

issue 5 - 2009

cord news

inside...

Truth, justice and peace

www.cord.org.uk



Photo: Rachel Scarle/Humanity Productions

welcome...

To our Christmas edition of CORD News. As the year draws to a close we report on two major issues that impact hugely on those with whom we work: the global conference on Climate Change and a potential new deal for the thousands of Africa's internally displaced.

We bring you a story of great hope from Uganda, of a fight for justice in Cambodia, of goodwill and friendship from Burundi and of progressive partnership in Chad.

The 2009 recession has hit us all, and continues to impact most on the disadvantaged and the poorest of the poor. Yet your generosity and support remains unwavering. We remain constantly thankful to you, and to the numbers of new and often young supporters who have committed to CORD over the past twelve months. Together we continue to achieve remarkable things.

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Burundi Unites for International Peace Day Match

A special CORD Peace One Day football match between returning refugees and local villagers kicked off in Giharo Commune, Burundi to mark the UN's Annual Day of Peace, of worldwide ceasefire and non violence.

The match between local side Eagle Boys and Amavubi the repatriate team, saw Eagle Boys enjoy a 2-0 victory and added Burundi to the list of UN member countries supporting cooperation and unity through the power of football on this special day.



A poignant re-enactment of how returning refugees were welcomed back from exile after years living in camps in neighbouring Tanzania.

The peace celebration included traditional Burundian drumming and a moving reenactment of refugees being welcomed back after 15 long years of exile in neighbouring Tanzania.





The seasons of Advent and Christmas remind us of God's presence among us. So it's the right time to reflect on how

our Christian faith forms the basis of what we do at CORD and how we do it.

It seems too easy just to quote a few verses from the Bible to show God's concern for all people and the special concern of Jesus for the poor. The challenge is to look at the bigger pictures from scripture about building peace, building God's kingdom and about God's incarnation here on earth.

Peace, shalom and eirene stories run throughout the Old and New Testaments. They lead us to focus on what it means to love our neighbour and our enemy, on forgiveness and reconciliation.

Building God's kingdom on earth is about the outworking of our lives as humble disciples of Christ. It's about how CORD's structure, and the way we work with people, disperses the power away from ourselves towards our local partners and beneficiaries.

God becoming human through His Son is what Advent and Christmas is all about. He came and lived amongst us, poor and as a refugee. We've recently reviewed what we've done in 2009 and planned what we'd like to do – with your help – in 2010. In so doing, we've been reminded that at the heart of our work is building relationships with people so that we can all live in dignity, in

peace and in the calm confidence of being able to become the person and communities that God intends us to be.

As Christians we are each on a journey, often a very hard journey, following the example of Christ. Every day we wrestle with the complexities presented by our work to which we respond based on our faith. We are God's gardeners in His kingdom so we must get our hands dirty to help realise that vision here on earth. CORD continues to work alongside people of all faiths, or none, believing that God requires an ecumenical church if the world is to live in peace. For me one of the great glories of CORD is our ecumenical character. In all our offices there are Christians representing a variety of styles of Christian experience and churchmanship.

As Christians we humbly recognise that we haven't got all the answers. Life doesn't present itself as a series of black and white issues. Our work is not about us as individuals or even about CORD, but about God working through us and the people we work with.

So I thank you for your faithful support this past year. For all of us, in different ways, it's been a tough year, so I wish you a peaceful Christmas too! And I hope you'll stay with us throughout 2010 as we continue to try to emulate Christ in communities divided by war and poverty; to engage with people in Africa and Asia to find truth, justice and peace in our communities.

Brian Wakley
Chief Executive

Cambodian Evictions Spark Human Rights Protest



Nationwide concern is growing in Cambodia after provincial authorities in Odar Meanchey equipped with rifles and guns evicted 214 families, destroying and setting fire to their homes, claiming the land for the Angkor Sugar Company.

The Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC) - a coalition of 21 NGOs - says the actions, which also saw three people arrested, two beaten and injured and a number of the evicted forced to hide in the forest were a serious breach of human rights. Some people were given shelter in a nearby pagoda, only to be evicted again and left short of water, food, shelter and medicine.

CHRAC is calling on the authorities to provide social land for the victimised and the poor. In a statement they say the Government has hundreds of thousands of hectares of land to grant to private companies and that social land concessions should be preserved.

'CORD's team in Cambodia is alarmed at the developments in Odar Meanchey Province, which has left so many families without homes and without hope. In many cases, it is widely reported that even their personal possessions were burned in the fires, as they were not allowed by authorities to retrieve them,' said CORD's Regional Director, Noel Matthews.

'We remain deeply concerned about those villagers who are still in hiding, in pagodas and in the forests, afraid for their lives as well as for those who are today in prison,' he added.

CORD remains committed to working with our partners in the grassroots networks and with local and international organisations across Cambodia to see the rights of the villagers respected and protected and their freedom restored.

'Real peace and prosperity can only be achieved in Cambodia where there is justice, freedom and respect for the rights of all sections of society,' said Noel.



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NEW DEAL FOR AFRICA'S INTERNALLY DISPLACED



Photo: IRIN

'There is no humanitarian solution to conflict. The solution is always political.'

A new convention to protect and assist the millions of Africans who are internally displaced has been drawn up by the African Union meeting in Kampala.

The rights of people who flee across national boundaries as refugees are protected. But there has been no international legislation catering specifically for people displaced within their own country (IDPs). If ratified, experts say this convention will fill a void in international humanitarian law.

IDPs vastly outnumber refugees in Africa: in east and central Africa there are more than 10 million IDPs (OCHA), with Sudan (4 million), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2.12 million) and Somalia (1.55 million) heading the list. In the same region, refugees total two million.

This latest deal was signed by seventeen African states at the end of a summit on October 23. It obliges governments to recognize that IDPs have specific vulnerabilities and must be supported. *'The crucial challenge now is ensuring that once the convention is signed and ratified by as many*

states as possible, it is actually implemented and respected,' said President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Jakob Kellenberger.

The convention emphasizes the sovereignty of member states yet spells out the obligations and responsibilities of armed groups, prohibiting them from carrying out arbitrary displacement, recruiting children and impeding humanitarian assistance.

Until African countries *'learn to respect the law'* participants said, the continent would *'remain at rock bottom'* in its attempts to address the problems of the displaced.

Antonio Guterres, head of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and representative of the UN Secretary-General at the summit, said solving the question of displacement in Africa required political solutions.

'There is no humanitarian solution to conflict,' he explained. *'The solution is always political.'*

A POTENT PART CORD IN CHAD

When CORD Supporter Relations Director Richard Dickson and Prospective Parliamentary Candidate Chris White visited our Chad Programme last month, both were inspired by the partnership that is an essential component of its success:

'The scale of Chad's programme across four camps housing some 85,000 Sudanese refugees from Darfur is awesome,' said Richard. 'CORD may be managing the work, but it depends wholly on partnership – with the Presidents of the school parents' associations, all volunteers, with inspectors, teachers, the child protection team and the national Chadian staff.'

Neither the Darfuris nor their Chadian hosts seem hopeful of any improvement in their situation in the foreseeable future; but both groups see their children's education as key to building a peaceful and prosperous society. As well as the camp schools, CORD continues to support schools in local Chadian villages surrounding the camps, where the need is equally great.

'When people have nothing to do and are not learning anything and they have no metier, they are more likely to go and join the revolution. With a little learning they are more likely to be able to live their lives peacefully, in tranquillity,' said Hassan Baba, Assistant Programme Manager in Gaga Camp.

'The refugees say that it's illiteracy that got them into the state they are in. They didn't know how to enter into dialogue rather than violence. Now they understand,' he added.

President Abkar Yarcub agreed. *'A partner like CORD is key to education in the camp. When we arrived our children were ignorant, they didn't know anything. Now they feel like they're trying. Children that we educate will be the leaders of Darfur.'*

Chris White said that the apparent mature sense of self awareness of the refugees and their hosts was deeply spiritual, inspiring and humbling.

'I was immediately impressed with the determination to ensure their children have the

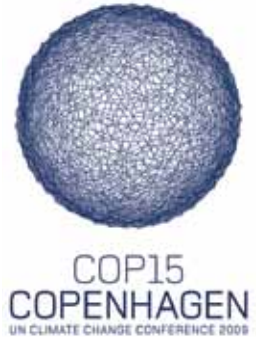
INERSHIP

best possible chances; that despite living in the stringent circumstances of the camps, what matters most is their welfare and their schooling. The focus is all on giving the children a better future,' he added.

During their visit, the two also met several vulnerable child refugees, including nine year old Yaya Abdullah. His parents divorced and Yaya was first rejected by his stepfather and then by his mother. Eventually CORD helped to find his birth father through the Red Cross. Traumatized by his experiences, Yaya is now slowly improving thanks to the involvement of the Chief of his block within Gaga Camp, and by being included in regular activities alongside other children.



CLIMATE CHANGE COUNTDOWN



CORD volunteer Adrian Duke, a journalist with the BBC World Service, is currently working with the UN climate change agency in Germany. He penned us his thoughts in the run up to the crucial UN Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December.

When I first got involved with the whole climate change business I had the same reaction as many - total bewilderment. Yet science accepts that:

- The world has warmed by 0.74°C in the past 100 years, with ice receding, mountain glaciers melting faster, milder winters, more heat waves
- We humans are playing a significant part in speeding up the process.

What seems abundantly clear is the very serious risk of a tipping point beyond which we will have no chance of turning back the clock. When I look as I do at estimates of projected global energy consumption the graph climbs dizzily as the world population grows and as we pull more people out of poverty.

As we pump more Co₂ into the atmosphere, temperature predictions suddenly leap to figures of 6°C or more which is a doomsday scenario. World leaders are focusing on re-organising their economies away from dependence on CO₂-spewing fossil fuels. This fundamentally alters whole industrial

sectors. It affects jobs, livelihoods, life styles. So a global political consensus has to be found.

This all seems far removed from the work of CORD with the powerful stories of how individuals are dealing with life in refugee camps in Chad, or peasant farming in Cambodia; from the basic necessities of a functioning toilet in Burundi or a means of earning a living, for the women beekeepers of Uganda.

Yet it is the poor who are and will increasingly bear the brunt of climate change. It is estimated that:

- By 2020 in some African countries yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50%
- Widespread melting of glaciers and snow cover will reduce melt water from major mountain ranges e.g. Hindu Kush, Himalaya, Andes, affecting fresh water supplies for more than 1 billion people and in turn increasing the potential for conflict
- In 2008 alone more than 20 million people were displaced by sudden climate-related disasters. An estimated 200 million people could be displaced as a result of climate impacts including rising sea levels by 2050.

So there is an equal and urgent focus on helping developing countries take action.

It is estimated that the worldwide energy supply infrastructure will require a total investment of a staggering US\$ 22 trillion. Not doing anything is going to cost more than investing in green technologies and, significantly, the longer we leave it the higher the cost.

Despite all the gloom it seems to me that a major plus of the whole debate is that it is having very positive side effects - in the same way that the campaign for HIV and AIDS has been the leading edge of a much larger global scale-up of disease control.

Similarly I suspect it is injecting new energy and funding into development in some of the world's most vulnerable countries. And it is triggering innovative projects such as the work with which CORD is involved in Cambodia.

So for me it's been a roller coaster ride, akin to learning a whole new language. I just pray world leaders in Copenhagen will have the courage and wisdom to make the right decisions.



CORD CAMBODIA ADDRESSES CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE

CORD in Cambodia is currently working with international and local organisations on helping local communities prepare for and address the effects of climate change.

Recent studies cite Cambodia as one of the most vulnerable countries in Southeast Asia. Almost 80% of Cambodians are poor rural farmers, yet despite significant evidence that the country is

already experiencing a change in climate people have very limited knowledge of the implications.

In early 2010 CORD and our local partners will launch a programme of awareness raising and education. Because of financial constraints this will be with a limited number of communities whilst further funds are sought to support the initiative. More details soon.

TOILET TWINNING GAINS MOMENTUM



WORLD'S ORIGINAL THINK TANK SIGNS UP ITS LONDON LOOS

One of the world's most prestigious centres of creative thinking, the Royal Society of Arts, has joined the ranks of global Toilet Twinners, linking their public loos with latrines in the tiny war-torn country of Burundi.

For over 250 years the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce has been a cradle of enlightenment thinking.

Shirley Gibson, Facilities Manager at their historic London headquarters, says: 'The RSA has been at the forefront of creative thinking for centuries.

Toilet Twinning is just that - an imaginative approach to highlighting a desperate global need. We had no hesitation in twinning our toilets and are delighted at the worldwide support the campaign is receiving.'



FAMOUS WC COMPANY ENGAGED

Meanwhile the legendary sanitaryware company Thomas Crapper has joined the global Toilet Twinning movement, twinning

three of its traditional high quality loos.

The famous Victorian's name won him a place in history. He was the superior sanitary engineer in Britain of his day, holding four royal warrants and supplying plumbing and fittings for the Sandringham estate as well as fittings at Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey.

'Thomas Crapper was a great sanitary pioneer who over a hundred years ago brought sanitation to the people of Britain. It is shocking that all this time later almost half of the people in the world still don't have a crapper of their own,' said MD Simon Kirby. *'I am proud to be the first loo manufacturer to become a Toilet Twinner!'*





EMMANUEL NDAYABARWA: OUR MAN IN RUTANA PROVINCE

CORD Burundi's Emmanuel Ndayabarwa has clocked up 7,150 kms - 4,400 miles - riding deep into the African bush to check on progress and log and record the coordinates of over 700 Toilet Twinning latrines.

The toilets, scattered amongst the remote hill villages of Giharo commune, Rutana Province, are being built by Burundians returning after 14 years' exile in refugee camps in neighbouring Tanzania. Checking on the progress of the latrines and then

recording the map coordinates as part of the world's first Toilet Twinning campaign is painstaking work for Emmanuel, who is travelling the rough and ready tracks on his trusted Yamaha 125 DT.

Made of hand made bricks and with corrugated roofs, concrete slabs and deep pits, the latrines are bringing sanitation and improved health to thousands of people who lost everything in the long civil war.

So far, thanks in no small measure to Emmanuel's journeys, Toilet Twinning has raised more than £50,000 for CORD's work.

Arap Moi

Taking the sting out of a violent past

CORD's Country Director in Uganda, Dennis Bailey, tells his remarkable story.

When seven women beekeepers in Kitgum decided not just to sit back and watch the Ugandan Government's war with the notorious Lord's Resistance Army take its toll on their lives, they were misunderstood. They were misunderstood particularly by men who thought they had ambitions above their station: traditionally beekeepers were men.

Arap Moi was not one of the architects of the Northern Ugandan war. He was abducted when he was fifteen and committed unconscionable violence on behalf of the LRA. When he was demobilised Arap Moi found bees much easier to live with than the people he'd previously terrorised. Bees sting when they don't like you. Communities do something else entirely: they stigmatise.

Twenty five-year-old Arap Moi became a recluse. He took to the shelter of his apiary beneath the trees at the centre of his family's reclaimed land. His family all dead, his only conversation was in response to the soporific hum of his hives.

About the same time that Arap Moi returned home from the war, the women formed the Kitgum Women Beekeepers Association and, in partnership with CORD, began training beekeepers in earnest. It was then that they came upon Arap Moi, humming love songs to bees in the bush. Ironically Arap Moi's favourite music is actually the music of Sting!

The women were immediately impressed. The cleanliness of Arap's apiary was exemplary, the quality of his honey thick and rich orange and his hives were 100% colonised. Arap Moi had also learned how to divide and multiply hives and to rear queens. KITWOBEE women risked



what most women wouldn't: they talked with the ex-combatant and discovered the secret of his success. Not surprisingly, they wanted to suggest he join them. But they couldn't.

Arap Moi's most significant disqualification from membership of KITWO BEE was not his youth, or that he was a notorious ex-combatant of the LRA. It was that he was a man.

Constitutionally, KITWO BEE does not allow men to be members unless they have an association with women beekeepers. But what woman would want to associate with Arap Moi? KITWO BEE faced a dilemma. They would have to change their constitution.

When KITWO BEE did just that at its AGM in March Arap Moi, teenage abductee, ex-combatant, repentant recluse, was among the first men to have his application for associate membership

approved. He has gone on to become one of KITWO BEE's principal trainers, teaching others to multiply hives and often visiting the very homes of people who once feared him.

Last year he gained the distinction of producing more honey than any other person in the Acholi region.

Arap Moi's story illustrates how after conflict communities can and do reconstruct themselves through dialogue - in this instance a dialogue around bees. The software of reconstruction often begins within the community, but this must translate into policy change that has concrete implications, contributes to reducing poverty and to putting back what war has stolen.

***God bless Africa,
Guard her people,
Guide her leaders and
Grant her peace.***

a celebration of CHRISTMAS

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CORD Partners with Warwick Business School

Five MBA students at Warwick Business School are partnering with CORD to help develop our social networking programme.

Their assignment will cover the academic year and draw on the students' business experience in the aviation, banking and manufacturing sectors.

CORD's Chief Executive Brian Wakley, himself an MBA, said that engaging with the prestigious Business School was an exciting proposition.

'Communications and the world of new media are vital components of CORD's operation, and offer huge potential to engage with more people in the work of building peace' he said.

'With the complexities of running programmes and offices across three continents and the varied remit of our work, the students have a wide brief to further involve the public which I am sure they will find challenging. Equally we look forward to implementing some of their ideas.'

We would like to thank...

Tim Suffield, Martin Whitmore, Steve Shaw & Simon Barnard for £2,500 raised by cycling from John O'Groats to Lands End.

Lindsay Poole of Wine Poole for £585 proceeds of her CORD Ladies' Lunch.

St John's church & St John's school in Blackpool for supporting Toilet Twinning .

Former international athlete **David Moorcroft OBE & numerous churches, schools, companies & individuals** for twinning their toilets.

Jude Simpson, stand-up poet, writer & entertainer, for penning an ode to her loo.

Automotive Technology Ltd & Berica Ltd for supporting our work in refugee camps on the Darfur/Chad border.

Student interns **Richard Cressey, Katherine Freeman, Arum Mahtani, Lydia Nash, Chernise Neo, Alex Hoseason & Andy Hood** for their work in the UK office.

Gillian Poole of DaffoGills for the Christmas Floral Workshop in support of CORD at Alveston Manor Hotel, Stratford upon Avon on November 26.

Schools and churches in Coventry, Leamington Spa, Rugby, Warwick, Claverdon, Wootton Wawen, Southam, Kenilworth, Shipston & Kineton for welcoming a CORD speaker.

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