



## **SAVE LIVES FAST. CONCERN LAUNCHES ANNUAL 24 HOUR FAST.**

The Concern FAST is taking place on Thursday November 29<sup>th</sup>. The FAST is now in its 38<sup>th</sup> year. Concern hopes to raise in excess of €1.5million for ongoing projects in 29 developing countries where they are providing emergency supplies and long term support for impoverished communities. Save Lives Fast. is this year's theme and to register tel. 1850 50 50 55, or log onto [concernfast.org](http://concernfast.org)

One of Concern's core programmes focuses on primary education. Last year it is estimated that over 250,000 people directly benefited from this programme and in addition an estimated 1 million people benefited indirectly. In Afghanistan Concern handed over a new school building in Sayab to the Afghan Dept of Education, thereby benefiting a total of 2,746 children in 2006. In Sierra Leone and Ethiopia, Concern is offering training for teachers and school management committee members. This training has benefited 20,000 primary school children, 50% of whom are girls.

Approximately 200 million children under 5 worldwide suffer from acute or chronic symptoms of malnutrition, during seasonal food shortages and in times of famine and social unrest this number increases. Malnutrition is an important factor among the nearly 13 million children who die every year from preventable diseases and infections. Concern has pioneered a new approach to dealing with acute malnutrition. This approach, called community therapeutic care (CTC), has proved to be extremely effective, so much so that it is now becoming the preferred approach to tackling malnutrition.

Concern's objective is to enable absolutely poor people to achieve major improvements in their lifestyles which are sustainable without ongoing support from Concern. This is achieved through focussing on key areas including; education, health, HIV and Aids, livelihood programmes and emergencies.

Mr Tom Arnold, Chief Executive of Concern said "the FAST is an integral part of our fundraising campaign. Each year we can see improvements in communities by being able to provide long term sustainable programmes through training in education, health, waste management, infrastructure and agriculture. We now operate in 29 countries and this would not be achievable without the support of the public in our largest annual fundraiser."

Ends.  
For Further Information  
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1<sup>st</sup> November 2007

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