



### *Moate - Moi Sorget: First Event, First Award and First Prize*

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of January this year, the annual Worldwide Forum was held in Croke Park. Worldwide is a government scheme, set up in 2007, which aims to raise awareness of development issues among students, teachers and the wider community in Ireland. This organisation provides funding to second-level schools and colleges which are involved with linking or exchange projects with other schools in the developing world. As we all know, Moate Community School is currently involved in an exchange project with Moi Sorget secondary school in Londiani, Kenya. Therefore the school was eligible to travel up to Dublin to showcase all the fine work that has been done in the past five months.

On the eagerly awaited morning, Mr Hatton, who had already flown out to Kenya in October, travelled up to the event with fifteen transition year students. The event was to be set in the conference rooms and adjoining hallways of the Hogan Stand in Croke Park. Thirty four Irish schools were set to take part. Each school had an exhibition stand and by 10 O' Clock, the halls were alive with decorative displays of African, Asian and South American culture. From one end of the hallway to the other you could hear Cork, Dublin and Donegal accents enthusiastically describing their partnerships with schools from Ethiopia and Kenya all the way to Vietnam in Asia.



At 11 O' Clock, the event was officially opened by Mr Jim Mullen, who is the Executive Director of Léargas. This is the agency which is responsible for the management of national and international exchange and co-operation programs in Ireland. The introduction was followed by an excellent keynote address by Professor Sheelagh Drudy of UCD. Her short but inspiring speech caught the full attention of over 500 students. Such was the innovative angle of her rhetoric, she managed to explain her views in a way that both teachers and students alike, hung on to her every word. The speech certainly brought about a new way of thinking for me and those nearby.

The afternoon consisted of two workshops for all students. There were many different options you could choose with some interesting topics such as “Gender Equality in the Developing World” and “Poverty in a World of Plenty”. Many facilitators gave up their own time to host these workshops and we in Moate are deeply grateful for the contribution they made, which shone a new light on Poverty and Violence in third world countries for us. Other activities included in the day were a journalism session and a new and interesting concept called “Graphic Harvesting”. Throughout the day, many

artistic students were assigned tasks to portray what they had learned through pictures and illustrations. The fruits of their labour were to be displayed on the back wall of the main conference hall at the end of the day. And I can only say that they certainly excelled themselves. It was a truly tremendous sight to gradually watch a blank wall be transformed into a sea of learning. When the awesome collection was complete, the whole ensemble gathered together and was surprisingly told to sit down and face the other way! However, it was only because they had a great surprise in store. The huge cinema-sized screen at the front of the hall suddenly burst into life with the collage of art behind us! We learnt that a lady was beaming the images through 'Skype' in her laptop towards our screen at the front. This truly was thought to be the highlight of the day for all, but amazingly it wasn't.

As mentioned earlier, each school had their own exhibition stand. These were all being judged throughout the day by judges from Worldwise. There were two other schools working with MCS in conjunction with the wonderful charity 'Friends of Londiani'. For the combined work of the three schools, we are proud to announce that an award was won on the day for our work so far; Mr. Hatton proudly accepted the award on behalf of the three schools and there were smiles all round as the Moate students went up to collect the award with him. It was truly the perfect end to a wonderful and action-packed day. This great success is a huge boost to every student in our school and will drive us forward as it is just a stepping stone towards the great work we have planned for the future.