

Helping Communities Affected by Conflict

MIDDLE EAST/CENTRAL ASIA

Iraq

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 152

Conflict Snapshot

- 1,730 million m² of land in Iraq still believed to contain landmines and unexploded ordnance. Roughly 90 per cent is located in agricultural lands, making clearance an economic necessity as well as a security priority.²
- There are an estimated 20 million landmines and millions more pieces of unexploded ordnance contaminating land.³
- UNHCR estimates that there are 1.5 million internally displaced people.⁴

More than 30 years of conflict and unrest in Iraq has left it with one of the world's highest incidences of contamination by landmines, cluster munitions and other weapons. These remnants of conflict cause continued devastation to communities, both through the physical danger they pose and by preventing access to land, development of infrastructure and threatening the fragile security of the whole region.

Improvised explosive devices, such as car bombs which are too frequently used in Iraq, are often created from the material plundered by insurgents from unexploded bombs.

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace's disarmament partner in Iraq, the Mines Advisory Group, has removed more than 1.5 million landmines, cluster munitions and other weapons since 1992. This demining work significantly reduces the threat of accident and injury to both resident and displaced populations, and has supported rehabilitation and socio-economic development initiatives.

Cleared land can now be used by communities, and agencies and local government can access areas to provide basic services to the local population. This work acts in support of peace-building initiatives which aim for long-term stability in Iraq.

In the past year alone, the program achieved:

- 4,000,000m² of land released, through a combination of manual mechanical, mine detection dog clearance and area reduction, completing clearance operations
- 80,000 hazardous items removed and destroyed
- 2,000 Mine Risk Education sessions held



can clear 100m² of landmines and bombs.

² See US State Department: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/12/152571.htm>

³ See US State Department: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/12/152571.htm>

⁴ <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486426>



Sean Sutton/MAG



Lyndal Irons

While in Australia campaigning to ban cluster bombs, Soraj joined a training session with the Sydney Wheelkings, a local wheelchair basketball team, at St. Joseph's College in Hunters Hill.

Case Study: The Campaign to Ban Cluster Bombs

Soraj Ghulam Habib was a boy of just 10 when he lost both his legs and one of his fingers in a cluster bomb explosion at the start of the war in Afghanistan. The bomb, which looked like a bright yellow box, also killed his cousin, and injured four other members of his family. Soraj has turned his unimaginable experience into a quest to rid the world of cluster bombs and support people who have been maimed by them. He campaigns around the world as well as in his own country and provides psychosocial support to other landmine and cluster bomb victims.

Soraj visited Australia in May 2011 on a two-week tour to raise awareness of the grave threat posed by cluster bombs, and campaign for a worldwide ban on them. His visit was supported by Act for Peace and other members of the Cluster Munition Coalition Australia.

Afghanistan

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 150

Conflict Snapshot

- Over 309,000 internally displaced persons.⁵
- As a result of armed conflict in 2010, 2,777 Afghan civilians were killed.⁶
- There is an estimated 668 million m² of land contaminated by landmines, with more than four million people affected by mines. Half of the casualties have been children.⁷
- Under-5 mortality rate: 257 per 1000 live births.⁸

Afghanistan is struggling to recover from more than a quarter century of conflict, with violence still raging in parts of the country. Since the late 1970s, Afghanistan has experienced a continuous state of civil war punctuated by foreign occupations from the 1979 Soviet invasion and the October 2001 US-led invasion.

Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, and landmines and cluster bombs, remnants of these decades of conflict, continue to cause devastation. It is estimated that between 2001 and 2002 alone, more than 240,000 cluster bomblets were scattered in Afghanistan.



Eskinder Debebe/UN

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace's partner, Christian World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan, works with Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

Dedicated to advancing Afghan women's health over the decades, our partner has helped to reduce controllable diseases such as tuberculosis, and also brought primary and secondary health services into the community.



can provide a baby kit to help keep a newborn baby safe and warm.

⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

⁶ United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

⁷ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor

⁸ United Nations Human Development Report 2010



SALEEM'S STORY

“ Aslamualaiykum, friends in Australia. I am Saleem Danish and I recently graduated from the welding course at the Construction Trade Training Centre (CTTC) in the Thatta District of Pakistan.

Prior to taking this course, I could only get occasional odd jobs to barely contribute to my family's income as I had no professional skills. Then the floods came and my home was filled with three metres of water. I had to flee to Karachi two hours drive away and live with my brother. It was four months before I could move home.

After I moved back, a Field Officer came to our village and met with our local village committee. I put my hand up to be picked for this course and went through the interview process. I also had to

take a test to check my literacy and numeracy skills. The CTTC wants to ensure that the people taking this course are serious about their skills and will work in the trade when they finish.

Through the course, I excelled and was one of the top students. After I completed the course, I received a full tool kit and got a job straight away building a huge billboard in Karachi.

Thank you, friends in Australia, for your thoughtful support. Because of people like you, I have a second chance at life. Now I am working for a charity to help rebuild houses for flood victims in my village, so that I can give back to the community after you have given so much to me.

”

Pakistan

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 146

Conflict Snapshot

- Over 980,000 people internally displaced.⁹
- As a result of the 2010 floods, more than 800,000 Pakistanis are still in need of permanent shelter and more than 1 million are in need of food assistance.
- 23 per cent of the population lives under \$1.25 US a day.¹⁰

Pakistan remains divided by political factionalism, tribal conflict and the continuing war against insurgents. The slow pace of recovery from 2010's devastating floods has worsened the living conditions for thousands of families from the country's northern mountain areas to the southern plains along the Indus River. The dominance of military authority over the civilian functions of the state continues to prevail, and deep political divides, combined with a growing proliferation of weapons, has seen violence and targeted killings increase. The continuing war on terror has seen both an increase in attacks on suspected insurgent targets by Pakistan and US forces and numerous retaliatory actions by insurgents. Both actions have had a devastating impact on civilian populations. Many parts of the country remain underdeveloped in basic education, health and livelihood infrastructure, and levels of food insecurity remain pronounced.

Work of Our Partners

Throughout the past year, Act for Peace has continued to support ACT Alliance member Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan to assist conflict- and disaster-affected communities in Pakistan. In response to the catastrophic floods of July 2010, our partners launched an immense relief and recovery program across the northern central and southern districts of the country. Since the onset of the disaster, they have reached out to thousands of heavily impacted and highly vulnerable households through immediate lifesaving initiatives as well as longer term strategies to support the re-establishment of livelihoods. In total, our partners have assisted more than 110,000 people through food packages which include wheat, rice, pulses and cooking oil, and over 50,000 people through non-food item packages including kitchen sets, hygiene kits and household utilities.

Additionally, our partners have significantly expanded their existing health clinic services in the months following the flood disaster, providing over 43,000 clinical consultations to patients through its mobile health units. Health work is currently managed through the operation of static health units in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

Work continues in providing renewed livelihood opportunities for shattered communities, including skill building opportunities through Construction and Trade Training Centres, cash vouchers to stimulate agricultural and small business development and cash for work schemes. Underpinning all of this work has been a quality and accountability initiative to ensure a high standard of service delivery and accountability to those in need.



can provide three months' nutritious food for a displaced family.

⁹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

¹⁰ UN Human Development Report (2010)



Palestine / Israel

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 145

Conflict Snapshot

- More than 1,180 Palestinians displaced as a result of house demolitions across the West Bank and East Jerusalem from January 2010 to June 2011.¹¹
- Poverty levels in Gaza have resulted in over 80 per cent of families being dependent on humanitarian aid.¹²
- In 2010, over 1.3 million people in the Occupied Palestinian Territories were food insecure.¹³

The growing statehood ambitions of Palestinians and the Palestinian authority have provided some cause for optimism amongst the population of the Occupied Territories. In Gaza, however, Palestinians remain in a permanent state of insecurity, paralysed by the blockade. Poverty, unemployment and aid dependency prevail, resulting in poverty-related diseases such as malnutrition and anaemia. Poor levels of sanitation, water quality and waste disposal also contribute to declining health indicators.

Economically, chronic aid dependency and spiralling unemployment (currently measured at 45 per cent¹⁴) reduce the ability of civilians to pay for health services and associated costs of transport, medicines and ongoing treatment. There is also a significant psychological impact on families living without basic utilities and infrastructure.



\$20 can provide life-saving medicine for a child in Gaza.

¹¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

¹² UNICEF

¹³ Reliefweb

¹⁴ United Nations Relief and Works Agency

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace continues to support the Middle East Council of Churches' Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in the operation of primary health care clinics in the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Health Centres were established in 1952 in Shijaiya, Darraj and Rafah localities, and they continue to provide vital health care services in poor, densely populated and isolated areas. These health centres provide primary health care services to close to 100,000 vulnerable and economically disadvantaged people, supporting baby and mother care, nutrition and dental care, in addition to laboratory testing services, clinical examinations and the provision of free prescribed medicine. Especially notable is our partner's work in tackling childhood anaemia and malnutrition, as well as their comprehensive package of services to expectant mothers and young babies. The health program has helped to stabilise health conditions in target localities, increase the quality and scope of services, and improve health knowledge and awareness amongst the population.

Act for Peace also continues to facilitate the deployment of Australians to the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). EAPPI is a global program of the World Council of Churches, run in conjunction with local churches and Palestinian NGOs and communities. The program's mission is to accompany Palestinians and Israelis in non-violent actions and concerted advocacy efforts to end the occupation of Palestine. The Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) spend three months a year working with vulnerable communities, monitoring and promoting the protection of human rights. In 2011, Act for Peace funded the deployment of three Australian EAs to flashpoints in the West Bank. Accounts from the Australian EAs can be found on the blog section of our website.



Paul Jeffrey/ACT

AFRICA Somalia

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 153

Conflict Snapshot

- 1.3 million internally displaced people¹⁵ and over 860,000 refugees who have fled Somalia.¹⁶
- The famine in the Horn of Africa is affecting 3.7 million Somalis, 1.85 million of whom are children.¹⁷

Somalia is ranked the least peaceful place on earth and the armed violence shows no signs of abating. The continuous war since 1991 has left the country without social services, schools, social centres, health facilities and other types of infrastructure.

Access to weapons is prolonging the conflict in Somalia, exacerbating violence, fuelling crime, and actively undermining counter-insurgency, security and peace-building efforts. The presence of landmines and unexploded bombs remaining in the ground is a major obstacle to the consolidation of peace and reduction of poverty, as the land remains unused.

Famine was officially declared in parts of southern Somalia in July 2011, and much of the rest of the country has been affected by severe drought. The World Food Programme warns that the food crisis in Somalia might become a permanent problem. While communities previously had the relative luxury of several years of regular rainfall to recover from the occasional year of drought, they now have to live in an almost constant state of food insecurity due to a lack of water.¹⁸

Work of Our Partners

Our partners were providing humanitarian assistance to displaced people in Somalia before the 2011 famine hit. This work has now greatly increased. They are working to provide emergency food, water, shelter, psychosocial support and post crisis livelihood assistance for 130,000 people most affected in the Gedo region of southern Somalia and internally displaced people in Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, which is aligned with Al-Qaeda and controls much of southern Somalia, is preventing some aid agencies from delivering urgent aid. Because we work through local partners, our aid is reaching those that need it most.

Our ACT Alliance partners are also assisting Somalia refugees who cross the border into Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. This camp currently has 400,000 refugees, even though it was built for 90,000.

We also support partners, the Mines Advisory Group, working on disarmament and armed violence reduction in central and northern Somalia. Our partners have so far removed 70 tons of unexploded bombs, ammunition and weapons. Key achievements of our partners in 2010 included: clearing 125,240 m² of land and destroying 5,722 weapons. They also deliver risk education to communities so that they can better identify unexploded material and know who to notify.



can feed a family in Somalia for a month.

¹⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

¹⁶ UNHCR

¹⁷ UNICEF

¹⁸ World Food Program, Statement By The World Food Programme Executive Director Josette Sheeran On Hunger In The Horn Of Africa, 12 July 2011, <<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/statement-world-food-programme-executive-director-josette-sheeran-hunger-horn-afr>>.

Sudan and South Sudan

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 151

Conflict Snapshot

- Over 4.2 million internally displaced people.¹⁹
- 51 per cent of the population of South Sudan lives below the poverty line.²⁰

2011 has been a turbulent year in Sudan and South Sudan. After peaceful, free and fair voting in a referendum on self-determination in January 2011, in which southerners voted overwhelmingly (99 per cent of the total votes) for independence from the north, the new Africa nation of South Sudan was born on July 9.

However, both the lead-up to the declaration of independence and its aftermath have been marred by bloodshed and violence. Bitter fighting in the Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile sparked fears of a return to civil war and forced tens of thousands of people to flee their homes.

South Sudan has been born into trying circumstances. As one of the world's least developed countries, it has the worst maternal mortality rate and an illiteracy rate among women of 84 per cent.



Nils Carstensen/ACT

Work of Our Partners in South Sudan

Throughout the civil war that raged in Sudan on and off for over 40 years, the Sudanese churches, both in the north and south, were the main institutions for support to the people in providing relief aid and social services, with the support of Act for Peace and other ecumenical agencies.

Our ecumenical partner, the Sudan Council of Churches, continues to pursue peace in areas of continuing conflict through a people-to-people peace-making project.

Work of Our Partners in Darfur

Act for Peace also assists our partners in Darfur who provide protection and assistance to people living in camps displaced by the conflict. Every year, approximately 500,000 people experience an improved quality of life due to the services supported by our project partners. This program includes:

- primary health care;
- nutrition education, hygiene promotion and other preventative healthcare sessions;
- access to water and improved sanitation quality for around 300,000 people;
- training for women, sheiks and government officials on peace-building, human rights and children's rights;
- building and restoring schools; and
- providing seeds, tools and training for farming.



can provide refugee resettlement kits containing food, medicine, clothing and school supplies.

MARY'S STORY

“My name is Mary Husna. I was married during the long war in Sudan at age 17. I was among those who remained in Sudan, unlike many others who managed to escape. We could not cross the borders because we were in an area which became the frontline.

During the war, we could not go far for cultivation, so we dug around our homes. The little food we produced was shared with the armed forces. I and many other women carried food on our heads everyday to the forces in the frontline. Sometimes, the enemy attacked when we were still there. Many women were killed in crossfire.

On our return trips, we brought the wounded women and soldiers back to be nursed in the village. In 1997, my husband, his brother and his brother's wife were killed. I was left behind with two children and my inlaws' three orphaned children.

After the peace agreement was signed in 2005, most of us were left in a dilemma. Our suffering contribution towards the movement was forgotten.

A visit by Mama Gladys Mananyu and other Sudan Council of Churches staff to this remote area gave me the chance to express and share my pain and most importantly, learn something new in my life — peace work. This marked the start of my happiness in this community.

The training is the first of its kind in this area. I hope more training will take place with others who have similar problems, so that peace reaches all rural areas. I thank Act for Peace and the Sudan Council of Churches for sending people like Mama Gladys to our community. God bless you!



¹⁹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

²⁰ Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation

Libya

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 143

Conflict Snapshot

- Over 200,000 internally displaced people and over 500,000 refugees.²¹
- Critical shortages of food, water and medical supplies.²²

Many of the refugees who fled Libya in the early months of the 2011 armed conflict were migrant workers, but as the conflict worsened, Libyans have also fled in large numbers.

The conflict in Libya resulted in further contamination by unexploded ordnance and possibly landmines. Libya was already contaminated with mines as a result of conflicts with Egypt in 1977 and Chad in 1980 to 1987. The borders with Chad, Egypt and Tunisia are said to be affected by mines, as are areas in the north and south of the country.

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace has supported ACT Alliance partners who have responded with emergency assistance to the crisis in Libya throughout 2011. The ACT Alliance response has included humanitarian assistance in refugee camps on the Tunisian border with Libya, including sanitation services and psychosocial support, provision of cash support to vulnerable families in Egypt whose livelihoods have been affected by the crisis, and clearance of weapons and unexploded ordnance in Libya.

One ACT Alliance team has recently been working in the city of Misrata. Bombing in Misrata began in a concerted attack by Muammar Gaddafi's forces and was intensified in March 2011 with NATO airstrikes. The NATO strikes have added an array of unexploded ordnance to a landscape strewn with thousands of unexploded shells, landmines, cluster munitions, artillery shells and mortar rounds, which pose a deadly hazard to the people of Misrata.

Activities which directly remove the explosive remnants of war remove the threat of death or injury and enable community development, economic stability and long term stability. For stability to be achieved and then maintained, displaced people need to be able to return to their homes and re-establish livelihoods in an environment free from the threat of unexploded bombs and ordnance.

Our partners' work removing unexploded bombs will need to continue for many years.



can purchase a full demining kit, containing the equipment needed to conduct a demining operation.



Paul Jeffrey/ACT

²¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

²² Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIIRIYA: Increasing reports of internal displacement* [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/1B89A6094DAA3A26C1257879005B9140/\\$file/Libya_Overview_Apr2011.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/1B89A6094DAA3A26C1257879005B9140/$file/Libya_Overview_Apr2011.pdf)



Paul Jeffrey/ACT

KAVIRA'S STORY

“ My name is Kavira Germaine. I was distressed about the health of my six year old daughter, Katungu Charline, and was advised to move to Luofu for proper care. Following diagnosis, Katungu was moved to the Therapeutic Nutritional Unit in Kayna. I was told she had become malnourished because of unbalanced meals and recurrent displacement. Kayna is an intensive therapeutic Nutritional Unit and I was amazed that treatment is free of charge.

I was very impressed by all the medical care, nutrition, equipment and the willingness and commitment of staff with my daughter's and other children's treatment. They fed all the children with milk at intervals of three hours every night.

My daughter was admitted weighing 12 kilograms and she was released from the centre at 15 kilograms, having completely recovered.

Due to ongoing insecurity, I am no longer willing to return to Bunyatenge, my home village. I have been educated on feeding kids to avoid malnutrition and I am so really grateful to the staff. They asked me to teach other mothers about the techniques, which I will certainly do, no matter where we find refuge.

Thank you, Act for Peace, for your support of the Therapeutic Nutritional Unit.



Democratic Republic of the Congo

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 148

Conflict Snapshot

- Around 1.7 million internally displaced people and 455,852 refugees.²³
- More than half of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo lives under the poverty line.²⁴

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is regularly listed as the site of one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. A long series of conflicts ravaged the country throughout the 1990s, destroying most of its infrastructure. Millions of its people suffer from a lethal combination of disease and hunger caused by ongoing conflict and displacement. Recovery is slow and complex, making it one of the least developed countries in Africa.

DRC is rich in natural resources, but there is a desperate need for economic and social reconstruction before its potential can be realised. In much of the country, living conditions are dismal, access to health care is minimal and violence erupts frequently in unstable areas. Rape is horrifically common, as are extortion, kidnapping, looting, recruitment of children by armed groups and anti-personnel mine explosions.

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace partners in DRC are working to bring some stability to the lives of its people. In the eastern Congo, around 70 per cent of those left homeless by war are taken in by other families. The hosts, like the guests, have few resources, and it is the hospitality of the poor that welcomes the poor. Our partners in the area have set up programs to aid those who have taken in refugees. We provide additional supplies, food, and training programs so that people can help one another to survive conflict.

In 2011, our partner, the All Africa Conference of Churches, is also working on empowerment for victims of conflict in eastern DRC, especially women and children, who are affected by the widespread problem of gender-based violence.



can provide grain and vegetable seeds to farmers, so that they can produce nutritional food for their families.

²³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

²⁴ United Nations

Zimbabwe

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 140

Conflict Snapshot

- More than 880,000 internally displaced people, with many of them having been displaced more than once.²⁵
- 39 per cent of the population is undernourished.²⁶
- Life expectancy: 47 years.²⁷

Politically, Zimbabwe remains deeply divided along political party lines even under the Unity government of Zanu-PF and MDC-T. A number of key issues are presently before the government including the ratification of a new constitution and fresh elections likely to be held in early 2012. The issue of national healing runs parallel to both of these processes recognising the history of politically motivated violence during the 2008 elections. The collapse of the Zimbabwe dollar and the dramatic fallout from radical land distribution policies remain pressing concerns for political organisations, non-government sectors and the rural population. While political, social and economic freedoms and opportunities are slowly emerging, there appears to be a prevailing caution and concern surrounding how the country will emerge through this critical period of national development.



Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace partner, Christian Care Zimbabwe, currently implements an innovative conservation farming program with rural communities in the southern districts of Zimbabwe. The program has demonstrated great success in improving the food security status of selected households through the introduction of high yield seeds, targeted agricultural inputs and low cost farming techniques.

The program develops a cadre of skilled farmers who are able to maximize the production of maize, sorghum and vegetables for household consumption and for selling at the market. The program has reduced dependence on food handouts and allowed farming communities to strengthen their economic capacity. The conservation farming program is accompanied by leadership-focused training, emphasizing social responsibility and heightening awareness and sensitivity on the chronic health issue of HIV and AIDS.

Act for Peace also supports an ecumenical accompaniment program which aims to develop effective leadership within the Zimbabwe churches. Specifically, this will encourage greater stewardship of the church in tackling issues including the constitutional reform process, forthcoming elections and national healing. This will help deliver grassroots peace and reconciliation initiatives and actions against gross human abuse, violence and intolerance.



can provide training in sustainable agriculture to two Zimbabwean farmers.

²⁵ United Nations Human Development Report 2010

²⁶ United Nations Human Development Report 2010

²⁷ United Nations Human Development Report 2010

SHONANI'S STORY

“ My name is Shonani, and I live in the Masvingo region in Zimbabwe. I am 33 years old, and have a husband and four children. We have been using conservation farming for three years. My husband and I work on the farm during the day, while our children are at school.

Life has been hard for us, and many years it was hard to grow enough food, especially when the rainfalls failed.

Conservation farming has made our lives much easier. We can now grow a lot more food, and are much happier. Thank you for helping to bring nutrition and support to our people!





YESAYU'S STORY

“ My name is Yesayu Damo and I live here in the Amhara region of Ethiopia with my two daughters. Last year, our community built a well using the training and support from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church’s Development and Inter-church Aid Commission. I, along with the rest of the community, recognised a need for a well to access fresh and clean water.

Previously, I would walk 1.5 kilometres to a spring to collect water. In our community, we carry water using large clay pots roped to our backs, which weigh more than 12 kilograms when full. It would take half of the day just to get water for my family. Now, I live right next to the well and have so much more time for other tasks.

Amasegenalhu (Thank you)! Support from Act for Peace has helped to empower our community to improve our quality of life. Thanks to you, I hope that I can be a positive role model for my two daughters.



Ethiopia

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 131

Conflict Snapshot

- 44 per cent of the population is undernourished, with this number rising drastically daily due to the famine in the Horn of Africa.²⁸
- Only 22 per cent of the population has access to safe water supplies and only six per cent to adequate sanitation.²⁹
- 80 per cent of Ethiopians rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, with the country now facing the worst drought in sixty years.³⁰

Ethiopia was already struggling with ethnic and religious divides before the drought crisis worsened. Across the Horn of Africa, 12 million people are on the brink of starvation as a result of the drought and increased food prices.

Work of Our Partners

Our Ethiopian partners are working to assist over 100,000 drought-affected communities in nine districts of Oromia Region of Ethiopia and assisting Somali refugees in Dollo Odo camps.

The program in Oromia aims to save lives and livelihoods through providing food and agricultural inputs, rehabilitating water supplies and strengthening of drought coping plans.

The work assisting Somali refugees in Dollo Odo is through the provision of food, health and nutrition, shelter materials, water, sanitation and hygiene, literacy programs, standard and quality secondary education as well as psychosocial support and skills training.

Our partner, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church’s Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC), continued to assist rural communities to help break the cycle of extreme poverty and conflict. DICAC’s Integrated Rural Development Projects tackle several cross-cutting issues simultaneously, including water, sanitation and hygiene, income generation, gender and development activities to enhance women’s participation in society. Through these programs, they also work to eradicate harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation and early child marriage.



can provide two families with emergency shelter during the current drought crisis.



can supply a pump for one hand-dug water well.

²⁸ United Nations Human Development Report 2010

²⁹ Water Aid

³⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

ASIA

Sri Lanka

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 126

Conflict Snapshot

- More than 220,000 people internally displaced after the conflict between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil Tigers.³¹
- 141,063 refugees have left Sri Lanka.³²
- 21 per cent of the population is undernourished.³³

The political landscape of Sri Lanka is characterised by three main features: the effects of the protracted armed conflict between the government and the rebel Tamil Tigers; ongoing power struggles between political parties, also involving hardliner groups; and tensions and distrust between different ethnic and religious groups due to the war's distortion of the social fabric.

The costs of the war, which ended in May 2009, remain high, having mostly affected innocent civilians through the severe humanitarian crisis and grave human rights violations. Sri Lanka now faces a huge challenge in resettlement, rehabilitation, large scale infrastructure reconstruction and reconciliation between and within ethnic communities.

The 2004 tsunami and the devastating floods of December 2010 to February 2011 have heightened the challenges, with two million people suffering large scale displacement and damage to their houses, livelihoods and crops.



\$95 can pay for nutritious meals for a week for 10 families displaced by a disaster.

MR THEVARAJAH'S STORY

The National Christian Council of Sri Lanka is helping communities to rebuild after extreme flooding in late 2010 and early 2011. While all communities were affected, those in the north-east bore the worst of the war between government forces and the rebel Tamil Tigers.

Once the floodwaters receded, most of the families returned to their original homes to find major losses to property and livelihoods. Our partner provided food, shelter and livestock.

In this photo, farmer K. Thevarajah holds his daughter, who is disabled. When the water level rose rapidly within his house, he carried her, his elderly father and his five other children to safety in the church.

When the floods came, I took my elderly father and my children to the church in my village. I knew they would look after us. Before the flood I had a home garden, growing chilli, brinjal and okra, which I used to take to the market and sell. I had an acre of land and could support myself, my six children and my

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace supports the work of our partner, the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL), in disaster relief and rehabilitation, peace-building and reconciliation and upholding community and asylum seekers' rights.

Act for Peace also supports the Organisation for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR), who are assisting over 72,600 Sri Lankan refugees in 112 camps in Tamil Nadu, India. Their health program has created a pool of trained people in the camps — health workers and self-help groups — who have been providing successful health and nutrition measures. It is intended that these skills will be transferable to Sri Lanka when they repatriate. Efforts have been made to address identified gaps in services. For example, a diabetes screening program, a community rehabilitation program to better assist people with disabilities and a close screening and nutrition program for underweight children have been prioritised.

In June 2011, AusAID and Act for Peace enabled two OfERR representatives, Samuel Chandrachan, OfERR's founder, and Florina Benoit, to present at the 2011 Refugee Conference held in Sydney to mark the 60th anniversary of the United Nations' Refugee Convention.

Mr Chandrachan also went to Canberra to thank AusAID for its support, through Act for Peace, for OfERR's health program, to advocate for continued Australian support for Sri Lankan refugees and to help Sri Lanka achieve a political, social and physical environment that promotes the full rights of all ethnic communities. He warmly thanked Act for Peace's supporters for their partnership with OfERR since the mid 1980s.



Sonali Fernando/ACT

wife, while making a little profit. Over the years, I was able to buy a cow and some goats. They grazed near the lagoon. When the floods came, all my animals perished. Twenty-two years of my life, washed away. All my savings were in those animals.

³¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

³² Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

³³ United Nations Human Development Report 2010



Burma/Myanmar

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 133

Conflict Snapshot

- There are an estimated 470,000 people displaced in eastern Burma/Myanmar, with more having been displaced since the general elections held in November 2010.³⁴
- 146,000 refugees in camps along the Thai-Burma border.
- Around 5.2 million people live in townships contaminated with landmines.³⁵

For years, Burma/Myanmar was ruled by a military junta which suppressed almost all dissent and wielded absolute power in the face of international condemnation and sanctions. With the recent elections, many had hoped that the situation would improve. Unfortunately, all early indications are that the elections have done nothing to weaken military control over the country. The former military junta and its proxy party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party, have a stranglehold on parliament with a Constitution that empowers the military to resume control whenever it considers national security to be under threat.³⁶

There is ongoing conflict in Burma/Myanmar between government forces and ethnic groups, as well as large scale displacement and gross human rights violations, particularly in ethnic areas and in regions where there are large infrastructure projects.

Burma/Myanmar's military and non-state armed groups have used antipersonnel mines consistently throughout the country's long-running civil war. These landmines are concentrated in border areas from decades-old struggles for autonomy by ethnic minorities.

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace supports a range of partners in Burma/Myanmar and on its borders. We are a member of the Thailand Burma Border Consortium which provides food, shelter and other assistance for 146,000 refugees in 10 camps. We have received generous funding from AusAID and our supporters for many years for this work. This has now also allowed us expand support to medical, water and sanitation programs.

The camps are managed by committees of refugees elected by the refugee population. This is an effective model, though sadly it is rare in other camps around the world.

Act for Peace also supports community-based organisations in the conflict zones in eastern Burma/Myanmar providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced people, whom no other aid agencies can reach. This assistance includes food aid and mine action to prevent further incidents and assist victims.

One part of the mine action program is a prosthetic clinic in Karen State, Burma/Myanmar, where mine survivors have constructed the building and run the clinic on a volunteer basis. Last year, 8,513 people in villages were educated about the risks of landmines through this program.



can provide a mine survivor with a prosthetic leg.

³⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

³⁵ Geneva Call - http://www.genevacall.org/resources/research/f-research/2001-2010/2011_GC_BURMA_Landmine_RPT_CD-Rom_ENG.pdf

³⁶ Thailand Burma Border Consortium July-December 2010 report

THE NERKAW'S STORY

“ My name is The Nerkaw and I'm proud of my work with the prosthetic workshop at Kho Kay in Karen State. Mine-survivors like me built this clinic and others now run it on a volunteer basis.

The clinic provides prosthetic limbs to victims of landmines and provides space for organisations to educate villagers about the risks of landmines.

Many people cannot come to the clinic due to their loss of limb, inclement weather, difficult terrain and the ongoing civil war. I lead one of five outreach teams who meet victims that are too far away to be able travel to the clinic. I take a cast for the prosthesis, get it produced at the workshop and then take it to the survivor to be fitted.

Recently, I travelled for weeks through mountains, mud and rivers, sleeping in hammocks in the open forest despite the rainy season, to deliver a new prosthesis to Mu'Kpaw, a farmer who stepped on a mine back in January 1986.

Mu'Kpaw's prosthesis looks different from most other prosthetic legs. Rather than a replica of a normal foot, he has been fitted with a so-called "farmer-foot." It is specially constructed prosthesis, which is more stable and thus more suitable for cultivating muddy rice fields, climbing steep inclines or even for fleeing the violence of the protracted civil war.

On my way back to the prosthetic clinic, I continue to observe and make notes of any unmet prostheses needs. There are at least ten more mine victims that we can reach in this small district who have asked us for prosthetic legs. Hopefully we can help them if the prosthetic program receives funding for it. Even though I only get paid \$50 a month, I do the work because there is such a great need and also because my girlfriend is a landmine victim.

”



Indonesia (West Papua)

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 68 (Indonesia)

Conflict Snapshot

The pattern of political violence in West Papua province continues to destabilise the region, as well as highlighting the need for a meaningful solution between the Papuan leadership and the Indonesian government.

Recent demonstrations in response to continuing reports of abuse and intimidation have cast a spotlight on the failed special autonomy measures put forward by the Indonesian government to provide limited authority to Papuans over local policy and decision making.

Amidst the calls for self-determination and a new political identity, West Papua continues to struggle with economic, health and livelihood indicators that are amongst the worst in Indonesia. This perilous state has been worsened by continuing transmigration into Papua from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago and the resulting impact on jobs, the economy and the ethnic composition of the region.

West Papua's environment remains exposed to indiscriminate logging, mining and natural gas development affecting the environment and the land-holding status of the indigenous population.

Work of Our Partners

Act for Peace's partners in West Papua continue to train young Papuans to be leaders in their communities to raise awareness and help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Other training initiatives focus on business management training targeting small scale business operators, supporting productive industries within the local population including fishing, kiosk/mini markets and brick making.



can provide for one person to attend a training course on HIV and AIDS awareness and support to affected persons, allowing them to train others in their community.



NCCP

Philippines

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 136

Conflict Snapshot

- Over a quarter of the population lives in poverty.³⁷
- After the torrential rains in June 2011, more of the Philippines now faces food insecurity.
- Over the past decade, almost 1,200 extrajudicial killings were recorded under the former Arroyo regime's military counter-insurgency operation. Many victims were human rights workers and church leaders.³⁸

The Aquino government, appointed in June 2010, promised broad changes to improve the Philippines' damning human rights record, perpetuated under the Arroyo administration's Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) counter-insurgency policy. More than a year into its tenure, however, the government has failed to arrest the continuing cycle of violence, with extrajudicial killings, violent abuse, unlawful arrest and disappearances still prevailing. In Mindanao, following the end of major hostilities between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine government, the number of displaced persons has dropped dramatically. However, continuing clan warfare has exacerbated household and community displacement and a climate of fear and uncertainty remains. The impact of government military operations and the actions of multinational mining and extraction companies has also caused significant damage to the lives and livelihoods of indigenous populations.

³⁷ United Nations Human Development Report 2010

³⁸ Karapatan Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights

Work of Our Partners

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), as part of the ecumenical movement in the Philippines, promotes a culture of justice and peace through understanding, cooperation and the affirmation of a common humanity. NCCP draws on its broad ecumenical network and grass roots support to carry out essential human rights work for the marginalised and voiceless.

NCCP has for a number of years implemented the interfaith program "Not without my sisters and brothers". This program specifically identifies Muslim and Indigenous people as key participants in dialogue towards shared experiences and peaceful negotiations. Program activities have included interfaith education and forums, fact-finding missions to investigate human rights abuses, initiatives supporting children and youth theatre and inter-religious and interfaith forums. In times of natural disaster, Act for Peace also supports NCCP in its emergency response and early recovery programs.



can enable a young Indigenous person to attend consultation and training on human rights and civil liberties.

Cambodia

2011 Global Peace Index ranking of 153 countries: 115

Conflict Snapshot

- Approximately 26 million cluster munitions were dropped on eastern Cambodia in the 1960s and 1970s by US forces in bombing campaigns.
- In 2009, unexploded ordnance-related accidents accounted for over 50 per cent of the casualties in Cambodia, with the vast majority of accidents occurring as a result of deliberate handling of ordnance.

Decades of conflict — including the brutal regime of Pol Pot in the 1970s — have left Cambodia one of the poorest countries in the world. The presence of unexploded munitions — thought to number in the millions — is a major barrier to development and the reduction of poverty. It restricts access to land that could otherwise be used for agriculture, schools, resettlement, infrastructure development and access to water. These weapons continue to kill and maim civilians, despite an ongoing demining drive.

Work of Our Partners

Our partner, the Mines Advisory Group, is clearing unexploded ordnance and cluster munitions from north-eastern Cambodia to reduce the threat to the lives of rural Cambodian communities.

Over the past two decades, more than 530 million m² of suspected contaminated land has been released to communities by our partner through clearance and survey for safe productive use. This land has mainly then been used for agriculture, with significant areas also used for resettlement of displaced people and for infrastructure development.

Our partner has found and destroyed more than 60,000 landmines and 180,000 items of unexploded ordnance, including cluster munitions and light weapons.

Field workers recently returned to Phlov Meas, Battambang Province, almost 12 months after two minefields in the village had been cleared. According to the community chief, Vai Chamroeun, more than 90 per cent of people in his community now earn a living by growing corn, sugar cane, beans and sesame. He said that before the clearance took place, few crops were grown. "Villagers were afraid of mines so they didn't expand the land for cultivation. Now their lives are getting better. It's not as hard as it was before. Today, people live in safety."



can clear 40m² of land in Cambodia landmines and other unexploded bombs.



Sean Sutton/MAG