

SSIA Goal

By Laura Coates
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A resourceful Newbridge nurse who saved a gunshot victim's life with tampons during her overseas work with aid agency GOAL has returned to work in Ireland.

Sandra Beattie has seen drought, starvation and civil war during the past five years as part of her overseas work in Africa.

She spoke about her experiences to the Kildare Post as the aid agency launched an appeal for SSIA savers to donate some of their cash to the good cause.

The ex-Holy Family student, now 33, decided to become a nurse after leaving school so she could work overseas for charity.

She spent much of the past two years working on GOAL health programmes in war-torn Darfur, Sudan. She has also worked in Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo since she joined the aid agency in November 2002.

One of her most dramatic experiences in Darfur came when a man called Adam presented at a GOAL health clinic in a pool of blood with a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

"With limited resources and huge blood loss things didn't look too hopeful," she recalls. "My colleague, Gill, suggested tampons to stop the bleeding from the exit and entry wounds - although I was dubious."

The man survived thanks to the efforts of the GOAL-ies and Sandra saw him alive and well before she left the civil-war torn country.

Home since March, she plans to stay in Ireland until the end of the year.

"The Sudan is quite a tough place," she said. "The environmental conditions are very hot and very dry, even though the people are very warm, it takes a while to get used to."

She says she has never felt her life was under threat while working for GOAL, but that the Irish aid organisation may leave a long and valuable legacy in war-torn areas of the world. "The emphasis is on the health sector in GOAL, you want to leave where you have been and hope that the local staff continue to provide medical care when you have long gone," she says.

To donate to GOAL's 'Life Saving after your SSIA' programme, contact 01 2809779 or visit www.goal.ie.



Sandra Beattie working with children at a hospital in Manono, Democratic Republic of the Congo

newsbriefs

Children's Rights

Fine Gael General Election Candidate Cllr Richard Daly says that he believes that the constitutional rights of children were denied to the tens of students who were refused places in Kildare's primary schools. "The failure of the Department to provide adequate places in Newbridge last year means that dozens of young children could not be accommodated in the primary schools. Deferring their entry has meant that parents had to make provision for childcare or preschool while they waited in vain for a place in the primary school to come on stream" said Cllr Daly.

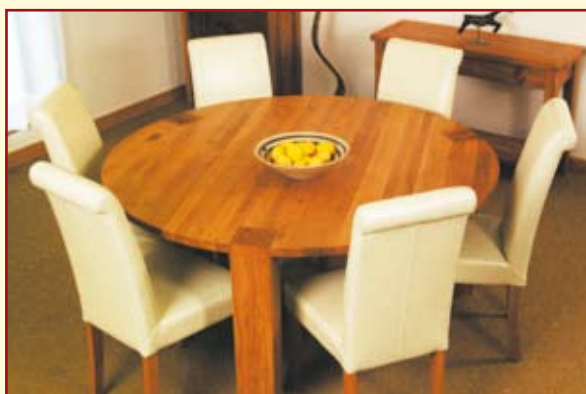
Tax Back

PAYE workers in Kildare who donated more than €250 or more to Concern during the last year can now support its work even further by giving their permission for the charity to claim tax back from the Revenue Commissioners. Last year Concern managed to claim a massive €171,000 back from the taxman from Kildare donations alone and is calling on its contributors to help them do the same this year. Charitable donations are tax-free and agencies like Concern can claim the tax back on donations totaling €250 or more over the course of a tax year.


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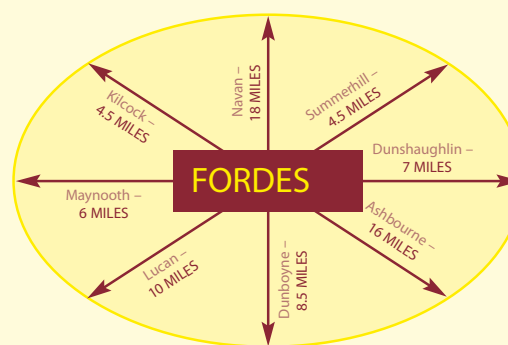
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