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Newsletter July 2010

*Mobilising a Pan-African Social Movement*

# The Power of ACTION

This quarterly newsletter published by the Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD) provides an overview of our innovative approach and involvement in Africa-wide development issues, programmatic activities and partnerships.

## Mali: Milk Factory in the Timbuktu Region

The eagerly awaited dairy plant for local communities in Léré, located in the north of Mali, was officially opened on 25 February 2010. Léré is a pastoralist area which runs short of milk during the dry season due to lack of pasture for cattle. Now with the dairy plant the local population can benefit from daily supply of high quality fresh milk.



The Léré deputy district commissioner and other distinguished guest at the opening

At least 20 farmers deliver milk to the dairy plant on a daily basis. The milk is received by 4 plant production workers who initiate the processing activities. There is also a special management committee composed of milk producers, representatives of animal keepers associations and women's associations that have been set up by the local communities and one facilitator.

More than 40 heads of cattle have been providing an average of 3,778.5 litres of fresh milk every day between March and May 2010. These are mostly Zebu cows from the Peuls, the Maures and the Touaregs.

Facilities in the dairy plant include a pasteurizer unit and 6 gas cylinders to operate it, a solar refrigerator, an installation of solar panels, tools that enhance transformation and conservation of milk and diverse factory maintenance and production apparatus.

"The installation of this dairy plant is in line with the aims of the Malian government to provide adequate infrastructure that supports farmers' productivity as well as ACORD's vision for food sovereignty", said Sarah Théophile, ACORD regional coordinator.

Despite efforts already made by the Malian government, malnutrition remains a real problem of family health. The new dairy enterprise, made possible through the support of ACORD and its partner Fondation Leger, will enhance production of milk, increase the income of pastoralist families and improve household food hygiene. See more photos from Léré on page 3.

## Tanzania: Thousands Say Goodbye to Refugee Status

In what the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) termed as a historic move that other countries could emulate, The Peoples Republic of Tanzania has been able to naturalise at least 162,000 refugees from Burundi since the beginning of 2010.

Tanzania's act gives citizenship to hundreds of thousands of Burundians who fled to Tanzania in 1972. Most of them were Hutus who fled ethnic violence in Burundi and had gradually integrated into Tanzania's society and economy. As recently as year 2000, Tanzania had the largest refugee population in Africa, with over 680,000 refugees from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The naturalization leaves Tanzania with some 97,000 refugees in camps and settlements, mostly from Burundi and DRC.

ACORD joins the UNHCR in urging other African countries to consider granting citizenship to refugees who want to stay in the host country, especially those who have been unable to return to their countries of origin for many years due to the unending cycles of violence in those countries. It is however important to give people a choice of returning to their country of origin if that is what they would rather do.

ACORD has extensive experience in working both with refugee populations, IDPs, returnees and host communities. More information on ACORD's work on peace building and conflict transformation is available on our website.

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

## Peace Building and Conflict Transformation

ACORD works to facilitate an enabling environment where marginalized communities become effective agents of conflict transformation.

### Guinea

Since 2008 ACORD has been supporting peace-building initiatives in Guinea's forested region. The political crisis of 2008 followed by armed conflict in various parts of the country created tensions making this area insecure.

**We are working with mediators to resolve cases involving resources based conflict and human rights violations.**

In Macenta and N'Zerekore, ACORD has drawn pools of mediators from different communities totaling eight, to resolve cases involving sensitive matters like resource-based conflict and violations of human rights. Three meetings have been held between January and March 2010 in efforts to end local and regional conflicts that have had an impact not only in Guinea but also in neighbouring countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia.

### Ethiopia

In Boranna, a successful cross border conflict resolution intervention between pastoralist communities in Kenya and Ethiopia has been implemented in collaboration with some local partners. The Ethiopian government has shown interest in supporting ongoing efforts or initiating conflict resolution mechanisms especially in areas where insecurity is particularly high.

# South Sudan Elections: A Learning Process

The first democratic elections in 24 years were held in Sudan from the 11 to 15 of April. The Sudanese people with nearly 16 million eligible voters had the chance to elect the president of the republic, the president of the government of southern Sudan, and the governor of each state.

They were also choosing the national assembly, the southern Sudan legislative assembly, and the legislative councils of the states. Having worked in Southern Sudan for over 30 years, ACORD is well aware about the inter-connectedness between peaceful coexistence and sustainable long-term development. Feuds and sporadic attacks among local communities interrupt people in their livelihood activities and also affect development work due to heightened insecurity.

Since 2007, ACORD has been implementing a programme on citizen empowerment and local government capacity building with funding from the Belgium government. Building on this work, ACORD conducted civic education workshops in 6 States in Southern Sudan in the run-up to the elections. These were Jonglei, Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Upper Nile, Unity State and Northern Bhaegazel.

These workshops received funding from the UN Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and aimed at encouraging women to actively participate in the electoral process. The National Elections Act of 2008 upholds the representation and participation of women in electoral processes.

Through radio talk shows, the need for members of the public to uphold peace during the election period was emphasized and listeners were also educated on general electoral processes, importance of women's participation in elections and links between stability and positive development.

This positive experience at a time when political tensions were high, has emboldened ACORD and its partners to further pursue efforts in conflict transformation and peace-building in South Sudan.

**A total of 132 women were elected at state level, out of 470 elective posts**



*"We urge women to take leadership positions so that women can be listened to and respected because our actions affect entire communities", one of the participants during the civic education in Bahr El Ghazal*

Continued from page 1:

## Mali: Photos from Dairy Plant in Léré



Dairy plant operators performing milk preservation techniques at Léré



Milk products include pasteurised, fermented and yoghurt milk

**70% of milk sold is pasteurized and the rest is processed into yogurt and traditional milk curds called "féné".**



A herd of Zebu cattle in Léré



Dairy plant operators taking a break



*"The food barns project is a good example of how ACORD and the Mozambican government can support one another in implementing projects in Niassa Province. We would like to replicate these activities in other areas of the country," said Mr. Ferreira Mahumane, the Sanga District Commissioner.*

## Mozambique: Providing Avenues for Effective Crops Management

Over 70% of the population in Mozambique depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. Because of erratic rainfall patterns, soil infertility, land pressure and lack of access to credit to purchase quality seeds and farming tools, small-scale farmers struggle to meet their immediate food needs, let alone produce a surplus. In remote areas like Niassa Province, in the extreme North of Mozambique, up to 35% of the population is chronically food insecure.

To support small-scale farmers in the four communities of Maumbica, Nova Madeira, Segundo Congresso and Matchedje, ACORD supported the construction of food barns in Sanga District, Niassa Province. Funded by Jersey Overseas Aid and Oxfam Hong Kong the project aimed to increase agricultural production and enhance food security by establishing demonstration farms, providing skills training and constructing community barns for safe storage of crops. Committees of community members led the construction and will manage the barns. The barns will provide rental services to their community's farmers and retain 10% of the drought persistent seeds harvested, for seed banking.

### Demonstration Farms, how they work

Seven hectares of land was identified for the demonstration farms and maize which is the main staple food was planted. These farms provide farmers with the practical training related to crop production and storage. The community is involved in all aspects of the demonstration farms, from planting, through to harvesting and storage and the farmers can then replicate these skills within their own farms.

### Measuring Progress Through Committees

Community involvement is critical for successful implementation and sustainability. A committee of 10 men and 10 women mobilised community members to actively participate in the project. Apart from maintaining the food barns, they also take part in exchange visits to enhance experience sharing and cross learning. Women are actively targeted for the simple reason that they provide the majority of community and household agricultural labour yet have little access to related resources and are not involved in decision making. Empowering women is key to achieving food security in Africa.

This project is one practical example of what is being achieved at the community level under the umbrella of ACORD's Pan African Food Sovereignty Programme.

## NEW: ACORD's Secretariat Staff Association in Action

We are proud to announce that the Secretariat Staff Association has been launched and is in operation. The elected representatives are Leonie Abela Sendegeya (Chairperson), Margaret Wamukoya (Secretary), and Helen Mukoko (Treasurer). Nashon Tado and Christine Okila were also elected as Committee Members.

The Staff Association will provide support to the organisation by enhancing unity and team spirit among staff. This will be done by facilitating and encouraging participation through mutual support and social activities that promote harmonious relations and team building among the staff. The Association will also strive to promote goodwill among the members of the ACORD community and promote staff welfare, morale, better working relations and knowledge. The elected members immediately embarked on the constitution-making process and they have presented the draft to the advocate for legal counsel and registration.



# 6 Functions of Agricultural Investment

**1** Prioritise smallholder farming instead of large-scale industrial agriculture

**2** Should be used to directly support small-scale farmers rather than for administration

**3** Promote environmentally sustainable agriculture

**4** Prioritise agriculture for food production rather than export cash crops or agro-fuels

**5** Ensure women and men alike, including people living with HIV and AIDS, can access agricultural inputs and can have ownership and control over land

**6** Explicitly aims to improve lives and welfare not just to lead to economic growth

## Recent Publications

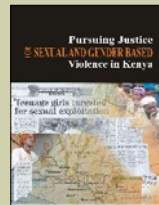
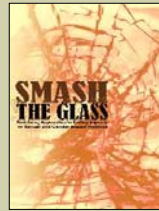
### Smash the Glass: Redefining approaches to ending impunity for sexual and gender based violence A Pan Africa conference report:

The report captures the highlights of the second regional conference on ending impunity for sexual and gender based violence, held in Kampala, Uganda in October 2009.

### Pursuing Justice for Sexual and Gender Based violence in Kenya Summary of Reparations' options:

Puts into perspective issues of transitional justice, protection of survivors and witnesses and the judicial processes in the Great Lakes Region.

The publications listed above can be downloaded from the ACORD website.



## News Clips

### ACORD's Seed Initiative in Amuru, The New Vision, 11th May 2010

Published in the New Vision newspaper of Uganda, this article discusses the initiatives undertaken by ACORD in Purongo sub county of Uganda's Amuru District to sensitise farmers about the benefits of forming farmer groups and the use of improved quality seeds that will give them higher yields. You can read the article online at:

<http://www.newvision.co.ug/detail.php?mainNewsCategoryId=9&newsCategoryId=37&newsId=719155>

### Rape Victims Awaiting Justice, Daily Nation, 7th March 2010

Published in the Daily Nation newspaper of Kenya, this article highlights findings of the ACORD report "A Case for Protection and Restitution of Survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Kenya". This report brings out the voices of the many invisible survivors who suffered during Kenya's political crisis. Justice, National Cohesion and Constitutional Affairs minister Mutula Kilonzo, present at the launch agreed there must be adequate steps to prevent similar violations in future. "This must begin by recognising what happened to them as documented by the new publication and any others in the past," he said while launching the report.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/Rape%20victims%20awaiting%20justice%20/-/1056/875108/-/ftobb4/-/index.html>

ACORD is a Pan African organisation working for social justice and development. Our mission is to work in common cause with people who are poor and those who have been denied their rights to obtain social justice and development and be part of locally rooted citizen movements. ACORD is present in 17 countries in Africa, working with communities on livelihoods and food sovereignty, women's rights, conflict and HIV/AIDS. We also campaign and advocate at national, regional and Pan African levels.

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ACORD Secretariat:

Kenya: ACK Garden House, tel.+254.20.272.11.72/85/6, fax.+254.20.272.11.66

United Kingdom: Development House, 56-64 Leonard st, London, EC2A.4LT, tel.+44.207.065.0850, fax.+44.207.065.0851/ E-mail: [info@acordinternational.org](mailto:info@acordinternational.org)

## Editorial Team

Editor - Nashon Tado  
[nashon.tado@acordinternational.org](mailto:nashon.tado@acordinternational.org)

Associate Editor - Margaret Wamukoya  
[Margaret.wamukoya@acordinternational.org](mailto:Margaret.wamukoya@acordinternational.org)

Design and Layout - Christine Okila  
[christine.okila@acordinternational.org](mailto:christine.okila@acordinternational.org)

Editorial Review - Nicola Bevan  
- Kristin Seljeflot  
- Vanessa Dupont

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