppressed children underpins the philosophy behind the One Family One Charity concept. Our long-term aim is to create awareness of the United Nations Charter for Children's Rights. But in the short-term, CAF seeks ways to help all children who have lost their childhood too soon.

CAF also believes that any help we extend should have a sustainable aspect and should not make the recipient dependent on the help. We aim to help our partners break the cycle change of poverty and then withdraw from the partnership once the recipient is back on his or her own feet.

Put simply, one family takes care of another family under the One Family One Charity concept. In the case of Pandithurai's family, Pia Lovengreen and Malcolm Alessi are his mother's partners. Anjalai invested Rupee 4,000 from a small savings programme she is involved in while CAF contributed Rupee 12,000. Anjalai has gained much, much more than 18 goats through the One Family One Charity scheme. She is now her own boss and in charge of her own destiny. She can look after her children better and Pandithurai and his sister Pandiselvi can go to school. That is why Pandithurai is full of laughter now.

## CAF GETS ANOTHER ROUND IN

CAF crossed town to Ixelle for its second Pub Quiz which took place in The Bank on rue du Bailly on December 5. Many of the teams that made our first Pub Quiz in Fat Boys' Sports Bar last summer such a success reappeared for round two. And the event also attracted plenty of new competitors.

Craig Winneker, editor of Tech Central Station, once again offered his services as quiz master and CAF volunteer, Frey Lamberty, bravely offered to formulate the questions, despite the death threats and voodoo dolls he received from disgruntled competitors the first time round. Question topics ranged from politics and geography to third world issues, there was even a section on Belgian history and culture. Once again, CAF was amazed at just how much weird stuff Frey knows.

There were obviously a number of trivia nuts as nutty as Frey in the field of fifteen teams as the scoring was consistently high. After the first few rounds the competition looked a little like the Tour de France, a tight peloton of three cyclists leading the field, a big clump of competitors in the middle and then some stragglers at the back.

Tensions rose as Hill and Knowlton, the Globetrotters and Dolly and the Wet Ends battled for the yellow jersey. Dolly and the Wet Ends nosed ahead at one point, but the Globetrotters soon reasserted its superior trivia knowledge to overtake on the outside. The Globetrotters were a well-composed squad of climbers and sprinters that performed strongly in every section of the quiz and the team breasted the red tape to win a meal for four at the Alban Chambon restaurant in the Hotel Metropole and a selection of wines kindly donated by Mig's Wine Store.

Dolly and the Wet Ends came in a close second and CAF would like to thank our sponsors, Hill and Knowlton, who took the bronze. Hill and Knowlton were keen to reclaim some lost pride and challenged the Dollies to a five-a-side football match. Dolly and the Wet Ends decided not to push their luck as only one of their four-man team can kick a ball.

The Globetrotters turned out have plenty of luck left, though. A member of their team won the star prize in the raffle, an overnight stay for four people at one of London's hippest new designer hotels, the award-winning K WEST.

## GOLFERS DIG DEEP FOR CAF

CAF was the beneficiary of all the funds raised from this year's final monthly medal organised by Ken and Maery Murray at La Bawette Golf Club, Louvain le Neuve, on September 22, 2002.

The final tally came to exactly Euro 2000 (with some last minute contributions), an increase on last year's total. CAF will use the money to establish a medical centre for sick and malnourished children in the

Democratic Republic of Congo (see story on page 1).

All the money came from fees for the pitch and putt competition, as well as cash from tickets sold for the club's spectacular tombola.

CAF would like to thank especially Ken and Maery for agreeing to donate all the money raised to CAF and all La Bawette's members for donating so much of their hard-earned cash to a great cause.

## PLEA FOR HELP FROM ERITREA

From Professor Bart Keymeulen, head of the Diabetes Clinic of the AZ-VUB in Brussels and Professor Jan Bernheim, Human Ecology, Faculty of Medicine

In March 2002, we learned about the critical condition of a 22 years old Eritrean economics student in Asmara, Eritrea. This young woman is the sister of an outstanding computer science student of the Vesalius College of the VUB. She has suffered from insulin-dependent diabetes

for the last three years. In early 2002 she was repeatedly admitted for diabetes-related comas to the Intensive Care Unit of the Halibet hospital in Asmara, Eritrea.

Our contact with her doctors, and the results of clinical tests indicated that she had a life-threatening condition, which can only be effectively treated given the appropriate diagnostic tests and treatment in a specialised centre.

Some funds were volunteered, and she was urgently flown to Brussels on June 15th 2002. The young student's medical condition was critical on arrival, but soon stabilized with the appropriate medical attention.

The AZ-VUB very generously treated her free of charges during this first 3 weeks of hospitalisation. She since then lives in the home of one of the friends of the young Eritrean, and continues to be treated as an out-patient at the diabetes clinic.

In October, she had a life-threatening complication that required thoracic surgery and another 4-week hospitalisation. Again she recovered well, and no more complications are expected.

Now that she is out of immediate harm's way, we must plan for the

future. Firstly, we must find the funds to meet the second hospital bill, which amounts to close to Euro 28,000.

Secondly, we have come to the conclusion that resources in Asmara cannot meet her needs and those of other severe diabetics in the impoverished African country. But we believe that if staff at the Halibet Hospital, (the only general hospital in Eritrea), were to receive up-to-date

training in diabetes care and a supply of the proper treatment aids, including modern insulins, she would be able to travel home and finish her last semester before graduating as a Master in Economics.

We propose to organize a training course for doctors and nurses at the Halibet Hospital. The course would be given by a doctor and nurse from the VUB's Diabetes Clinic and would be organised in collaboration with staff from the Halibet hospital.

Negotiations are under way with the NOVO Nordisk company's World Diabetes Foundation, which envisages to sponsor this project. Any funds that we can raise ourselves will, of course, increase our chances with corporate sponsors.

Sponsorship or donations will be gratefully accepted on bank account 001-3770138-18

Additional Information can be obtained from

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### CAF MISSION

CAF seeks to improve the health and education of children in impoverished communities, in ways that respect the environment, through sustainable projects identified as priorities by local children, parents and community members.

### CAF VISION

CAF envisions a world where children have the right to good food, shelter, education and play, the right to say what they think, to be listened to and to be protected from abuse, consistent with the "Convention on the rights of the child."

### CAF NEWS

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CAF News is now available in French

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