

Community Care Development Centres in South Africa

A joint project of Rotarians, **Soul of Africa** NGO and CRCID
(*Canadian Rotary Collaboration for International Development*)

Presented by: PDG Douglas W. Vincent, CRCID Representative
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It is my pleasure to share with you some of the great opportunities available for doing effective humanitarian aid work, through partnering with other organizations. Today, I've been asked to focus on how Rotarians in Canada and South Africa have successfully partnered in the creation of over 20 Community Care Development Centres, which help poor communities care for AIDS orphans and cope with this challenging situation.

I am excited to share with you some results of our positive experiences with Rotary, CRCID (Canadian Collaboration for International Development) and the Soul of Africa NGO, which was formed in conjunction with our sponsor, the Clark Shoe company.



But before I talk specifically about this, I wanted to concur with the comments of our previous speaker . . . encouraging you all to seriously consider travelling to see these projects in September . . . because a few months ago, I did exactly that with 34 Canadian Rotary friends.

Those who know me are already aware of my passion for international service and how I like to promote the 'hands-on' component of project activities. Thus, our trek to South Africa with Rotary friends, to experience first-hand the life of these wonderful but greatly disadvantaged children.

Consider taking this trip and see the work that your Rotary Foundation is doing, as you experience the love of those youngsters and their grand parents. You will come away with an overwhelming and unique belief that we get a great return on our Rotary Foundation investment . . . and yet the work is never done - there is always more to do, as we shine that light of hope into the dark corners of despair.

This is just one reason why the collaboration of our partners in this effort is so vital. Alone, Canadian Rotarians are but a tiny resource to fight the huge battle of health issues. But, never forget that we are one with the power of many.

Some may wonder how Canadian Rotarians are lucky enough to have the CRCID, which is unique in our Rotary world. Actually, it came about through the request of our Canadian Government and the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). They were inundated with multiple Rotary Club requests for funding International Development projects and asked our leadership to try and help them develop a way to efficiently and equitably distribute Canadian humanitarian aid funds.

Thus the Canadian International Collaboration for International Development was developed, with one representative from each Canadian District forming the governance committee. Our organization works on a three year funding cycle from the Canadian Government. Every third year, we submit a proposal to fund potential programs in the Rotary world, which fall within the government guidelines. When approved, the funds are dispersed as programs and projects are implemented over the following months and years.

Right now, you're likely thinking how lucky we are in Canada to have this source of funding. But I'd ask you to think instead, of a partnering Foundation or organization in your area that might work in a similar way. I encourage you to develop your own concept or vision like the CRCID, the 'Soul of Africa' NGO or a sponsor such as Clark Shoes to partner with and effectively initiate larger scale aid programs.

One of the ongoing complaints we hear from clubs is the paperwork and red tape involved in doing Matching Grants. In this case, through CRCID we have a lead club with an appointed person as the primary contact. They are experienced and well versed in the grant application process and generally handle most of the paperwork and follow-up.

Canadian clubs can now get involved with WCS work in this way, with little hassle over the paperwork required. It also allows the smaller clubs to fit in with the larger ones, where a smaller budget may not be enough to do a project on their own. We are promoting involvement at the grass roots and encouraging individuals to participate through their personal contributions.

I would like to make you aware of some of the recent programs (and projects) that are under way. I am certain you will find them and the process of contributions that have brought them about, **IMPRESSIVE!**

\$574,000. in Malaria Nets are being distributed this fall to children in Tanzania. \$160,000. was raised by Canadian Rotarians with the balance contributed through CRCID and TRF Matching Grants.

A \$370,000 AIDS (ANCHOR) program was implemented in Mozambique with \$183,000.

In Uganda, we had a TRACC program for AIDS Orphans and a Micro Credit project. So far it has included two installments of \$74,000. and \$43,000., with another \$300,000 in the proposal stage.

With regard to South Africa, so far Rotarians have contributed over \$104,000. with CRCID contributing \$161,000 and your Rotary Foundation \$456,000. This is the power of Rotarians and NGO's working together in partnership to leverage success.

If you travel to visit the poor villages in South Africa as I have, you will witness the ladies in the community sitting around a water well, in their village square or possibly on the front porch of a care centre. They will be stitching sandals (and soccer balls) which are then sold through Clark shoes. The proceeds of these sales pay for the bricks and mortar part of the projects with Rotary funding equipment, supplies and training. It is commendable to have everyone participate in such a worthwhile and noble enterprise to help others, one sandal, one friendship at a time.

This is truly the Power-of-One . . . one person . . . gathering together with others to make things happen. Through our Soul of Africa joint venture, Canadian clubs have partnered with local Rotarians and local village residents to adopt communities who have the greatest needs. By working together in this way, the recipients have dignity and fulfillment, building a better life for their families with a hand up, rather than a hand out. This is empowerment at its best.

We all know that in many cases silos get built in both business organizations and Rotary. I believe that through this endeavour, we are helping clubs to gather the silos together under one umbrella, with a more effective and efficient approach to international service.

In the media, there are many stories of despair in third world countries. Some of us are able to travel and see them firsthand. We see up close the barren faces of people in such desperate need, yet the children somehow have hope. Trying to address this extreme poverty and the ensuing health issues which cause many deaths each day is an ongoing situation of too few resources. The local issues are not insurmountable; however, they are large! With additional help and that Rotary attitude (we are one with the power of many) we can face them squarely and succeed.

I believe we need to use the 'Soul of Africa' as a great example to collaborate in the future; Rotarians, NGO's, sponsor companies and the local community residents, all involved. I know that through this program Canadian Rotarians have been more effective and subsequently have gained a greater awareness of what can be done, through such a major project. Working together we truly do make a difference.

On a personal note, the hands-on component of any project is key to the success and fulfillment one receives from doing volunteer humanitarian service. Each year, I help coordinate several trips abroad for Rotarians. It is great to feel the sense of pride and commitment building as I observe my friends and colleagues witness the shanty town poverty and warm appreciative people. The ROI (return on investment) from your Rotary Foundation contribution is powerful and amazing!

This formula also provides much encouragement and positive reinforcement to the local Rotarians and community members who, with deadlines of visitor schedules, elevate their commitment and ensure the job gets done with a high degree of timeliness and success.

Again, I encourage you to make a decision and take the time to go to South Africa . . . plan to visit the poverty stricken villages . . . open your vision to the conditions there, the terrible poverty . . . and also the potential for something better. Take a moment to extend a hand or a gentle hug to a child. They really ask nothing more of us than this caring.

My friends, I encourage you to build your own Soul of Africa . . . Not only is it possible, it is real, it is effective, it is successful, it is proven, it is mutually beneficial, **it is Rotary**

For pictorial reports of South Africa and other humanitarian aid trips, go to:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/DougVpics>

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