



chips update

CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL PEACE SERVICE

Summer 2011

“Practical, grassroots, biblical, sustainable peacemaking”

Welcome

Welcome to the latest CHIPS newsletter. We apologise for the long gap since our last one. It has been a very busy and exciting time for CHIPS. Paul Rose came back to UK after his first ten months in Ghana to raise the money to start up the planned CHIPS project there. He returned to Ghana in November 2010, having successfully raised enough funds to start the Ghana project. Thank you so much for all the generous one-off gifts towards the start up costs, and especial thanks to those who are now donating regularly for Ghana – but we still need more ! And thank you too to Paul's parents for organising his time in UK, and supporting him and CHIPS so well. Some news of Ghana can be found below.

Roy continues to look after CHIPS, and most recently paid yet another “final” visit to Uganda, accompanied by Michael Kennedy, a CHIPS veteran from Cyprus days. Michael will now take over Roy's responsibilities for Uganda, freeing Roy to look after the rest of CHIPS work and concentrate on the proposed Basic Training Course (see page 4). By way of introducing Michael, we include on page 2 his article “A legacy from ...” which we did not find space for in our last newsletter. News of Uganda is on page 3.

Thank you so much for your continued support.

Sheila Jordan, CHIPS Administrator

New Foundations laid in Ghana

Paul Rose writes:

Greetings once again from CHIPS Ghana! The Lord has continued to lead and protect us as we work for His Peace and to further His Kingdom here on earth. We've seen some great steps forward and are praying for more !

We were delighted in December 2010 to be granted a plot for our base in Nakpayili. The elders granted us a large area of around 4 acres on which to lay out our base, and we have constructed a local-style compound of 6 rooms for our team to be living in. As the construction work was going on, we received more and more visitors from all around, with many Konkombas and Nanumbas stopping as they passed the site to help mix the mud for the walls for a few minutes before continuing their journey!

This base gives us a physical anchor and shows the communities that we are here to stay - essential for us to be accepted and respected.

A young Konkomba Catholic man, Desmond, from Lungni, helped me with the work of setting up the base. We enjoyed working together and particularly the fellowship of our daily prayer and bible study times. He has been a great help and I've been introducing him to some of the vision and mission of CHIPS. He has now joined me as a team member.



Work begins on the CHIPS base in Ghana

While the team is forming and the base being founded, we started some small activities with the communities. Those we sent for training by anamed (Action for Natural Medicine) back in October last year have been busy using the skills they learned to treat their families and communities, with two already producing medicinal ointments for sale, to treat skin diseases, rheumatism and other illnesses. In Wulensi, we have more than 100 young artemisia annua trees being nursed by a community group, in preparation for planting. Then this artemisia can be used as a powerful malaria treatment. Schools in both Wulensi and Lungni have also become involved, with three in the process of starting up small medicinal gardens to encourage natural medicine among their students and the wider community.

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Finishing off a building – CHIPS base, Ghana

We're lacking rain seriously at the moment - more than three weeks since the last rain and it's delaying everyone's planting of groundnuts and maize, while threatening the yams that are already planted in the

mounds. Many could die before germination if the heat continues. Work around the base is going well, only that we also need rain. It will become a demonstration area for many activities. Our medicinal demonstration garden is fenced, planned and ready to be planted; some of the land around the house is to be farmed for vegetables and other crops so is being prepared; the tree nursery is progressing well, with more than 80 moringa trees ready for planting out, over 30 pawpaw (papaya) also germinated and growing well, plus Artemisia (malaria medicine), and some other seeds from local trees and plants we've been trying; lastly, there's a Foundations for Farming demonstration plot now fenced, weeded and mulched, ready for planting.

Our workers are doing really well and we will soon have two more joining CHIPS as team members, I hope.

With love in Christ, Paul

A Legacy from Emile Perreau-Saussine by Michael Kennedy

Fear is an effective and economical weapon in regions of conflict. It is easily provoked and can be manipulated to cause panic and flight leading to the abandonment of homes, land and livelihoods. While much is done to help dispossessed communities and refugees, CHIPS has chosen to work in abandoned areas; and particularly in abandoned rural areas where there is an integral link between home, land and livelihood.

In Cyprus, in the valley of the Dhiarisos, a CHIPS team was able to show through example that abandoned villages could be reoccupied and fear confronted. As we worked with former villagers, helping them in their fields and restoring their orchards, their interest in returning to their former homes grew. As they began to return we had to consider what type of community might develop. It would clearly be different from that which the residents had fled five years previously. What type of security arrangements would the returning villagers demand and how would they co-exist within the wider society they had feared? The CHIPS team would also face challenges and needed to prepare for life in a traditional Muslim community. Resettlement of the village would impact on the prospects for a wider political settlement of the Cyprus problem. We had to be sensitive to the legitimate civil authority which at that time had a Greek Orthodox Archbishop as head of state and followed a tradition in which a function of church and state was to bring about God's kingdom on earth.

It was suggested that we should draw inspiration from the Old Testament vision of the Celestial City and the description of the Kingdom of God which is explained in Matthew's gospel; a kingdom where the 'poor in spirit' have ownership. The parable of the fishing dragnet indicates that on earth the Kingdom is inclusive; that it is more precious than everything we own and yet as unpretentious as a grain of mustard seed or a yeast. Yet it has a great potential. But if we were looking in these words and parables for a master plan for social and political development we were mistaken. The political form and civil structure of the Kingdom is a mystery.

Emile Perreau-Saussine, whose death last year left many with a sense of loss, would have been able to help us and shed light onto our deliberations. Thankfully he has set out his contribution in an essay **'Heaven as a political theme in Augustine's City of God'**⁽¹⁾ How, he asks, can ordinary politics in an earthly city be related to heaven? He tells us that Augustine developed his political philosophy following the sack of Rome in 410CE by Alaric and the Vandals. Despite the disintegration of the western Christian Empire Augustine acknowledged that **'there is a practical imperative to bring about God's Kingdom here and now – to belong to it here and now.'**

'The city of God is sometimes called the heavenly city because its perfect state is achieved only in the afterlife. But insofar as men lead virtuous lives, it already exists here on earth.' The essay concludes that ... **'The boundary between the earthly city and the City of God is neither a sociological nor an historical one: it is in everyone's heart.'**

¹ (in Markus Bockmuehl and Guy Stroumsa (ed.), Paradise in late antiquity Cambridge U.P., 2009)
<http://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/contacts/staff/eperreausaussine/Heaven as a political theme in Augustine.pdf>

New Life for 20,000 in Apeitolim

In January 2001, Christian International Peace Service had been in Uganda ten years, working in the border area between Karamoja and Teso. On January 14th 2001 a senior local government official from Katakwi persuaded the army to send a Buffalo armoured personnel carrier to the CHIPS base at Lomaratoit on a punitive raid. Twelve people were killed: machine-gunned on their way to fetch water, including one CHIPS ex-worker and his family. Four years of hard work there, and many rewards, just disappeared overnight. It was so devastating – like a crucifixion – we felt there had to be resurrection – that God must have something wonderful in mind.

Roy went out to visit and restore the shattered team. They decided that the project needed to be strengthened. After many years of very slow progress, now something remarkable *has* happened – at the NW end of the borderlands at Okoboi and Apeitolim. Six CHIPS Team members built two new bases there in 2006- 2007. The population then was zero, but by August 2007, about 200 people had settled near the team; in March 2009 there were twelve new villages up to 6 kms from the CHIPS bases, of a thousand people each. By March 2011 a total of 20,000 people had settled in Apeitolim and Okoboi – in just four years.

Soil fertility is good there, so it is viewed as the potential breadbasket of Karamoja. CHIPS only gave each settler a hoe, a panga and some seeds, help with demarcating a plot of land, and gave tree-seedlings, building poles, and a welcome: the rest they have done themselves. God gave the increase through them.

Trade and transport now ply from Matany down through Apeitolim & Okoboi to Oditel, developing a new Teso/Karamoja artery; the map is being redrawn. Small businesses are emerging, even including a makeshift cinema! Intermarriages have already taken place. Society is being affected. Other NGOs are being attracted, increasing the resources available. What became a small parish from nothing is due to become a large Sub-county during the new financial year. Local government administration is reorganising itself to provide for the vast population. Optimists say the situation there has become “irreversible” now that the peace dividend is being experienced.



Roy Calvocoressi at the Handover Ceremony in Apeitolim. Here he is watching a display by a children's choir.

On March 25th 2011, after 20 years in Uganda, CHIPS handed over its ministry in Apeitolim & Okoboi to the Church of Uganda which becomes the fifth Church in the area. The CHIPS Team members have much to be proud of. We will now concentrate our efforts to the east of the River Okere, from the CHIPS Base at Okolonyo, 28 kms along the border.

New Beginnings at Okolonyo

Roy writes: On Saturday 26 March, following the Handover Ceremony of the previous day, CHIPS closed its base at Apeitolim and moved everything to Okolonyo. Charles Okello was left at Apeitolim to continue other work there. He and the Project Manager John Mark Okotel have left CHIPS.

Simon Peter Achia rejoined the Team until September. The Team becomes an oligarchy with a leadership team of four: Simon Peter Achia, Ephraim Osilimo, Mary Goretti representing women settlers, and John Ongom representing CHIPS Compound Workers. Simon Peter will be in charge of projects. A Project Manager will be brought in from outside to lead the project from September and a Treasurer with book-keeping expertise is being sought.

Michael Kennedy led our week at Okolonyo very effectively, concentrating on teaching the Team how to write a Project Proposal and how to manage a project. The Team were noticeably invigorated. Michael now nobly takes over the responsibility for CHIPS Uganda.

A Team survey on 30 March listed 56 households at Okolonyo and 180 households east of Okere, in three or four settlements. CHIPS has provided seed and implements for these settlers. We need an additional £11,000 to take Okolonyo to the next stage.

Speaking personally, apart from the pleasure of leading Bible studies, I experienced an outpouring of my soul. Together with James 3:13-18 this is my parting prayer for Uganda (see also Lamentations 2:11 & 12):

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Pour out my soul on fertile ground,
And purify its sins.
Heal its hurts and bleeding wounds:
The stress and strains of life.
Let it be seed for growth of peace,
With fruits of righteousness.
Remove all envy, strife and lies;
Bear enmity between both sides.
What fell on us you bear away
To God in heaven above
And let him reign in love and power
Before his Kingdom comes.
Holy Wisdom, full of peace,
empty yourself for us.

Roy Calvocoressi



Bishop George Erwau of Soroti and Bishop Joseph Abura of Moroto address the crowd at the Handover Ceremony in Apeitolim, 25 March.

Basic Introductory Training Course

CHIPS is hoping to start an ambitious new training programme later this year.

We will recruit four apprentice peacemakers, who will spend 18 months learning more about the CHIPS style of peacemaking and some of the many other things that they need to know to equip them to become effective peacemakers. They will then work for CHIPS outside the UK for a further three years. The training will be based in UK but will include visits of about four months each to the CHIPS projects in Uganda and Ghana.

We will soon be advertising for people to join this training programme, and make a commitment to spend the next four and a half years with CHIPS. Unfortunately, we cannot accept applications from people who are based outside UK at this time. Applications from those just leaving university will be considered.

Prayer Panel

We give thanks for the wonderful progress in Ghana, for the grant of a plot of land to build a base, for the successful building of the base, for all the good workers and team members there, and for Paul Rose.

We give thanks for the willingness of the Church of Uganda to take over at Apeitolim and Okoboi in Uganda, and for the miracle of 20,000 settlers having come there and created a peaceful buffer zone.

We would value prayer in the following directions:

- for Paul Rose and his team in Ghana
- for the initiatives around the base at Nakpayili and the activities of the local communities nearby
- for all the settlers in NE Uganda and for successful planting and growing of crops
- for the CHIPS Team in Uganda as they regroup at Okolonyo and for the money now needed
- for the recruitment of the right Project Manager, Treasurer and new team members to take the work in Uganda forward
- for CHIPS Trustees as they continue to explore exciting visions for the future expansion of CHIPS
- for continued success in fund-raising, public relations, etc, to enable CHIPS to grow
- for our plans and hopes for a training course in UK, and the recruitment of suitable trainees

Yes, I'd like to support CHIPS' work for PEACE

- Please send me more information about CHIPS
- I enclose a gift of £_____ for the work of CHIPS (cheques payable to "CHIPS")
- Please send me information on tax efficient and/or regular giving
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