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# News

Issue 3 - 2010

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Empowering people  
to find a path to peace

  
Peace through Partnership


# Welcome/

**The notion of the Big Society may be the new mantra for Britain, but as Cord is discovering there are plenty of initiatives in our programmes that show the idea is nothing new; the developing world's a hotbed of self help ideas which we, in the UK, would do well to replicate.**

What's more, as our peacebuilding intent continues to help more than 300,000 people find resolution to years of conflict, it is gratifying to reflect on the growing empowerment of those for whom life has proved a continual struggle against poverty, adversity and the lack of basic human rights.

In striving to effect long term change, last year we spent £3.1million in Africa and South East Asia: a growth in expenditure of more than 40%. Building peace through partnership has become our mantra. It's a long and difficult journey and not an inconsiderable challenge. Yet together with you, our supporters, we are confident it is one we can achieve.

A peaceful world is more than just a vision. It's a development necessity, a moral imperative and vital for the future prosperity of us all. /



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# Voices of peace/

Gaston Sindayigaya, Cord Burundi



**A survey of Burundians benefiting from Cord's programme in the hill villages of Rutana Province shows that they are 95% satisfied with the improvements to their lives.**

Gaston Sindayigaya, Cord's Field Office Manager in Rutana Province said he has no doubts the work is contributing to building peace amongst those who suffered exile during years of brutal civil war.

"Cord's major five year regeneration project involves building schools and houses, rehabilitating springs and gravity

schemes for clean drinking water and promoting social cohesion within the communities," he said.

"All these activities have the effect of healing the broken hearted and preventing further violence," said Gaston. "I am really encouraged to be positive about the progress we and the Burundian hill villagers are making."

Education for the children and the provision of water were rated the biggest benefits by those who are being supported as they rebuild their lives after returning from years in exile in neighbouring Tanzania.

Gaston says he is deeply motivated to do his work by compassion for humanity.

"My goal is to work hard to alleviate poverty by responding to people's needs in the long and short terms so that eventually they become self sufficient," he explained.

"What frustrates me sometimes is that there are still some potential dangers to the peace we are building, like land issues and the security situation, which is erratic in this region."

Gaston has high hopes for

the future because the force for peace as practiced by Cord Burundi is supported by the majority of the population. The government is encouraging peace initiatives, alongside international and national bodies who are responding to the people's basic needs and so preventing potential violent conflicts. /

# Cambodia's Courageous Women Leaders/

**Kheng Sophal is an Executive Director of Cord's Cambodian partner the 'Positive Women of Hope Organisation'. Kheng, 31, is a single mother living with HIV. Here she explains how Cord has helped PWHO to improve its operations and so give better support to hundreds of women who find themselves similarly affected.**

"I am very self-motivated and committed to becoming a good leader and to sharing my experience with staff. I am keen to support other women like me living with HIV and those diagnosed with AIDS."

"PWHO face a number of difficulties; things like mobilising members of local saving groups, creating educational campaigns

and ways of improving community development. Many poor women can't get involved because they don't have transport; they've had hardly any schooling and are often illiterate, and are discriminated against by the community."

"Another problem is that the government has taken over HIV and AIDS services, but now clients have to wait almost an entire day to get treatment because of a lack of resources and medical staff."

"I also faced a lot of challenges at work. That's when I turned to Cord for help with mentoring, coaching and training. I am very happy with their support; so far it's been invaluable. The team helped us to improve our report writing, advised us on how to

manage staff and to operate on a daily basis, as well as developing a three-year strategic plan."

"I have become more confident in my role as a leader and manager. I've learnt to reflect on problems and to turn what I have learnt into practice. Cord's support has really benefited all our staff so that we are all able to work more effectively."

"Now we are better able to make a significant difference in helping those living with HIV and AIDS, particularly the women". /



“My self-motivation in overcoming my personal challenges and finding I could relate to other women in the same situation encouraged me to become a HIV and AIDS worker”

**Teng Kangrang is a 36 years old mother of two who faced extreme poverty when she discovered she was HIV positive, contracted from her husband who died five years ago. One of her daughters, aged 13, is also infected. At first Kangrang lost hope, thinking she would die. She felt extremely vulnerable with few possessions, little education or skills, no job or knowledge of how to cure her disease.**

“It was a really challenging time,” says Kangrang. “Eventually I realised I had to move to Phnom Penh to find a way to treat my HIV infection and to look for work.”

“I learnt how to make a living making women’s clothing. Then I got help and support from

the Positive Women of Hope Organisation, I learnt how to use antiretrovirals to stop me from getting sick. This inspired me to become a member of PWHO.”

“Living in my community in Kandal province I realised that many Cambodian women who have HIV and AIDS are marginalised and face huge difficulties; they have no information, people misunderstand their condition and they have unequal access to medicine. Many have no alternative but to sell everything they own, including their homes, to pay medical fees and to give them an adequate standard of living because they aren’t aware of their rights.”

“My self-motivation in overcoming my personal challenges and finding

I could relate to other women in the same situation encouraged me to become a HIV and AIDS worker.”

“I’ve been working for PWHO as an HIV and AIDS coordinator for five years, helping provide women with home-based care services, counselling, and education on sexual reproductive health. I’m challenging myself to become a development practitioner.”

“I have strong hopes that I will be able to keep healthy and earn enough money to see my two beloved daughters through higher education so they will have good jobs. My dearest wish is to live longer with them, to see them grow up,” says Kangrang. /



Photos: Samnang Chum/Cord



Photo: Richard Wainwright

# Chief Students Bring Democracy to the Classroom

**The 34,000 children engaged in our education programmes and the 2,000 who enjoy sport and play in our child friendly spaces are learning to work and play together harmoniously, as friends.**

An exciting innovation in the Refugee schools of Chad is the 'Chief Student' scheme, where one young person manages the class when the teacher is absent, leading the others in a given activity, including reading and preparing homework.

All Chief Students are democratically elected by their peers and have a mandate to maintain order and discipline in the classroom, liaise with the teachers and Headmaster and to advocate on behalf of their classmates.

Oumaima Oumar Idriss is 11 years old and lives in Bredjing camp.

She is a pupil at Aboubakar Primary School in grade 5 where, after a voting campaign, she has been elected as the Chief Student.

Oumaima says she feels proud to lead other students and to keep order and discipline in her classroom. She is also very happy as she enjoys interacting with the teaching staff on a regularly basis. For her this process is a preparation for life in leading any group and a way to value girls in her society.

More importantly the scheme is introducing this young generation of refugee children to the culture of democracy, which is lacking in their country. It is hoped and expected that in the future such opportunities will ensure that Sudan experiences fair, transparent and democratic elections. /



# Solar Cooking a Real Breakthrough for Women in Chad Camps/

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**Cord is tackling the huge problems surrounding the gathering and use of firewood in the Sudanese refugee camps with a major shift to harnessing solar energy.**

The all day job of venturing four hours distance away from camp and two hours scavenging for wood means children are not at school, women are vulnerable to sexual attack, there is conflict with the Chadian community and the environment is being irrevocably destroyed.

Cord invited 'Tchad solaire' and 'Bolivia Inti-Sud' to Gaga Camp to demonstrate that it is possible to cook food with solar

energy and to trial a prototype brought from Europe, by brewing tea in Cord's compound.

The team visited the markets in N'Djamena and Abéché and found that all the necessary materials to replicate the cooker are available locally.

In Gaga Camp three focus groups were very keen to assemble the oven, impatient to see for themselves if it was possible to cook this way.

Outside in the sun, more than 30 people came to watch for five successive days of cooking pans of rice and tea - even those who had not been invited! It was important for them to see for themselves if the food was edible.

Word had spread and even 'The Voice of OUADDAI Radio' came 50 miles from Abéché to cover the story.

## Result: Incredible!

Everyone was astonished! The rice tasted good, it wasn't burnt in the pan, people clapped and said that this was a real success. So solar cooking became a reality, with 100 families lined up to pilot the cookers. It is estimated a cooker will cost €200 to import or €150 to make locally.

"To cook with solar beams is a dream for me. I saw the demonstration and it's very impressive!" said Housna Souleymane, Bredjing Camp, "This is an historic day for me".

"Cord is looking for solutions to the big problems that women have in their daily lives: I do not know how to say thank you." said another woman, this time from Treguine Camp, "We shall share what we learnt with our friends in the camp and those who remained in Darfur."

Bolivia Inti-Sud estimate that using a solar cooker reduces CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by 1 tonne a year according to the international protocol 'Gold Standard'. /



“Solar cooking is a solution to the problem of refugee women having to search for wood for cooking food. I am old but I am very happy to have had this experience [today]”

Hawa Abdel Mollah



# Burundi Footballers Kick Off for Peace/

**September 21 will see Cord Burundi organising a special 'Peace One Day' football match between youngsters to highlight the annual day of peace being marked with similar fixtures around the globe.**

This is the third year that Cord has added Burundi to the list of 192 UN member countries supporting cooperation and unity through the power of football on this day of worldwide ceasefire and non-violence.

2010 is the Year of Peace and Security in Africa and the African Union has made a strong commitment to Peace Day.

"2010 will be a year of many challenges," said Mr. Lamamra Ramtane, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security.

"While in the past few years the number of violent conflicts has

been significantly reduced thanks to the collective determination and efforts of Africa, far too many African countries remain trapped in a vicious cycle of conflict with its attendant deadly consequences," he added.

"Armed conflicts in Africa kill thousands of people every year; create humanitarian disasters; wipe out livelihoods of ordinary people; and make sustainable economic development impossible. There is also a more profound loss: the destruction of hope for a better future."

100 million people are expected to mark the day, allowing life saving initiatives such as mass child vaccinations to happen. Games will be played worldwide in major stadiums, local pitches and rough sand. /

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



# DIY Approach Proves a Winning Formula/

**After six years of working alongside the Sudanese refugees from Darfur, Cord no longer provide handouts; instead we involve people far more in managing their lives. This is why we work with the Associations of Children's Parents (APEs) in managing our schools programme.**

The APEs from Gaga camp constructed fences around their schools so that the students can learn without being disturbed by people passing by. It's a simple proof that APEs understand that their children's education is key to the future of their country and a way of breaking the chain of poverty.

Cord's annual forum for APEs from all four of the camps where we operate was a chance for those from Gaga to share their successful experience of

getting the fences erected and for generally involving the community more in practical issues. They stressed its not an overnight intervention but a learning process. It's a best practice which the teams from the other three camps promised to replicate.

Just after returning to their camps APEs from Bredjing and Tréguine started to mobilise their communities. When we visited people were working hard, some making or transporting bricks and others sand. Everybody was doing something in the schools because the APEs are also involved in constructing and repairing classrooms.

Empowering the refugees to actively resolve their own needs and problems has to be a positive way forward. /

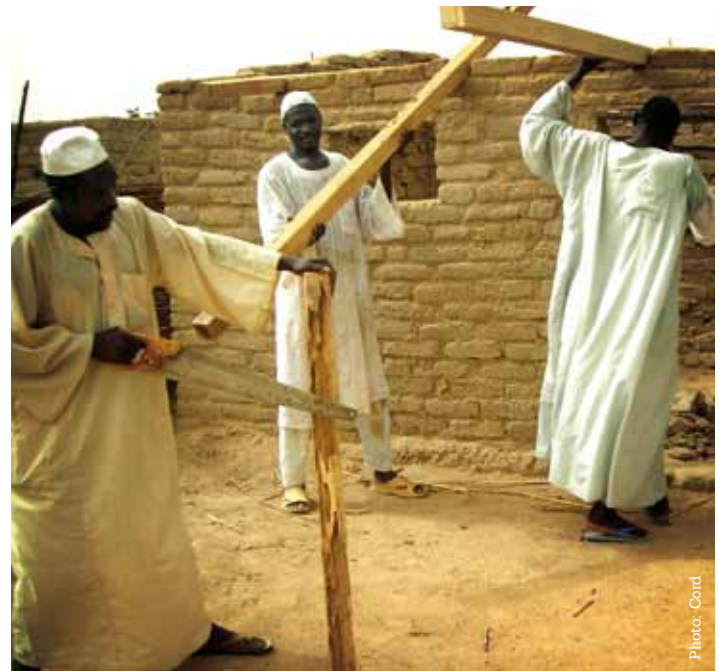


Photo: Cord

# Cord Asia Expands into Laos/

## **Cord Asia has begun establishing a programme in Laos at an exciting time in the country's development.**

Building on our highly successful programme in Cambodia, Cord has been invited by Concern Worldwide to take over responsibility for their Laos civil society projects.

This is an exciting time in Laos; it's the first time since the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic was established in 1975 that organisations have been allowed to exist outside of the government's domain.

A recent decree legally recognising "non-profit associations" means that local organisations are able to independently manage their funds, employ staff and develop

programmes to address a range of Laos' social and environmental issues.

While Cord awaits its official permit to operate in country, we are working under Concern Worldwide. Since July, Cord advisors have been meeting with representatives from a variety of new organisations to see how best we can offer them learning and support as they develop.

Capacity Development Coordinators Manininh Sihaphom and Syviengkeo Bounlutay, who previously worked for Concern Worldwide, have joined the Cord team. "The non-profit associations are able to work all over the country, in the villages and remote areas, and are able to do a lot to advance the development of Laos. I think that if

they are able to work closely with government, everyone will benefit, aiding poverty eradication in Laos PDR," says Manininh.

The Cord advisors have already organised a 2-day fundraising workshop, which was also designed to bring the various organisations together to share experiences and find ways of working more cooperatively.

"It's our belief that as we work with these organisations to build stronger, more accountable management and increase creativity, so they'll be able to serve increasingly greater numbers of communities; to improve their quality of life on a scale that will have significant impact on the most

vulnerable groups throughout the country and on Lao society," said Cord Chief Executive Brian Wakley. /

*Right: Cord Senior Capacity Development Advisor, Luisa Perticucci, advises Ms. Inthana Bouphasavanh, the director of the Women's Rights Study center (WRSC) as she develops a project to train law students about women's rights and the UN's Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The aim of the project is to transform the legal system in Laos by raising awareness among the country's future lawyers and judges.*



Photo: Dennis McMahon/Cord

**Cord**  
Lead Through Partnership

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# A Huge Thank You to:

**Wright Hassell for offering Cord supporters a discount on will writing. For further information contact Kit Lawry 01926 315301 - also look out for more detail in November's Cord News!**

Churches and schools in Leamington, Balsall Common, Stratford-upon-Avon, Coventry, Warwick, Nuneaton, Stanway, Alcester and Kenilworth.

The Mayor of Leamington, Councillor Robert Cunliffe for his Charity Theatre Evening.

Anne Elliott of EMA, Colin Durrant of Colins IT, Martin Sparrow of Suretax Accounting and Monica Moody of Minuteman Press for corporate sponsorship and support for Cord.

Harrison Beale and Owen, Poppleton and Appleby and Warwick Racecourse for making the Ladies Race Day a fundraising success (pictured right).

Zoe Jones and Seasons Restaurant Leamington for a Jamie at Home evening.

Rebecca Fahy and Jigsaw for invaluable website work with Cord's Ugandan partners, YSA.

Lord Leycester Hospital, Warwick and Wine Poole for a Cord Winetasting evening.

Cord's Community Ambassadors - join this expanding group, have fun and meet some interesting people while making a real contribution towards building peace - do give us a call! /



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