

Photo: David Morphew

News

Issue 5 - 2011

Working together
for a peaceful future


Cord
Peace through Partnership

Welcome/

2011 has been a turbulent year. A time of sea change in the Arab world, the birth of a new African country that is Southern Sudan and a global recession that affects us all.

For Cord our vision remains the same - the creation of a world where peace, dignity and human rights are fully realised; where sustainable peace is achievable by people, communities and institutions working together; where the problems that cause violent conflict are addressed - and ways of resolving conflict without recourse to violence are adopted.

Violent conflict creates new pathways into poverty as infrastructure is destroyed, livelihoods lost and human rights are

violated. Mistrust grows between communities and the very institutions that are supposed to support them. Instead of working together, the poor become trapped in the new dynamic of poverty and conflict.

This is why Cord continues to work at effective peace building, addressing development needs and seeking to build trust between communities.

'Changes in the societies at the very bottom must come predominantly from within; we cannot impose it on them,' writes Paul Collier in his book 'Bottom Billion'.

This is why we aim to strengthen national and local institutions, by working alongside individuals and communities in

developing their abilities to sustain long term peace.

Our partners across Africa and S.E. Asia are being encouraged to shape their own futures as they are guided and mentored by our in-country teams.

There remain numerous challenges as we look forward to 2012. Yet we are confident, that with your support, we can continue to bring real change.

As we anticipate the holy season may we thank you for your commitment to our work during the past twelve months.

We wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

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Voices of peace/

Annie Turnbull, Cord Africa Programmes Operations Manager

Cord staff member Annie Turnbull shares how she came to work in peacebuilding.

As our six-seater plane lifted off from Hadjer Hadid in Eastern Chad, I waved at my colleagues standing beside the airstrip and thought how my Monday morning commute has changed over the years! I still haven't forgotten my dreary hour-long bus rides to get to a job I felt no connection with.

From a young age I was inspired by my parents' deep commitment to social justice. I remember, aged six, standing outside a supermarket with my Mum collecting money for Prisoners of Conscience overseas. After university I was determined to find a career that would involve working with people from other cultures for peace, but I wasn't sure exactly how to get there.

I found myself working in a busy sales team for a national company. The longer

I stayed the further away my 'dream job' seemed, and the heavier my heart felt as I made that morning commute.

After a short while I decided to volunteer for Amnesty International in South East Asia. That experience opened doors for me and my career in development took off you could say; but even as I found myself working in Northern Uganda a few years later, I knew that something was still missing.

I was managing projects for a large health charity, supporting refugees under violent attack by the Lord's Resistance Army. The refugee camps were huge and had been there for many years. The work was important, but for me it was only responding to a symptom of violence, without addressing the underlying conflict which had created this desperate situation.

It was increasingly clear to me that I felt a particular call to focus on projects that

met peoples' basic needs but also built peace.

Now I feel privileged to have found in Cord an organisation, and colleagues, with whom I share so many values and hopes for the future. As Operations Manager for the Africa Regional Programme, I am based in the UK but work with Cord teams in Chad and Burundi monitoring projects and planning new funding bids to make Cord's vision for peace a reality.

My journey to work these days can take in anything from the road into Leamington Spa, to camel trains in Chad or banana plantations in Burundi. It's busy and challenging work but I wouldn't have it any other way!





“I can’t wait to try out our new classrooms! I come here to learn how to write. I’d like to be a teacher when I grow up!” says 9 year old Abdella Hamsa Mohamed, Zounoureine School, Treguine camp.

Autumn school report/

The new school year in Chad is now in full swing - and there have been some changes in the refugee camp schools that are pleasing children, parents and teachers alike!

Improved facilities, including latrines, are attracting record numbers of children to enrol. With new classrooms and equipment in four schools in Bredjing and Treguine camps, children no longer need to be taught underneath trees outdoors or in classrooms in dire need of repair.

“We used to start registration at the beginning of the new school year. Now we have to start three weeks earlier, in September! There are more children to register and it means that we can be ready to start with lessons at the beginning of October,” says Schools Inspector Mahmat Adoum Omar.

Everyone agrees the increase in numbers is great to see, but it’s about more than an academic education.

“We try to create a culture of peace in all the schools. We teach the practice of non-violence and a spirit of tolerance,” explains Bredjing Schools Inspector Abu Bakar Zakaria.

Although progress has been considerable there are still some classrooms in need of repair. However, in tough economic times, international donor funding for construction has been halved. With the money that is available Cord plans to build as many new classrooms as possible whilst retaining some budget for repairs to others.

Final comments: Excellent progress, still more to do.

Meanwhile two new schools in Burundi have opened in record time/



Buhogo and Kiremba elementary schools in Giharo and Gitanga communes were completed in just two months. The old building at Kiremba housed 639 pupils in just six classrooms; the additional six rooms should go a long way to relieving the overcrowding.

There was no school for miles around in Buhogo. The new building has plenty of space to create a school garden, but Kiremba has to negotiate with neighbours and the local authority to find a suitable space.

Cord and local villagers have also built a teachers' house at Bukeno School, leading to an immediate increase in staff, most

of whom live some 20km away; too far to walk on a daily basis.

The school also has latrines and a rain water collection system, giving the children access to clean water and a basic understanding of good hygiene. But without electricity teachers remain frustrated that they can't see to mark homework and plan lessons after dark.

The local Hill leader is mobilising parents to build a football ground; encouraging them to focus on what they can do to make positive changes for their children with what little they have.

Teacher Audace Mdayishimiye is helping build the foundations for peace with a generation living with the consequences of conflict.



Food enterprises boost for Burundi/



An enterprising pineapple juice production plant has opened in Rutana – the first to capitalise on what is a new crop for Burundi’s rural communities.

Pineapple is cultivated in both the valleys and mountains, is resistant to a harsh climate and is mainly grown to sell rather than as a daily food. Training from Cord has just been completed and the first juice sampled – delicious!

The production unit will employ around 10 members of the Koratumenyekane Association, who have bought pineapples via the local market whilst they wait for their own crops to mature.

With the unit ideally placed on a junction between the road from Gitega and the capital Bujumbura to Rutana, they expect to sell the juice across a wide area.

Their aim is to produce 500,000 litres of juice a year.

Women unite over cassava

Cord’s partner in Burundi, ADDF (the Association for the Defence of Women) is a powerful force in the country, with three projects across Rutana, Bubanza and Bujumbura Rural Province affecting ten communes. With Cord’s support they are achieving great things.

One new venture is a shop milling cassava flour and selling for a profit. Women work in shifts, breaking up the dry cassava ready for the milling machine.

It’s hard work, but the women say toiling together helps them focus on how they are improving their lives by earning a living.

Cassava is a vital staple for about 500 million people, its starchy roots producing more food energy per unit of land than any other basic crop. Eaten as a vegetable its leaves also provide vitamins and protein.

Get ready for Christmas with o

Christmas Cards



▲ **Bearing Gifts**

127 x 127mm

With foil finishing



▲ **Peace**

85 x 170mm

With glitter finishing



◀ **Holy Family**

170 x 85mm

With foil finishing



▶ **Away in a Manger**

125 x 90mm

With foil finishing



▶ **While Shepherds Watched**

125 x 90mm

With foil finishing

All cards are one design per pack and show the Cord logo and the greeting "May peace and joy be yours this Christmas and throughout the coming year"

Our cards and gifts!

Essential Gifts and Peace Heroes

With Christmas just around the corner don't forget our range of essential gifts that help make peace a reality.

Our gifts are practical presents with a priceless message that will have real impact where it matters most. From solar cookers, to literacy packs, footballs and our very own Peace Heroes - you'll be spoilt for choice. Gifts start from as little as £5.

So if you're stuck for gift ideas and are wondering "socks or smellies, choc's or jellies...", try our peaceful prezies for size!

All our gifts come with a special gift card and the money will support peacebuilding in Africa and Asia.

The full range is available online at cord.org.uk/shop or call **01926 315301** for a catalogue.

Order online, by post or by phone before 14 December.



Cambodia's floods highlight climate change/

Severe flooding in Cambodia poses a serious risk to the country's food security says the National Committee for Disaster Management.

S. E. Asia's worst flooding in a decade has spread across 17 of Cambodia's 24 provinces, affecting over one million people, causing 247 deaths, forcing the evacuation of more than 34,000 homes and destroying some 200,000 hectares of rice fields, nearly ten percent of the country's harvest.

More than 1,000 schools and some 2,400km of roads were destroyed, while health officials say the flooding has prolonged the dengue fever season.

The Cambodia team continue to offer support to our partners in providing

emergency relief to those who are badly affected. Both PNKS and Banteay Srei are working with the local authorities and others to respond effectively. Banteay Srei are providing emergency relief in the form of medical supplies and agriculture seeds to families in one commune in the Pourk district.

Climate change is seen as a source of increasing vulnerability for Cambodia's poor.

About 80 percent of Cambodia's 14 million people live in rural areas, the vast majority dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Losses to the rice harvest mean farmers are turning to borrowing - commonly done at usury rates - driving them into a risky cycle.

According to the UN Development

Programme (UNDP), shorter and more intense rainy seasons, combined with longer and drier seasons are expected to significantly alter the country's agricultural landscape. Predicted rises in temperature could have devastating effects on the staple rice crops.

"Local action and local solutions are what is needed most," says Tin Ponlok, Deputy Director General of climate change for the Cambodian Ministry of Environment. "This is where we can make the most difference."

Cord will continue to support local partners in Cambodia in finding the best way forward amidst the crisis.



Photo: Flooding in Bangkok, Thailand. October 2011
Philip Roeland/Flickr



Disinterest in Darfur

A Human Rights Watch report laments the world's apparent disinterest in Darfur since South Sudan's independence in July.

The report claims that Sudan stepped up bombing attacks on civilians, displacing more than 70,000 people largely from communities linked to rebel groups.

Endorsing the findings is veteran Sudan researcher Erich Reeves, who maintains that Darfur has been bombed more than a hundred times this year.

Writing in Dissent Magazine Mr Reeves mourns the loss of the UN Panel of Experts for Darfur set up in 2005 and says that Sudan's government has succeeded in closing down the most authoritative body investigating reports of indiscriminate aerial attacks, and those targeting civilians.

Peace is paramount for Sudanese in Chad/



As the year draws to a close we asked three of our education team in Bredjing refugee camp in Chad to tell us why peace is paramount to the young generation of Sudanese growing up in their care:

Abdarhamane Ibrahim Abdallah, Teacher

“Peace is one of the names of God, the Creator. Without peace the world would not exist. It’s the reason why, as an educator I must always strive for peace by teaching children, students and parents to have the spirit of tolerance, forgiveness and peaceful coexistence.”

Alfaziz Ibrahim Idriss, Teacher

“Peace is a blessing from God and is also the basis of society. If there is no peace, then there can be no development and progress in human lives. It’s because of the lack of peace in their home land in Sudan that these children are refugees in Chad.”

Aboubakar Zakaria Mahamat, School Inspector

“Peace is the top priority for all who live down here. Violence is the enemy of peace. That is why I am involved in educating children to practice the culture of peace by having love for one another, a spirit of solidarity and above all, forgiveness. Violence doesn’t solve problems, it makes things worse. I always say to our children in the camp that because of the lack of peace in our country we have become residents of the refugee camps. So peace is sacred. Without peace no one can achieve.”

Business partnership bears fruit for Cord/



Cord has joined forces with the fine food company Cotswold Fayre to launch the Peace Pieces snack pack into the retail market.

The ethically sourced pack of dried fruits – including papaya, goji berries, raisins, apricots, pineapple and cranberries from eight countries - will be distributed through 1,200 fine food retailers, farm shops, delicatessens and hotels.

“Peace Pieces are a deliciously simple way of helping achieve a more peaceful world for some of the bottom billion- people living on less than a dollar a day,” said Cord Chief Executive Brian Wakley.

“We are delighted to be working with Cotswold Fayre to distribute the brand nationwide,” he added.

“We are so pleased to be working alongside Cord in taking their Peace Pieces to market in the UK, as they dovetail beautifully with both our existing high quality range food products and other charitable initiatives,” said Cotswold Fayre Managing Director Paul Hargreaves.

“We look forward to bringing revenue to Cord as sales increase amongst independent retailers,” he added.

Watch out for more news on Peace Pieces in the coming months.

Yes, I'd like to make a difference/



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Gift Aid is worth an extra 25p on top of every pound you give to us - and it costs you nothing!

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You must provide your name, address, postcode and tick the box for us to be able to claim Gift Aid on your donation.

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Your data will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Cord does not sell or share your data with other organisations for marketing purposes.

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