In this issue we highlight World Refugee Day. World Refugee Day (WRD) is an annual event celebrated on June 20th. 2019 marks 19 years since the first WRD, which is championed by the United Nations Refugee Agency to serve as a reminder that the world supports and stands with refugees. WRD raises awareness of global responsibility for refugees.

On World Refugee Day, we honour the strength and courage of individuals who have had to flee their homes because of conflict or natural disasters.

We also share updates on the wonderful work our DRC and Liberia programs are doing, and introduce some of our people, including two new directors.

In this issue:
- World Refugee Day in the country programs
- DRC WASH Interventions
- Liberia’s Livelihood Projects
- Update on the strategy review and M&E plan
- Meet our new Directors at Head Quarters

UNHCR Annual Network Organizations Consultation meeting in Istanbul - May 2019

UNHCR held their annual Network Organisations Consultations in Istanbul between 12-14th May 2019. The AIRD Director of Operations, Florine Clomegah, was in attendance. The Network Organisation Group (NOG) includes representatives of NGO networks, UNHCR Senior Staff as well as the Divisions and representatives of the Field Reference Group. The NOG enables UNHCR to address various important aspects of partnerships with implementing partners such as AIRD. Key points from the meetings:
- Scaling up the anti-fraud approaches with innovative technology
- The importance of internal audits for maintaining oversight of projects
- For improved service delivery and better engagement with partners, UNHCR will continue to decentralise their office staff through regional bureaus
- Increased focus on the Grand Bargain targets. The Grand Bargain is an agreement between some of the largest donors and aid providers to get more means into the hands of people in need.
- Renewed efforts to encourage agencies to have in place strategies and initiatives to fight against and prevent Sexual Abuse and Misconduct.

We look forward to a continued fruitful and sustainable partnership with the UNHCR and other partners based on a firm understanding and agreement of the key issues discussed during this forum.
AIRD Niger celebrates World Refugee Day in style

AIRD Niger marked World Refugee Day on 20th June, 2019 with celebrations at the refugee reception zone in Intikan in Telemses and Agadez.

In Intikan, the celebrations were attended by the administrative authorities headed by the prefect of Tilia, UNHCR team, implementing partners and Refugees. The UNHCR head of Office - Tahoua and the prefect of Tilia thanked all partners who support refugees in the different aspects. The celebrants were led to visit AGR Health centre in Intikan and the building site of the woodless houses for teachers of Intikan Primary School. The day was crowned with sports and cultural activities with presentations from refugees.

In Agadez, celebrations were preceded by pre-events held on June 19th mainly for the community before the main celebrations which were attended by dignitaries. For the main celebrations, UNHCR together with implementing partners organized a public health day at the mother-child health center in Agadez district to launch sanitation awareness activities. They committed to continue supporting all necessary processes.

AIRD was especially appreciated for its logistical support regarding transportation of ceremony materials and people during activities which included blood donation, health, a march and the official ceremony.

Celebrating World Refugee day in Ouagadougou and Dori - Burkin Faso

In Burkina Faso, staff marked the World Refugee Day with main celebrations held in Ouagadougou and Dori.

In Ouagadougou, UNHCR organized celebrations with refugees, implementing partners and government representatives. The event was held at the University of Joseph Ki-Zerbo. Part of the activities included a competition where students from 4 universities delivered presentations and answered a quiz on the history of UNHCR and its mandate around Persons of Concern. The event was made even more colourful with entertainment by refugee groups and a cocktail.

In Dori, celebrations of World Refugee Day took place on 18th June 2019 with a visit by UNHCR Representative Mrs. Loli Kimyaci and the Minister of Foreign affairs, His Excellency Mr. Alpha Barry to infrastructures in the Goudoubo Camp.
Logistical support boosted World Refugee Day Celebrations-Chad

Chad marked World Refugee Day (WRD) with a series of activities that allowed for engagement and interaction organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. At the Notre Dame des Apotres hospital, refugees showed off their football skills against UNHCR and other implementing partner teams. Hygiene materials were also handed over by UNHCR representative, Mbili Ambaoumba.

A conference-debate was organized at the HEC-Chad University the following day, 20 June 2019, on the theme “Education as a tool for protection and movement with refugees”. The theme was selected to highlight the difficulty of access to education for refugees. The day was also marked by an exhibition and sale of high quality handicrafts made by refugees and host populations at the French cultural center.

21 June was the peak of WRD celebrations with attendance by the Chadian Minister of Interior and Security accompanied by senior officials of the Chadian state in the presence of the diplomatic corps, donors, heads of national and international NGOs, refugees and others guests. It was punctuated by musical entertainment and fashion shows featuring strong involvement of refugees, presentation of trophies and symbolic gifts to best performers and lastly speeches from representatives of refugees, UNHCR and the Chadian officials.

In addition to participating in the day’s activities, AIRD’s offered logistical support by transporting refugees to the event.

World Refugee day celebrations in Cameroon

World Refugee Day in Cameroon was marked by several activities held from 14th to 20th June 2019 at various camp sites. In the Eastern region, a march was held in a show of solidarity with refugees. Participants came from the community, UNHCR partners and local NGO’s in Bertoua and Batouri on 14th June. The key message was informing the wider community of the important work that NGOs undertake in supporting refugees.

Between 17th-19th June, community level activities involving football & handball matches and educational talks were conducted in the various refugee camps in line with the theme.

On 20th June, the different regions (East, North, Adamaoua and far North) gathered at the UNHCR planned celebration with partners, refugees, local community and public authorities at camp sites within their respective regions.

In the East, activities were held mainly at Mbile with regional authorities, site managers and refugees in attendance. AIRD staff from Bertoua and Batouri joined the day’s march and also exhibited AIRD’s work. A few AIRD staff from Bertoua joined refugees in Tongo Gandima to celebrate with them. In Adamawa region, celebrations took place at Meiganga. AIRD staff took part in a march and thereafter showcased their work through an exhibition. The day was spiced up with cultural dances, speeches and poems from refugees and other community groups.

In the North, celebrations were held at Helbao where AIRD staff from Touboro participated in the scheduled activities including an exhibition.

In the Far North, festivities were held in Minawao, where some AIRD staff from Maroua received certificates of appreciation for the good work done in support of refugees.
DRC hosts over 533,000 refugees from Rwanda, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Burundi who fled their countries seeking international protection. Since 2015, AIRD as the main logistics partner for UNHCR in DRC has continued to demonstrate its expertise in the WASH sector.

Our water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions mainly focus on identifying WASH infrastructural gaps and needs to improve safe access to clean water sanitation and hygiene practices so as to reduce the (public) health risks associated with poor water, poor sanitation & hygiene services and practices.

AIRD DRC has so far targeted IDPs in the former Katanga province of Tanganyika and Central African refugees in North and South Ubangi. The main focus of the WASH interventions is to improve hygiene and sanitation conditions of refugee populations in the camps by facilitating access to basic services like showers, latrines, etc.

To date, 1,829 family latrines have been constructed in 15 villages within Nyunzu territory, and 3 Villages in Mitwaba territory. AIRD has constructed 1,200 emergency latrines and 1,200 showers in 3 Central African refugee camps including 400 showers & 400 latrines in each of the following; Mole (Zongo), Boyabu (Libenge) and in Inke (Gbadolite).

With the above facilities in place, the interventions have enabled the refugees access to improved sanitation and hygiene practices which has reduced diseases, promoted good hygiene practices and improved living conditions and livelihood opportunities.

In partnership with UNHCR, the AIRD Liberia program is implementing a Livelihood and Social Economic Empowerment Project targeting refugees and host community members in Bahn and Saclepea/ Nimba County. The project mainly focuses on;

**Cash Based Interventions (CBI)** to support Income Generating Activities (IGA) where beneficiaries are trained on generating business ideas, business management, record keeping and business plan development. The trainings are undertaken before start-up funds are disbursed. Host community members are paid a fixed amount of US$ 500.00 per family, while the head of house hold in the refugee category receives US$300, with US$100 paid to each dependent in the family. In addition to cash grants, beneficiaries receive in kind assistance of structure construction.

Currently, a total of 94 beneficiaries (44 pilot project and 50 second batch of cash disbursement) received cash grant assistance, and 50 beneficiaries have trained in small business management. Mentoring and coaching beneficiaries in their new livelihoods and economic projects is done by the AIRD livelihood team. Weekly income reporting tools are used by beneficiaries to enable them to track income from their businesses. Livelihood coordination meetings are conducted bi-weekly with beneficiaries to share progress, challenges and lessons learned.

Technical support for agriculture production. 45 acres of upland are used for cassava, corn and vegetables production (bitter balls, eggplant, hot pepper, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers and okra), while 40 acres of swamp is used for rice and vegetable production. A total of 200 refugees and 26 host community members are benefiting from agriculture activities in peaceful co-existence project to enhance local integration with the host community.
AIRD Strategy review process

AIRD’s 2014-19 strategy is coming to an end this year. We have already started work on ensuring we have the next strategy in place by the start of 2020. Several consultations have already happened with Country Management Teams in each country and with staff at the Head Quarters (HQ). Input from STOP CONTINUE START exercises and SWOT analyses of the 2014-19 strategy implementation will further build on the success of the strategy development.

There are 12 Working Groups looking at various aspects of our strategic requirements, and these working groups have started to meet online and by technological means - WhatsApp and Skype are proving to be very helpful! These working groups are made up of staff from HQ and Country Programmes, to ensure a full involvement and input from the field and staff with experience at as many levels as possible.

We are on track to deliver our first draft of our strategic approach to the Board by the end of August. Following that, we will further refine our approach to present the final version by the end of November. Thank you for all your help, wisdom, input and insight to date. We’ve got some ways to go still, but things are looking up. A further update will be shared in the next newsletter.

Streamlining our operations and programs management with evidenced-based Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) frameworks.

As we progress with our country programs operations, the need to scale up the standardization of our global evidenced based operations and programs accountability becomes more apparent. In previous years, a challenge for AIRD was access to statistical information on our achievements versus planned targets in a timely manner to compile reports or prepare urgent documents for leadership and donors.

Based on this realisation, we have developed comprehensive global monitoring and evaluation frameworks that will standardize all our program/project implementation. As we begin to use this framework, country programs will find it increasingly time saving to plan, implement, monitor, and compile evidenced based reports. These reports are aligned to approved plans, project goals, outcomes, outputs, and log frame indicators in line with AIRD standard operating procedures, donor reporting requirements, and the organizations’ policies. The monitoring and evaluation framework will officially be rolled out in September 2019.

Monitoring visit to AIRD Burkina Faso country program

In June 2019, the CEO of AIRD international, Mathias Temesgen, visited AIRD Burkina Faso for a planned monitoring of the program operations. The CEO met with various stakeholders including UNHCR officials, government dignitaries led by Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Affairs, and other implementing partners with whom AIRD works. The CEO went ahead to visit the different operation areas to check on progress of implementation and to ensure that the work done is to the highest standards to meet donor satisfaction. Mr. Mathias appreciated the wonderful work being done by the program and encouraged staff to keep up the positive attitude exhibited towards work.
What are your first impressions of life in Kampala?

My welcome in AIRD has been very warm. I have had the chance to talk with and meet so many passionate individuals both in person and online who have so much experience of working with AIRD and in their specific field and I see an organisation that is growing. Life in Kampala is a bit crazy, (particularly the traffic!) but I like the overall feel.

Tell us a bit about your journey before joining AIRD.

I've worked in relief and development organisations since 1994, working in a variety of different countries and roles. Much of my time has been spent covering programmes in Africa, with time also in Asia and Latin America. Professionally I have moved through project and programme roles to management and leadership positions at country and HQ level. Immediately prior to joining AIRD I was working in Fundraising. I speak French and enjoy picking up other local languages.

What gets you out of bed in the morning?

Other than my young children, my constant belief is that we are all able to make a difference for the better, bringing the best out of each other in whatever we do. I believe that through collaboration we can achieve more than doing things on our own, and I thrive on connecting people and ideas.

Is there anything you'd like to say to everyone now you have their attention?

This is an exciting time that we’re entering into with the strategy review, giving us a chance to build on an excellent past and create a future that reflects us as a whole organisation. I’m hopeful for where we are going and looking forward to our ongoing journey together. Be encouraged wherever you are that your contribution makes a difference to our success.

Mark Arcedeckne-Butler
Director, Development and Communications

What are your first impressions of life in Kampala?

Life in Kampala is good as people in Uganda are kind. It is also a great place to be as many NGOs are working with the Government and UNHCR to serve the refugees communities, as Uganda has the greatest number of refugees in Africa.

Tell us a bit about your journey to joining AIRD.

I have a track record in strategic and operational leadership in a changing and complex environment and an international and humanitarian context. I am a determined senior manager, a digital communication expert, and operations director who has acquired experience in delivering key solutions within leading organizations. My work has involved the overseeing of operations, programs and projects.

I am a people manager and believe in putting the human at the heart of management. I believe good employees are the reasons behind the success of managers. So I enjoy teamwork and foster team spirit. Human Resources are vital to the achievements of goals. I am committed to working for the refugees, educating children, alleviating poverty and listening to and including the beneficiaries are also essential.

I enjoy meeting them when I make visit field visits to learn from them on how best we can help. I am also a gender champion and advocate for women in leadership roles and the workforce. I am also an author, blogger, a good public speaker, and deliver workshops and capacity building seminars.

What gets you out of bed in the morning?

Helping others and the belief that happiness is the way forward coupled with professionalism, operational excellence, competencies, sound financial management, and creating a virtuous circle of good deeds is the means. I am happy that I am working to improve the welfare of others.

Is there anything you'd like to say to everyone now you have their attention?

Be a real humanitarian. It signifies that we keenly believe in putting the welfare of humanity at the heart of our work.

Florine Clomegah
Director of Operations
Stories from our people

My journey with AIRD

My name is Royan Serge. I began my career with AIRD in 2012. As a result of my previous experience, I was recommended as a database manager, and then I became a spare parts storekeeper after which I was assigned to Gore in southern Chad as a logistician. From Gore, I returned to Ndjamenaa as Transport and Warehouse Manager. As you can see, AIRD gave me many opportunities to grow professionally.

As a logistician, I have enjoyed my work with a number of successful missions/events I have taken the lead on and are worth noting. However, the most remarkable mission was that of receiving and relocating a big number of Central African Refugees from the Southern border to various camps for a period of one week in 2017. As a young logistician, this experience exposed me to the enormous challenges faced by refugees and I realized the importance of supporting people in dire need.

I saw many with young children while others had lost relatives and were in deep agony. I appreciated the value of life and the importance of promoting peace in any country to avoid such situations of displacement.

As a learning, I have decided to dedicate my work towards humanitarian work to contribute to making lives of displaced people better. Thanks to AIRD for giving me this platform to support refugees. I will always do my best to ensure that we continue performing our roles efficiently and diligently as a logistics partner.

We thank our AIRD family for delivering remarkably in all our areas of operation. We give a very special thanks to our donors for enabling us to do the work we do that changes the lives of refugees and their host communities.

In the next issue:

- World Humanitarian Day - Why it matters
- Updates from Tanzania, ROC, Chad and Burkina Faso

Thanks to all those who have contributed stories and photos for this issue. For feedback/comments/queries on any of the articles in this issue, please send an email to communications@airdinternational.org

We would love to share your stories! If you would like to contribute an article or photos etc. to the next issue, send an email to communications@airdinternational.org