



# Newsletter

*"Today, no walls can separate humanitarian or human rights crises in one part of the world from national security crises in another. What begins with the failure to uphold the dignity of one life all too often ends with a calamity for entire nations."*

Kofi Annan

December 2020



Above: A sanitation and hygiene sensitisation exercise carried out by AIRD Burkina Faso also involved handing out visual aids to residents in Gorom-Gorom.

This year will forever remain one for the history books. All the planning in the world could not have prepared us for the sudden and widespread effects of the coronavirus pandemic. That every nation on the planet could be faced with the same devastating challenge is unprecedented. We mourn with the world for the losses faced, including for those within the AIRD family itself. We can only hope that as we continue to battle the pandemic, the lessons we are picking up day by day will mean we enter the new year armed with the knowledge and skills to achieve success.

At AIRD, we look to 2021 with hope because what is the humanitarian sector if not one built on hope. We are grateful for the work we were able to continue doing for displaced people for whom challenges remain great, corona or no corona. Our immense gratitude goes to our donors and partners who acted swiftly to maintain the activities that were achievable in the safest way possible, while encouraging continued dialogue to understand how to address the challenges faced now and those that might come in the future.

In spite of the challenges, at AIRD we will move forward with a certain level of confidence to deliver much needed services for our partners and People of Concern. The timing of our 2021-2025 strategy is proof of our hope for a future in which we will do bigger and better things for the communities we will serve.

We invite you to read about some of the activities we were able to achieve up till the end of the third quarter of 2020.

## In this issue:

- Safeguarding at AIRD
- Highlighting activities across our operations in 2020

## Safeguarding at AIRD



### **KAMPALA**

*“The United Nations has launched an investigation into allegations of sexual abuse and the exploitation of vulnerable women by members of its staff in Uganda’s drought-stricken northeastern Karamoja region” – The New Humanitarian September 2020*

### **LONDON**

*“Almost two years on from a landmark summit on safeguarding in the aid sector, sexual abuse and exploitation are still “widespread” and continuing unreported, according to experts – Devex News, July 2020*

### **BENI**

*“A total of 51 women, alleged that they had been sexually exploited or abused overall by mostly foreign men, identifying themselves as aid workers in Beni, the main city at the centre of what was the country’s worst ever Ebola outbreak, between 2018 and June this year” - The New Humanitarian and the Thomson Reuters Foundation news organizations – September 2020*

The above are a sneak peek of the recent attention given to abuse and harassment among humanitarian workers. The Inter-Agency Standing Community (IASC) recognizes that all people should remain safe from sexual exploitation and abuse while receiving humanitarian aid, including health services and treatment during COVID-19. If sexual exploitation or abuse does occur, they should have access to safe and confidential reporting channels and services.

The African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD) is committed to protecting staff and affected populations from sexual exploitation and abuse within all our response operations. AIRD subscribes to the six IASC core principles on Protection of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The Senior Management Team supports all teams to deliver on this commitment through technical support, resources and partnerships.

In past months and in those to come, AIRD has taken and will continue to take the steps to:

1. Update the Code of Conduct to explicitly highlight Safeguarding;
2. Carried out a UNICEF led assessment on internal safeguarding procedures;
3. Designate a person for the protection of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment to work together with the Human Resources Manager to promote an environment free of exploitation, abuse and harassment;
4. Follow up on the implementation of safeguarding protocols;
5. Follow up on the guidelines on the self-assessment on implementation of safeguarding protocols.

Together, we at the AIRD will deliver operations in an environment safe and secure for all staff, beneficiaries and all other stakeholders.

## Highlights from our Programs

Our different country programs deliver many critical services in the areas that they work in. Our programs all concurrently run various projects and activities. Here we highlight very briefly a few that have been implemented in each program during 2020.

### Construction, Infrastructure and Rehabilitation in the **Republic of Congo** and **Tanzania**

Setting up new infrastructure remained a critical area in many of our operations this year. However, even as gaps remain for these, many previously existing structures also continue to require rehabilitation and maintenance.

The **Congo** team found that major flooding made the need for decent shelter especially dire for those displaced. OCHA reports that since October 2019, heavy rains have affected about 170,000 people across the country, including 30,000 Central African and Congolese refugees, and 6,302 hectares of agricultural fields have been destroyed. AIRD was instrumental in the distribution of 108 emergency shelters to those left without homes. In addition to supporting persons of concern during this emergency, 25 latrines with sanitary facilities, 20 water pumps and 15 solar street lights required rehabilitation and maintenance. Other services remained critical and earlier in the year, the team also handed over the keys to a primary school in Bouemba that will serve over 500 Congolese learners and asylum seekers. The school houses 6 classrooms, an administration block, latrines and a borehole.

In **Tanzania**, in addition to running several other projects, AIRD's expertise was once again called on to support with construction of structures that support delivery of services for partners. This year, our support came in the form of a new logistics base in Mubondo. This work included all permanent structures (perimeter fence, office main block, rub halls, a workshop, fuel station and all offices). The Tanzania program has been innovative in its construction works over the year with its utilisation of Hydraform bricks that are made with murram and cement and interlocked with each other in a way that minimises the need for mortar mix (cement, sand and water). This can cut the costs of building projects by up to 25%.



*Left: Construction kits for emergency shelters to be set up for flooding victims in the Congo. Right: One of the classrooms at the Bouemba Primary School*



*Left: Mubondo Logistics base Tanzania construction under AIRD supervision. Right: The police quarters at Mubondo base.*

## NFIs and Refugee transportation in Niger and the Central African Republic



Being able to facilitate the continued transportation of important items was especially important this year given heavy movement restrictions in most locations.

In the **Central African Republic (CAR)** this transportation came in the way of 337 tons of various goods and materials including NFIs, food, fuel, building materials, generators, being transported and delivered in good conditions by the end of the third quarter. With two tankers, the CAR team also ensured the transportation of 168,000 litres of fuel from Bangui station to the various field offices. As COVID-19 movement restrictions continue to be lifted, the team anticipates resumption of refugee transportation that could see support required in the safe movement of an estimated 10,000 refugees, including 4,000 from Cameroon, 4,000 from the DRC and 2,000 from the Republic of Congo.

The AIRD **Niger** team continued with the transportation of critical items and movement of refugees. At the end of the third quarter, 34,063 tons of various goods and materials including NFIs, food and construction materials were transported and delivered in good condition by UNHCR/AIRD trucks and hired trucks. 1,200 m<sup>3</sup> of water was transported for refugees and for construction in the Ouallam site. Overall, 5,932 Persons of Concern (PoCs) were safely transported from host villages to the settlement villages during a relocation exercise in Maradi, utilising buses and trucks. An additional 1,239 refugees were relocated as well from Tahoua. This transportation was managed by the offices in Agadez, Diffa and Niamey.



*Left: A recent Niger joint mission to raise awareness of Nigerian refugees on the resumption of the relocation operation in the Maradi region*

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## Livelihoods in Liberia and Chad

Livelihoods and sustainable development activities are a very key area that AIRD strongly promotes and intends to become a key player in. When displaced people have been brought to a place of safety and provided with basic items to restart their lives, it then becomes very important to present them with opportunities to develop themselves and have autonomy over their lives as much as possible. The coronavirus pandemic has certainly proven more than ever how important it is to have alternative sources of income.

In 2020, implementation continued of the AIRD **Liberia** livelihood and social and economic inclusion project in three refugee settlements (Bahn, PTP and Little Wlebo settlement) and urban refugees living in Monrovia. The livelihood program has four specific objectives; access to agriculture/ livestock/ fisheries, access to self-employment/ business, provision of vocational training and capacity building and sectorial cash and vouchers through Cash Based Interventions (CBI) to support Income Generating Activities. Specifically, during the third quarter period, mentorship continued but with prioritisation of phone call mentorship between mentors and mentees. Beneficiaries were motivated to invest in agriculture production which was not as greatly affected by COVID-19. A total of 827 are currently undergoing mentorship. It was, however, deemed necessary to postpone vocational skills training to 2021 due to the pandemic.



*Liberia vegetable farms that are becoming food baskets for Zwedru city and surrounding host communities.*

**Chad** AIRD’s market gardening project for refugees and host communities in Farchana continues to reap benefits. The project helps to provide water for own household consumption and for animals (mainly donkeys) which are instrumental for rural activities. Started in 2019, the market garden project supplies over 24,000 litres of water to more than 100 households. Turnips, potatoes, onions, garlic, tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, beets, peppers, okra and other local products have been planted thanks to the available water.

As proof of confidence in these initiatives, AIRD in Chad signed two contracts with World Food Program for the implementation of two projects respectively in Gozbeida and Guereda. These two resilience projects aim to defend and restore soils, protect the environment and improve agricultural production. The main beneficiaries are refugees and their host communities.



*AIRD’s vegetable gardening project in Farchana produces its first harvest of the season for refugees and host communities*

## WASH in Uganda and Burkina Faso

Delivery of adequate and safe water and water facilities proved to be especially important this year given the heightened needs for improved sanitation and hygiene everywhere. Gaps in water needs exist in settlement camps even in the most “normal” of times, so the challenges were certainly exacerbated this year.

With **Uganda** remaining the largest host for refugees in Africa, the AIRD team is all too familiar with having to deliver large volumes of water to several camps around the country. By the end of 3rd quarter, the team had successfully transported 9,975,000 litres using UNHCR provided trucks to deliver water to communities with special attention to facilities such as health centers, bricket factories, schools and reception/transit centers. This was done in settlements and transit centres in Nakivale, Kyangwali, Rhino Camp, Adjumani and Kyaka, contributing to increased access to clean water geared towards achieving the minimum standards of 20 litres per person per day.

The Sahel region in **Burkina Faso** is well known for the water scarcity problems it faces, especially in the dry season. Any efforts that can be made to bring water closer to its inhabitants goes a long way. The refugee camps of Mentao and Goudebou are not immune to these water challenges, even with the situation in these areas not being as bad as in other towns and cities in the region. The two camps both have water structures that were installed in 2012 to provide water for the residents. These structures had not been maintained for some time and their production capacities were dropping, which meant the daily ratio per individual in the area was not being met.

AIRD in Burkina Faso came in to implement various WASH activities, including providing maintenance services on the hydraulic structures installed for access to drinking water. These services were implemented in refugee camps and Internally Displaced Persons sites. The team also distributed drinking water in Dori, Seno province through construction of water points and water trucking. 200 plastic drums and 2,000 sanitation kits containing basins, jerry cans, soap and kettles were further distributed to encourage improved sanitation and hygiene.



*Left: Maintenance of pumps in Mentao and Goudebou camps, Burkina Faso*

*Right: Distribution of drinking water was carried out in Dori, Seno Province through the construction of four water points with a capacity of 10,000 litres each, and also by water distribution through water trucking, Burkina Faso*



*Left: 200 litre drums distributed to 200 households*

*Right: 2,000 WASH kits were distributed in the area containing soap, basins, jerrycans and kettles*

## Workshop management in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** and **Cameroon**

The vehicles and assets that keep staff and partners moving in some of the toughest terrains in our various program countries must be repaired and maintained regularly. AIRD's expertise in this area means that we are counted on to manage over 60 workshops across our countries of operation. It is an area in which we plan to continue growing from strength to strength in order to support humanitarian organisations in even more locations.

By the close of the third quarter of 2020, the very busy AIRD **DRC** workshops had managed to close 2,525 job cards in the areas of Ituri, Kasai, North & South Ubangi, South Kivu and Tanganyika. The average number of days for repair was three during this period. The program manages a total of 17 workshops, including three new garages added this year; two garages installed for a new project in Kasai and a new garage installed in Uvira for the South Kivu sub-delegation. In total, job cards were raised 90 times for trucks, 1,293 for light vehicles, 15 for buses and 502 for motorbikes among other assets.

In **Cameroon**, the end of the third quarter saw the program's workshops closing 548 job cards at 7 workshops in Batouri, Bertoua, Maroua, Meiganga, Touboro, Buea and Bamenda. The average number of days of repair was also three during this period. Job cards were raised 35 times for trucks, 310 times for light vehicles and 127 times for generators, among other assets.



*New garage and construction of the Uvira office and spare parts store in South Kivu, DRC*

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We thank our AIRD family for delivering remarkably in all our areas of operation. As the year comes to a close, we give very special thanks to our donors and partners for enabling us to do the work we do that changes the lives of displaced people and their host communities. We look forward to carrying on with the important work we undertake with our donors in the communities we serve.

We will continue to share highlights of our activities through the various newsletters as well as through our recently revamped website at [www.airdinternational.org](http://www.airdinternational.org)

**A Merry Christmas to our Christian family, happy holidays to all who will take time off during this period and a Happy New Year to all!**

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For feedback/comments/queries on any of the articles in this issue, please send an email to [communications@airdinternational.org](mailto: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](mailto:communications@airdinternational.org)