Welcome to the First Edition of AIRD’s Newsletter

I am proud to present the first newsletter of African Initiatives for Relief and Development. AIRD is better known for its logistical management and relief support systems designed to improve the lives of people of concern. AIRD has worked closely with UN agencies and a multitude of humanitarian actors over the last 9 years, which has contributed to the expansion of our operations and enhanced our expertise in the supply chain delivery and emergency response. As we grow as an organization as does our staff. This newsletter aims to share information, news, and highlight activities carried out by our committed staff. With over 1,328 international and national staff members there are experiences and learned concepts that are being shared among our offices, but we also like to share this with our readers. As we are currently operating out of 8 countries there is plenty to be shared with our partners, staff, and supporters. Our hope is for this newsletter to shed light on the diversity and engagement AIRD has in the field. We are always looking for content to share, so if you have any photos or stories please email me at juliana.n@airdinternational.org.

AIRD is Granted Pre-Qualification Status

AIRD has met all the necessary qualification requirements to be granted the Pre-qualification for Procurement status with worldwide scope to carry our procurement activities for UNHCR funded programs until December 31st, 2019. This is a great triumph for the AIRD family. We need to always ensure we meet the highest standards in the implementation of our Procurement Policies and Procedures across all our countries.

Attended Events

ICVA Annual Conference

AIRD has been a member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) since 2013. ICVA is a global network of non-governmental organizations created to increase collaboration and coordination between NGOs and humanitarian actors. Being a part of ICVA has enabled AIRD to meet other NGOs and discuss relevant impediments and shared knowledge within the humanitarian sector.

AIRD was invited to attend the ICVA 2015 Annual Conference held on March 9, 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland at the Centre International de Conferences Geneva (ICCG). This year’s theme was Partnerships: From Principles to Practice, with a focus on considering partnerships in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit. AIRD had the opportunity to meet and discuss the value and implementations of Principles of Partnership with over 160 participants from around the world.

If you would like to know more about what was discussed please visit https://icvanetwork.

Opening New Program in the Central African Republic

AIRD continues its growth into new programs with becoming the implementing partner for UNHCR in the Central African Republic. AIRD will be responsible for facilitating fuel, warehouse, and transportation & fleet management. The Central African Republic is amid a civil war that began in 2012. AIRD is proud to provide assistance as relief efforts continue to assist people of concern. We were also able to promote two national staff members to expatriate staff during the process.

UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs

Every year United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) holds an Annual Consultation with NGOs in Geneva, Switzerland. AIRD was invited to attend the three day event that commenced on July 1, 2015 at the International Conference Centre Geneva (ICCG). It is an opportunity for partners to have an open dialogue about the interests of NGOs and UNHCR. AIRD was able to exchange views with over 200 organizations and to discuss issues on internally displaced people, refugees, human rights, protections and regional concerns.

UNHCR ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOs. JULY 1, 2015. GENEVA, SWITZERLAND.
Meet the AIRD Team

In each Newsletter we would like to introduce our readers to an AIRD staff member from one of our 8 countries of operation

AIRD would like to introduce you to Juliette Thiombiano, Chief Mechanic of AIRD Chad Program.

Originally from Burkina Faso, Juliette has been working with AIRD in Farchana, Chad since 2014; prior to that she was a national staff member of our Burkina program. Juliette’s interest in mechanics dates back to when she was still in high school; being the only girl of six children she was not discouraged to pursuing interests in mechanics. From an early age Juliette asserted herself as one of the boys. Her interest in mechanics blossomed when she entered high school in 1994. Her interest manifested itself in her undergraduate studies and technical education for motor vehicles, which shaped her to become the specialist she is today.

A crucial part of Juliette’s influence to the AIRD fleet and transportation sector in Chad is facilitating trainings designed to familiarize the garage staff to:
- AIRD’s Garage management system
- Maintenance and repair protocols of assets entrusted to AIRD
- Driver’s responsibilities
- Inventory of the car’s tools
- Respect of speed limitation
- How to use the 4x4 (H4 and L4) functions
- Why and how to use the maintenance book
- Respected periodic maintenance
- Technique cards

Such trainings enable AIRD to use a common practice amongst all of our garages and reinforce our staffs’ promptness to train additional staff in new and existing operations. “The harmonization of protocols in matters of maintenance and repair will allow us to speak the same language in all garages of AIRD,” this year Juliette has held trainings that reach 28 participants from Goz-Beida, Iriba, Harase, and Abeche.

“I’m passionate about mechanics and would like to make the world know that women are able to participate in the development of society by living their dream and passion, beyond taboos and prejudice,” said Juliette. This drive and passion for mechanics is not something she wants to do alone; Juliette hopes her position within AIRD will also encourage her younger sisters, who are reluctant to look into mechanics or other non-tradition roles for women to see that their options have no limits.

These common structures play a major role in encouraging woman to be confident in pursuing positions not commonly held by women in the region. AIRD was fortunate to not only find a well skilled team member, but an advocate for empowering woman. Despite cultural inclinations and preconceptions of what makes a mechanic Juliette has respectively harnessed her relationship with her team and continues to follow her passion. “It is for this reason that it is a great pleasure for me to share what I learned with my colleagues regardless of gender, and to bring my contribution to building a better world, knowing that I shall also learn from them,” said Juliette.
Refugees are people like anyone else, like you and me. They led ordinary lives before becoming displaced, and their biggest dream is to be able to live normally again. On this World Refugee Day, let us recall our common humanity, celebrate tolerance and diversity and open our hearts to refugees everywhere.

Ban Ki-moon

World Refugee Day 2015

June 20th marked the annual celebration of World Refugee Day. It is a special day for honoring, recognizing and appreciating the resilience and courage of refugees worldwide. The theme this year focused around refugees overcoming hardships through means of expression. This could mean anything from being an avid gardener to writing poetry. Each of our country operations participated in various ways by providing services and partaking in the festivities. The greatest success of the celebrations was the refugees, being able to present their cultural dances, and refugee memorandum to different actors.

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Ban Ki-moon

AIRD Men’s Football League: Nakivale, Uganda

Nakivale is located in the South West region of Uganda and for over 40 years this area has been hosting an array of refugee communities. AIRD is currently implementing operations alongside our partners to bring forth better living conditions for over 60,000 refugees currently settled in the area.

The AIRD Uganda Program’s activity in Nakivale is generally directed towards medical supply procurement, provision of meals for asylum seekers, transportation & fleet management and warehouse management for non-food items. For the last four years AIRD has been operating in Nakivale and has upheld regular communication with local community members and partners to see that these services are carried out properly. AIRD seeks to maintain positive relationships with the host communities and encourages cordial relationships with the refugee community.

This year one of the ways in which AIRD encouraged positive moral among partners and the host communities was starting a football league, which AIRD later discovered attracted the attention of the refugee community as well. The first AIRD football league took place earlier this year with participants consisting of 11 refugee teams and one AIRD staff team. For 6 weeks the friendly matches significantly boosted the moral of all parties. Thanks in large part to the donations from AIRD staff members and partners AIRD Uganda Program managed to supply the league with necessary football gear, water for the players during the matches, and hire a doctor to be on scene during the events. The AIRD Uganda Program in Nakivale saw this popular activity within the refugee settlement as an opportunity to bring communities closer and also found that it performed well as crime deterrent tool due to the entire camp being actively engaged in the events throughout the league.

Upcoming Events

- 12 August: International Youth Day
- 19 August: World Humanitarian Day
- 8 September: International Literacy Day
- 21 September: International Day of Peace
- 2 October: International day of Non-Violence
- 16 October: World Food Day
- 17 October: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty