

Louise Seligman, Chair of Breadline Africa UK, writes:



Dear Friends of Breadline Africa

Amidst gale-force winds and driving rain, in November twelve Trustees (eight from the UK and two each from Ireland and Holland) arrived in Cape Town to evaluate the work of Breadline Africa, and help make future plans.

We were struck by the cheerfulness and will to succeed we saw at the projects we visited. It is always humbling to see people who have very little showing such willingness to help their fellows.

We were briefed by local experts on present and future needs in Southern Africa. Given the harrowing crisis in Zimbabwe, we agreed to designate extra funds for projects there, in addition to the projects we already support.

We are very concerned about the world economic crisis, as it's the poorest who will suffer the most. So far, our loyal donors have managed to keep contributing generously – bless you all.

By the end of the week, we felt confident that there was a plan in place for offering as much assistance as possible to the needy, especially children and young people. We reaffirmed our commitment to the work of Breadline Africa, and offered up a heartfelt prayer of thanks to our donors – without whom we could achieve nothing.

L. Seligman

P.S. For more Trustee news, see page 6

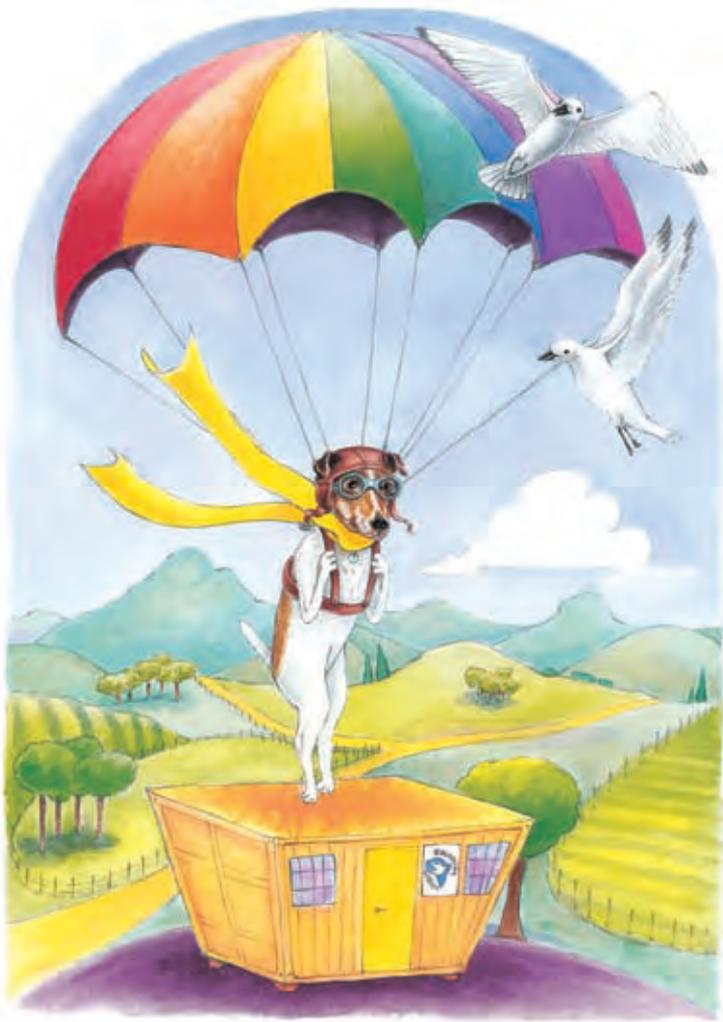


Hands up all those who are having fun!

The children have a ball

Well, the pictures say it all! Over 800 children from desperately poor homes had an unforgettable day of fun, sun, sand and smiles, all thanks to you. Each child got a gift from "Father Christmas", and then there was all the excitement of a jumping castle before everyone tucked into a good lunch. They were thrilled – and I am so grateful you made this possible.





The Parachuting Dog to the rescue!

I'm sure you remember the special bequest by Captain Moore and his family in memory of his nephew, John McCreath, and how it came from a trust in John's name called the "Parachuting Dog". And I told you the story of how John, aged five, when his grandfather asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, announced: "I want to be a parachuting dog, granddad!" We are happy to be able to report to all of you, and especially those who loved John,

that the Parachuting Dog Container is finished, and ready to roll out to where it's needed most! It's particularly precious to us all, and the unusual name is the cherry on top.

Don't forget that if you'd like more information about leaving a bequest to Breadline Africa, you can just drop me a line in confidence. I'll answer all your questions.



Close to my heart...

Last month I wrote to you about a very special need – support for a small medical and birthing centre in the remote Eastern Cape, so that we can save lives and improve mother-and-child health in this community. Please don't forget about this intimate need that is very close to my heart!



A special thank-you from Edna and the farmers of Lilliefontein



I wrote to some of you a while ago to ask your permission for an alternative plan for our mushroom farming project. Well, I was overwhelmed by the kindness, warmth and generosity of your lovely letters, cards and messages in

response. It's very humbling to receive so much trust and goodwill, and I will definitely keep you all up to speed with our plans for a packing shed and administrative building – now in the works, thanks to your donations.

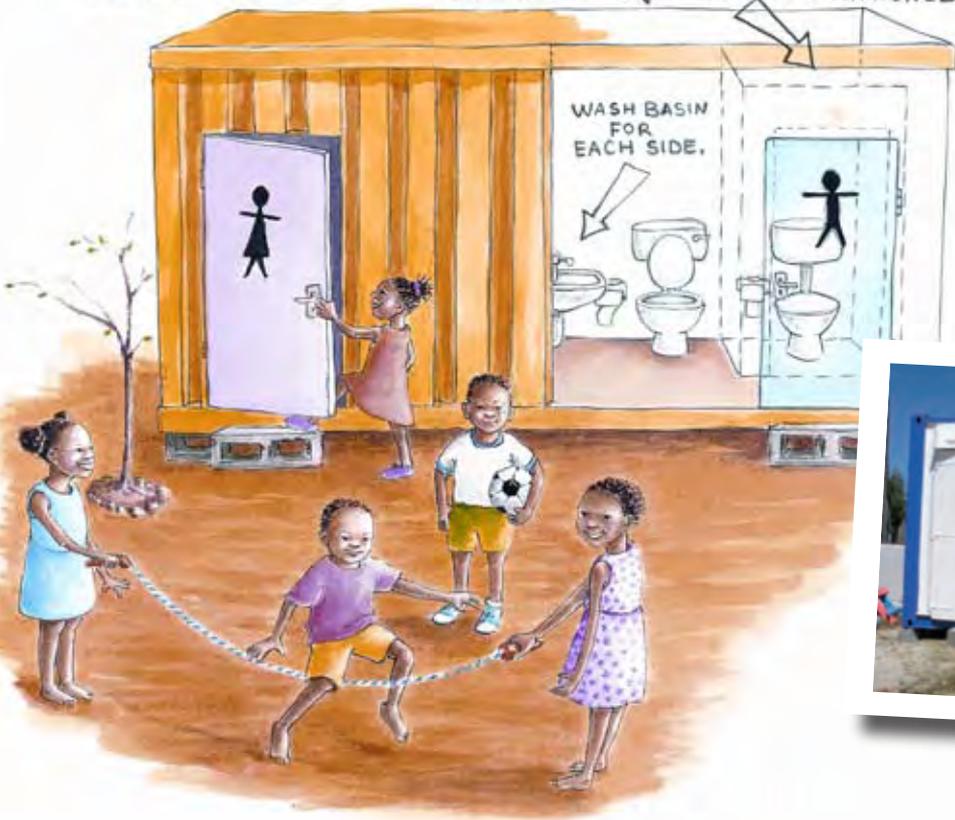
MASIZAKHE EDUCARE'S
TOILET BLOCK, KHAYELITSHA

SEPARATE ENTRANCE
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

PLUMBING ALL AT
THE BACK OF
CONTAINER.

ADULTS' TOILET
MAY BE PARTITIONED.

WASH BASIN
FOR
EACH SIDE.



The bottom line

Remember Angelina Zenani of Masizakhe Educare, and her anxiety because the tots in her care had to use unhygienic and inadequate public toilets some distance away from her humble nursery-school? I'm delighted to be able to report that their brand-new toilet block is being prepared – take a look at the picture to see how it will all work. Thank you all so much for meeting this very basic human need!



Soon the children will have a brand new ablution block like this one.



Harvesting water by hand – a back-breaking task.

Water everywhere, but how to save it?

We're all very worried about climate change, and the impact this is already having on small farmers in Southern Africa. We've noticed that the winters are more severe, and the summers hotter and much drier. So I jumped at the chance to supply the farmers of

Riverlands with water tanks, to help them store the rain that comes storming down all winter – and then disappears for the long summer months. I know these tanks will be vital to their crops and their self-sufficiency.



Lifesaver

This bright, hefty parcel of food staples might not look like a lifesaver, but to some, it literally is. It went out to many families living in acute poverty, who were able to celebrate a modest Christmas because of your generosity.

Turning English lasagne into African bricks

Rosalind Edwards was so impressed by our 'Cans for Skills' appeal, she decided to raise money for a 'Can' especially for training bricklayers -- a vital skill that helps unemployed folk earn a decent living and build their communities. How did she do it? Well, she headed for her kitchen, called up her friends, and voila! -- two 'Bring and Buys', two raffles, two garden days (with lots of lasagne), a Quiz Night and a coffee morning later, Breadline Africa had their 'Can' and a clutch of proud and pleased bricklaying graduates. We are so grateful to Rosalind, her husband and her friends for their "Can do!" spirit.



Proud graduates show off their tools

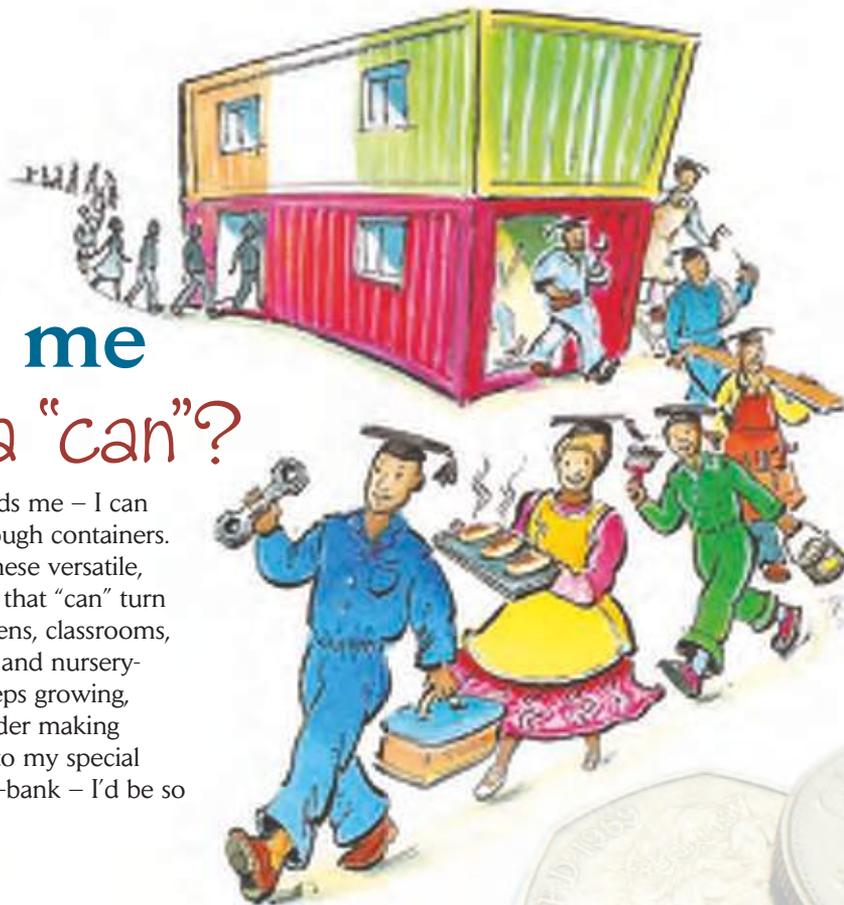
John and Rosalind Edwards

Edna is addicted to blogging!

Isn't the Internet wonderful? I've discovered the joys of "blogging" in the last while -- the perfect combination of writing a diary and sending letters -- and I can add in pictures, links to projects Breadline Africa is working on, even video clips! Or think of it as a newspaper column -- but one where you can leave your comments, and chat to me that way. It's easy -- if I can do it, anyone can! Please do "visit" me by clicking on the Breadline Africa blog to read all about what we're up to. The address is: www.breadlineafrica.org/blog.

Can you help me with a "can"?

And this reminds me -- I can never have enough containers. The need for these versatile, low-cost "cans" that "can" turn into soup kitchens, classrooms, clinics, libraries and nursery-schools just keeps growing, so please consider making a contribution to my special container piggy-bank -- I'd be so grateful!



Don't forget: £1 = £1.28 at no cost to you!

And another important reminder: if you are a UK income taxpayer, we need your signature! Please don't forget to fill in your Gift Aid Declaration, which allows

us to claim 28% back on the donations you have already given us. And this means 28% more communities can benefit at no extra cost to you!



Edna's Column

What an amazing year 2008 was! And I'd like to offer you all greetings and every blessing for 2009. Once again, I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your letters, cards, messages and prayers. I have so many more stories to tell you about all the projects I've mentioned here, and the many other plans we're

hatching. But this time round, our Trustees wanted a chance to speak to you directly – there's a special letter for you on page 1.

Edna

xxx



Our Trustees get their hands dirty

So often trustees are just a line of names in small print at the bottom of a letter. But ours are really "hands-on", and I thought you might like to see them in action.

You can imagine how grateful the team was to see them. But they asked me to tell you that the people they are really grateful to are YOU – **and you and you and you** – our wonderful supporters, without whom we wouldn't be able to achieve anything.



Late in 2008, we here at Breadline Africa had a visit from a very special group of people – the Breadline Africa trustees!

Their main job as trustees is to make sure that Breadline Africa funds are wisely and carefully allocated, to projects where your donations have the most impact. And our trustees really practice what they preach – they all paid for their own airfares to get here. What's more, they were all taking precious holiday time away from their jobs and families to come and see the projects that you support!

They were particularly interested in the amazing impact that legacies can have on poor communities, and asked me to mention this to you – this was after seeing the exciting plans we have for the classroom Captain Moore is donating in memory of his nephew (more about this project, and how to leave Breadline Africa a bequest, on page 4).

The Trustees make dough



Edna shares baking secrets with Louise Seligman.

While they used their time here to think hard about Breadline Africa's future, and to make plans and create strategies for the challenging road ahead, they also got stuck in (quite literally!) into our Blogger Bake-Off.

This is our online campaign to march boldly into the world of the Internet. All around the globe, people can reach out through blog networks that can touch hundreds...thousands...even millions of people. We wanted to get more information and debate about poverty in Africa going on these networks, so we came up with the idea of baking bread (a basic necessity), swapping recipes and ultimately "giving dough" to raise funds for food projects – emergency parcels, soup kitchens, community veggie gardens, and more. If you'd like to join in the fun, go to www.bloggerbakeoff.com.



Renée Hopster and Sir Robbie Dunbar get hands-on!