

## International Conference honour for Bambisanani Partnership

### The Bambisanani Partnership

**D**avid Geldart, Founder and Chairman of the Bambisanani Partnership, recently addressed a prestigious International Conference in Prague, Czech Republic.

Over the past thirteen years the partnership has gained international acclaim for its pioneering work using sport as a catalyst to promote education, leadership and global citizenship in one of South Africa's most deprived rural areas. During that time more than 250 volunteers from St. Mary's School, Menston, The University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University have delivered a range of Bambisanani programmes to over 3000 South African children with significant impact on students from both countries.



The conference, organised by *Progressive Connexions*, attracted a diverse range of delegates and speakers from over 35 different countries. The conference provided an excellent platform to outline the purpose, activities and outcomes of the partnership. As well as hopefully encouraging others to embark on similar projects the presentation generated considerable discussion and debate involving not only those from the world of education and sport development but also from very different backgrounds including Law, Public Administration, Human Rights, International Development and even Architecture. Some of these conversations have continued post conference which is really encouraging.

Kacper Grass, USA:

**“***The Bambisanani Partnership presentation at the conference made a very powerful impression on me. While textbooks can give students access to a whole history of ideas and the internet can provide information on virtually any subject, the Bambisanani Partnership offers students an opportunity that neither traditional education nor modern technology can adequately substitute: cultural learning through personal connections. If more young students had the opportunity to travel, meet, and share their knowledge and passions with peers around the world, then there would be much reason to feel optimistic about the future of international and intercultural relations. Should this project be but one small step in creating a more understanding and open-minded world, then at least it is a step in the right direction.*”

Adita Singh, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat, India

**“***The work that the Bambisanani Partnership is doing is truly inspirational. It is one thing to talk about making a change but it is another to take action. It's amazing to see people who dedicate their life to promoting education and leadership in one of the most deprived rural areas of South Africa. The most remarkable thing about the initiative is the use of sports as a powerful and effective educational tool. The project is changing lives and I think everyone should put their weight*

*behind the movement, so that it could be expanded to other areas as well. I would like to discuss the possibilities for collaboration between your organisation and our university (JGU).”*

Helen Vost, Managing Director, Youth Sport Trust International:

**“***I was delighted to meet David in Prague recently and hear his presentation about how the Bambisanani partnership has gone from strength to strength since it first began in 2006. By sharing the journey that St. Mary's School has been on with Mnyakenya High School in South Africa, David will I'm sure inspire other schools and universities to use the power of sport to forge global links and promote genuine two way learning which benefits all the teachers and young people involved.”*

Dr Robert Fisher, Conference Director:

**“***A global audience of academics, practitioners and professionals enjoyed an illuminating and revealing presentation on the work of the Bambisanani Partnership at the third global inclusive interdisciplinary conference, Culture and Society, in Prague. The significance of the work being undertaken and its value to researchers serves to accentuate the continuing need for voices who are engaging with communities and developing innovative, organic relationships to be heard in contexts like this and provided welcome perspectives in conversations with the delegates who attended. We heartily welcome and encourage this much needed level of participation in our global meetings.*



David added:

“ It was a great honour and a privilege to represent the outstanding Bambisanani team at this important international event. Such occasions always help me reflect on what we do and why we do it; on our actions and on our impact. This genuinely progressive conference proved very effective at this. There is a great danger for all of us that ‘we live in our own echo chambers’ only hearing or reading that which reinforces our current world view. This conference was highly effective in bringing together a wide range of people who were willing not only to listen and learn from one another but also to question and challenge others in a spirit of collegiality, goodwill and friendship. It was a great opportunity to speak about our international work to an international audience.”



For more information about the Bambisanani Partnership please see:

[www.bambisananipartnership.org](http://www.bambisananipartnership.org)

David Geldart

The Bambisanani Partnership: Using the power of to change lives in one of South Africa’s poorest regions



Progressive Connexions  
Interdisciplinary Life

Prague, Czech Republic