



CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL PEACE SERVICE

chips

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"Practical, grassroots, biblical, sustainable peacemaking"

From Mini-Massacre to Minor Miracle

The CHIPS Border Resettlement Project was our response to the massacre at Lomaratoit in 2001. It comprised settling a mixed population of 25,000 Karamojong and Iteso along a 55km stretch of road between Olilim and Iriri in the south east and Apeitolim and Okoboi in the north west. We gave ourselves ten years to complete the project. Planning began in 2005.

Early in 2007 there was nobody living in Apeitolim or Okoboi until we moved there. Safety and security were poor and the people were afraid to move back. When it was known that CHIPS were moving in, villagers started to trickle back. We provided seed and tools to assist them to get started.

The crucial issue was expressed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) at Amuria, who said that CHIPS didn't just talk peace but they lived peace and were willing not only to live at grassroots level but even to settle in places not considered safe. Within two and half years the population has risen to 14,000. A recent survey carried out by Medicins Sans Frontieres reported that there was little or no malnutrition there. In fact many are approaching subsistence and a few have surpassed it.

We are not quite sure how to describe what has happened in Apeitolim. When one person is healed by Jesus Christ we call it a miracle. But we don't know what words to use when 14,000 people are provided with a livelihood through the initiative of half a dozen simple Christian folk. For myself, a spectator in this development, I can only say that I am lost in wonder, love and praise and leave it all to God, who is Love.

We are greatly honoured that the First Lady of Uganda, Mrs Janet Museveni, who is also the State Minister for Karamoja Affairs, will be visiting the CHIPS Project at Apeitolim later this month.

I picked up the reins of CHIPS on 1st September, Susanne resigning owing to her mother's heart attack. We are grateful to her for her contribution to CHIPS and for Mark Cuthbert's work in 2006, 2007 and 2008.

During my recent visit in September/October 2009 we came to the conclusion that it was time for a period of consolidation at Apeitolim, so we are opening a second location for settlers 25 km along the border, at Okulonyo, which becomes the centre and pivot of the CHIPS Border Resettlement Project and the Uganda HQ of CHIPS ! It is in the middle of nowhere, in what used to be a Game Reserve, so the land is well fertilised and the soil is good. The CHIPS Base will have eight houses. An office and store is planned for early in 2010. Opposite is an

Army Detachment who have a borehole which we share. Unfortunately it is producing rusty water so CHIPS will be repairing it.

Unfortunately, I found that CHIPS finances were in poor shape. Indeed we were overdrawn. It has therefore become necessary to cut expenditure in Uganda. The team in Uganda was reduced by one third. Four team members were regrettably laid off. Bases at Iriri and Okoboi were closed while I was out there. The Base at Apeitolim was greatly reduced; for the time being expenditure will be halved.

We are therefore most grateful to 25 of you who have responded to the appeal by our Chairman, Eric Read, and have sent £7,000 by giving sums ranging from £5 to £2,000. Our main focus will be to provide seed and agricultural implements for those who come to settle around Okulonyo in the New Year. They will build simple houses and prepare land for planting in March/April. We need a further £40,000 to see us through this period to April 2010.

At Bix and Henley-on-Thames where I live, people say it is impossible. "How can 6-8 people settle 14,000 ?" Well, you could say that part of the answer lies in plenty of Self-help and Initiative on the one hand and little bureaucracy on the other. Secondly, they say "How can it cost only £100 per family ?" So I will try to explain.

The importance of CHIPS presence cannot be overestimated. It is true that CHIPS also provides: seeds and saucepans and hoes, and roofing poles for houses (we have approx 10,000 poles growing in our Tree Nurseries). Also the CHIPS team has expertise in Agriculture, Water Development, Community Development and Veterinary work (35 para-vets). CHIPS is recognised in NE Uganda as being skilled, knowledgeable, discreet, effective and prayerful. Nevertheless it is its presence that is most valued.

CHIPS is a very small initiative but God has multiplied our humble offerings and we have seen Him settling 14,000 people at Apeitolim/Okoboi, at a cost of £100 per family settled. However, we need £40,000 urgently to see us through to the end of the financial year, next March 2010, which is also the end of the Ugandan planting season, by which time we are praying that there will be a busy village of farmers at Okulonyo. At the moment we do not have enough money even to get us to Christmas, so please give generously. In any event, please pray for CHIPS. An email prayer letter should be available shortly.

This work is not done by human effort. It is Jesus Christ who is our Peace. God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Roy Calvocoressi

Reply Slip from: Name:
Address:

- I enclose a donation of £.....
- Please withdraw my name from the CHIPS Mailing list. I enclose a farewell gift of £.....
(If you wish to remain on the mailing list, we would be most grateful if you could contribute £10 - £25 per year to cover printing and postage costs.)
- Please send me a form so that I can make a monthly/quarterly/annual gift by direct debit.
- I would like to receive a bi-monthly prayer email. My email address is

Thank you very much for your support. Please return this slip to Sheila MacAulay Jordan, CHIPS, Bix Bottom Farm, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 6BH.