

January 2011

Director's Report

“Those who learn to operate in a vastly changing global environment, those who can walk on quick sand and dance with electrons: those who amass an array of valid experiences: those who see connections where others see chaos will flourish and find opportunity in every disturbance.” (Ogden, 1993)

I am grateful to Brenda Longstaff of the Northumbria NHS trust for pointing me in the direction of this quote which very well sums up both the work of BUILD at a strategic level and the work of linkers at the grassroots level. In the New Year we shall be promoting Brenda's vital research into the impact of health links.

We are certainly 'operating in a rapidly changing global environment' and often feel we are 'walking on the quick sand of change' but also flourishing in a vast 'array of valid experiences'.

Perhaps the greatest changes we have experienced in the past year have been the political and economic environment in which we are working. But we have been hugely fortunate in being institutionally very light on our feet and dependent on only three employed people (and four dogs in the office which has the label "Chiens Lunatiques" on the front door!) supported by a band of highly committed volunteers, not least in our trustees. We have not been dependent on Government funding which, with our small size, has given us a flexibility which has allowed us to work effectively in the changing climate. The Big Society is real to us particularly when we talk about the Big Global Society of which we are all a part, to which we contribute and on which we are all dependant in different ways.

The General Election in May saw the temporary disbandment of the all-party parliamentary group "Connecting Communities" and the standing down of the Chair Nigel Griffiths MP to whom we are grateful. We were delighted when Claire Perry the new MP for the Devizes constituency agreed to take on the Chair of the APPG since when Pepi has worked hard with her and her pps Chris Jones to get the APPG up and running again and we were very pleased to be able to meet at the re-launch of the APPG in October with Stephen O'Brien, Minister in the Department for International Development to inform him of the different sectoral work of BUILD much of which is continuing to be supported by DFID through the Global School Partnerships programme the International Health Links Programme and the

Education

Cambridge Education Foundation
READ International

Community

Schumacher Institute

Health

World Child Cancer
LifeLine Network

Local Authority

Local Government Association

BUILD's New Trustees

Tina Alexander
Nsikan-George Emana

Global Community Links programme. We subsequently heard that DFID is putting a further £5m into a new Health Links fund.

We like to think that the two meetings we held with Andrew Mitchell, Secretary of State for International Development when he was in opposition may have influenced the coalition Government to continue to support these programmes, but it has added a greater urgency to our call for evidence of impact of partnerships. Without properly conducted evidence there is the danger that community based partnerships will be seen to be 'fluffy' relationships that are unworthy of the support that can make such a difference. BUILD will be the repository of such research, available to all with acknowledgements to those who undertook the research.

In the meantime, we continue to act with Margaret Burr (producer of the Toolkit for Linking) as advisors to the DFID Global Community Links programme and meet twice a year to discuss with DFID and British Council, the manager of the programme some of the issues that arise as the programme progresses.

We look forward to working through the all-party parliamentary group in the coming months and are looking at innovative ways in which we can use it to support more partnership linking.

We were delighted to hear during the year that we had been awarded a grant by John Paul Getty Trust to work with diaspora groups in the UK to build on the natural links that they have to their home communities to encourage them to take advantage of the DFID funding available to build partnerships between schools, health institutions and communities here with counterparts in their home communities. One potential use of the APPG will be to introduce some of the diaspora communities to the country specific APPGs at Westminster, of which there are many, so that the voice of the former can be heard in Parliament.

Mike Waldron of inter-pares associates and Dr Atul Shah of Diverse Ethics are managing our Building on UK Diaspora International Partnerships programme and already we have held a meeting with leaders of ethnic minority organisations in Sheffield who have set up a small committee to take this work forward in that community. Six more regional meetings will be held during the next two years with a view to developing a national strategy. But we are also finding that the diaspora from particular countries are asking us to work with them to BUILD on their links. Already we have been in discussion with groups and individuals from Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Sudan and Kenya about how we might take this forward. It is also clear that there is a real need for capacity building for some of these organisations and that is likely to be a challenge for us in the coming months.

The year saw the end of the first year of the excellent work conducted by Stephen Lyon and Andrew Watts into "Bringing the World into Church Schools in the UK" funded by the Jerusalem Trust. This culminated in a meeting at Church House where the findings from their consultation were shared with 30 representatives of the Anglican and Methodist Churches, DFID, British Council, UKOWLA and others involved in school partnerships. It is clear that there is considerable enthusiasm for the concept of using the links that the Churches already have (e.g. through the dioceses) to partners in the South to bring those partnerships to the schools for which the Churches are responsible. The challenge will be to

harness that enthusiasm and convert it into practical action. We are planning four regional meetings in 2011 to encourage school partnerships between Church schools with counterparts in partner dioceses, the first to be held in the Worcester Diocese in February.

We are grateful members of the Royal Commonwealth Society, which during the year has given special rates to a number of BUILD members, and use the great facilities that the RCS has to offer in Northumberland Avenue in terms of office, meeting and refreshment facilities. If there are members of BUILD reading this who have not taken up the offer of special rates, please get in touch with Pepi and she will arrange it for you. The RCS hosted an excellent BUILD meeting during the year and we are grateful to Danny Sriskandarajah, Director of the RCS and Mark Collins Director of the Commonwealth Foundation for their participation in the discussions.

As a Commonwealth accredited organisation we continue to work in a Commonwealth context and during the year produced a paper which was distributed to all Commonwealth Health Ministers prior to their meeting in Geneva encouraging them to recognise the value of health care partnerships and met with Lord Crisp who was to address the meeting.

We provided opportunities for members of BUILD to meet with Mark Collins, Director of the Commonwealth Foundation (another BUILD member) to explore ways in which these organisations might use the Commonwealth family to advance their causes e.g. International National Trust Organisations an international body that draws attention to the importance of the recognition, preservation and the development of heritage globally; and Transform Drugs Policy Foundation to look at a potential role for the Commonwealth in addressing the issue of illegal drugs in producer, transit and consumer countries.

We see these opportunities for networking between the BUILD membership as a vital function of our work and there is no better opportunity for this than the two day annual meeting that we hold at Charney Manor. Next year sees the CHOGM in Perth and we hope that we shall have a presence at the People's Forum to advance the cause of pan Commonwealth partnerships.

Previous work with the Commonwealth Foundation has borne the fruit of two new, locally registered National Linking Organisations in Cameroon (COWLA) and Nigeria (NOWLA) with a planned third in Kenya within the next year.

The driving force behind NOWLA is Nsikan-George Emana from the Gender and Development Association in Nigeria and we are delighted that she has agreed to become a trustee of BUILD as has Tina Alexander, Honorary Consul in Dominica. Having trustees internationally may give us communication challenges but it will certainly strengthen our work considerably and we are delighted to have them working with us. In the meantime we were very sad to see the departure at the AGM of Sir Nigel Thompson as Chair of BUILD since its birth in 2002 and are hugely grateful for his affirmation, support and direction of our work over the eight years of BUILD's existence.

During the year Pepi has been working on the development of the database of links and already it is coming into its own as we encourage communities with links of all kinds to inform their MPs, with whom

they are cross-referenced on the database, of the work they are doing. It is vital that we engage with our policy makers to inform them of the breadth of international work that is going on their constituencies. Many MPs have said that they are being questioned as to why the DFID budget has been ring-fenced when there are so many problems that are having to be faced here at home. I have no doubt that it is precisely because of the high level of public engagement and interest in global justice and international development in so many different ways that Government made the decision to protect the budget. If the Big Society does not include the Big Global Society in which we live it will fail.

It is also significant that we have had greater attendance by MPs at APPG meetings when they have been lobbied to attend by their constituents both of whom we have been able to identify through the database.

Charney Manor in Oxfordshire was once again a great meeting place for BUILD members to share wisdom and experience. A meeting in November was not quite the same as the previous Charney meetings that we have held in the summer months when we have had the opportunity to reflect in the lovely gardens. On this occasion participants brought stories of the way the partnership links are impacting on society here and in the South. We are capturing those stories and using them in different ways to promote the movement to impress potential donors and policy makers and to use the experiences of one link to enhance another.

We were pleased to be joined by representatives of the UK Borders Agency who gave us frank and vital views on how to put forward successful visa applications. It was a helpful session for everyone.

2011 will undoubtedly be a challenging year for many of us as individual agencies but as the effective coalition that BUILD is I have no doubt that we shall continue to play a vital part in bringing peace, prosperity and justice through partnerships.

EDUCATION

Cambridge Education Foundation, the not-for-profit arm of Cambridge Education, is part of the Mott MacDonald Group. Two representatives, Angie Cook from Cambridge Education Foundation and Ian Flower, a Divisional Director from Wales, attended the BUILD meeting in Charney Manor in November 2010.

The Mott MacDonald Group is a diverse management, engineering and development consultancy working with public and private clients worldwide. As one of the world's largest

employee-owned companies with over 14,000 staff, we have principal offices in nearly 50 countries, and projects in 140, and, as an employee-owned company, we are fully committed to integrating corporate responsibility. Making a difference in people's lives, we believe, involves respect, awareness, open communication and commitment. It also entails following the principles of sustainable development. Mott MacDonald is backing the development by Cambridge Education Foundation of a mutually beneficial partnership

created with a community outside Accra in Ghana.

Do the employees value the Group's commitment to corporate responsibility? The answer must be 'yes', since the Group scored 78% for making a **positive difference** to the world, which was the **highest score** of any firm on the 2010 Sunday Times Best Big Companies list.

Angie Cook

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READ International began life in 2003 as a Book Project based at Nottingham University, founded by a group of socially entrepreneurial students following a gap year teaching in Tanzania. Now there are close to 1,000 student volunteers involved, operating from a network of over 45 university sites across the UK.

We collect school textbooks and children's literature from primary and secondary schools throughout the UK, sort the books and send the most relevant, up-to-date, and high quality books to schools in Tanzania and Uganda. Any books collected which are not relevant or appropriate to send are sold online through our partnership with **Better World Books** or recycled to generate funding.

Tanzania and Uganda follow a secondary school syllabus almost identical to the UK, but teachers often lack the resources needed to teach. In the UK newer editions of books

inevitably replace the old (very often only a couple of years old though), which makes for good quality, but technically out of date textbooks filling up school store rooms or ending up in landfill. We send them to where they are really needed, improving access to education for thousands of children in East Africa. In the UK our trained student volunteers run a presentation programme, developed in partnership with Oxfam GB and experienced teachers, helping to raise awareness of global citizenship in secondary schools throughout the UK.

Since we first sent books in 2005, we have shipped a total of **850,000** books to Tanzania and Uganda and are supporting the renovation of dozens of school libraries so that access to these books is also improved. In Tanzania and Uganda we work closely with the Ministry of Education to ensure that our books go to where they are most needed. Our university student volunteers personally distribute the books in East Africa, building relationships with local Ministry Officials, Headteachers, teachers and students at the schools they visit in order to make the books most effective. During library renovations the volunteers visit the school every day for approximately one month, working in partnerships with the students to create a space for them to learn, exchanging stories and experiences with them whilst doing so.

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Global Neighbours?

Paul Hawken, the author of *Blessed Unrest*, estimates that the number of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the world is well over one million, maybe as many as two million. They come in all shapes and sizes from the big ones like WWF, Amnesty International and Oxfam down to the tiny ones, often run by a small band or even a dedicated single person. They work in all areas of what is broadly described as social and environmental justice.

Systems thinking is a discipline that has a long history. An extensive body of knowledge exists mostly in the academic world but substantial use of systems thinking methodologies occurs in the corporate sector where it drives efficiency measures and productivity and recently, in the UK, there has been an upsurge in using these ideas in the public sector. Systems thinking is far from being a panacea and it always carries a risk that it might make things worse but it has the potential to improve, to see things in the 'big picture', and to explore the consequences of action both within and without the immediate organisation.

The Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems works to apply systems thinking to the many issues that arise in trying to build a sustainable world. For a while now we have explored the idea of providing support and

resources to CSOs to help them do a bit of systems thinking but, and this is the novelty, to do this through a linking process. If we could share the process of thinking about an issue or even the whole organisation, a much richer and more comprehensive picture will emerge and decision making becomes clearer if not easier.

If two CSOs (or more) were linked for the purpose of exploring some common theme or problem that was important to them like water or pollution or energy supplies then it would provide a reason to step back and look at what's going on and to start a dialogue. It's the old adage of two heads are better than one. If there were a set of system thinking methods to help this then that would provide structure and tools.

So far this is all speculation but we would like to propose a project, which we are calling **Global Neighbours** that would provide resources for this linked systems thinking process – guides on how to do systems thinking, a website for matching and for dialogue processes, databases for subject information and whatever may emerge from thinking about this idea. Which leads to a request: what do you think of the idea? If you have any comments or suggestion please email me on ian@schumacher.org.uk

Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (Accra Ghana) twinned with Royal Hospital for Sick Children Edinburgh

As part of a concerted effort to improve supportive, palliative and curative care for children with cancer worldwide, two charities, World Child Cancer and AfrOx, have just opened this twinning project. World Child Cancer now has 6 such projects across 3 continents and AfrOx has been developing an all ages comprehensive Cancer Action plan with colleagues, NGOs and the Ministry in Ghana. Based on well tried twinning models pioneered by the St Jude Research Hospital Outreach Team and by individual members/groups from the International Society of Paediatric Oncology, assistance was requested by Lorna Renner in Accra (paediatrician/oncologist) with the support of a newly formed parents' group. A five year plan was formulated with year on year measurable aims, a UK team visited and assessed needs, strict clinical and financial governance guidelines were put in place and the project started with a 3 day training/education workshop this month led by a team of 2 paediatricians, a senior nurse and a play therapist. The 46 delegates were multiprofessional and included those from both Accra and another centre, Kumasi.

The agreed key features of the project are to:

- 1 Raise awareness of cancer (signs and symptoms – poster campaign) both professionally and in the wider community.
- 2 Encourage earlier and precise diagnosis.
- 3 Ensure a regular and affordable supply of cytotoxics and supportive drugs (with subsidy).

- 4 Increase numbers treated on protocol (curative intent).
- 5 Publicise curability of some tumours (eg Burkitt lymphoma), acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, Wilms' kidney tumour).
- 6 Establish a comprehensive case registry to monitor survival, morbidity, mortality and abandonment.
- 7 Train and retain key staff.
- 8 Create satellite centres to reduce travel to the centre for all aspects of care.

Ghana has a population of 23 million (40% under 15 years) with an estimated 1000 – 1200 new childhood cancer cases/year, of whom only 200 reach the 2 development centres and receive any form of care. Ghana has made major improvement in under 5 mortality (Millennium Goal 4), and has a low H.I.V. prevalence rate. Cancer is thus emerging as a major cause of morbidity and mortality. With its annual per capita income of just 630 US dollars, treatment must be affordable. Nearly 40% of the tumours seen are Burkitt lymphomas, reported to be curable with simple therapy which costs 50 US dollars (a fraction of the cost required in high income countries).

Start up funds for the project has been received from THET/British Council Health Links and individual philanthropy. Ongoing funding and long term sustainability are a challenge but must be overcome if we are to help the estimated 100,000 children who currently die worldwide from cancer without any relief and no chance of cure.

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The **LifeLine Network** Conference which took place in October 2010 marked the climax of an eventful few months for the Network. 55 delegates from 21 countries arrived in East London for ten packed days of sharing ideas, knowledge and expertise. Some important links with key UK funders and researchers were made during the week – links that will enable members on the ground to access resources and expertise to develop their ground-breaking work. Many of the delegates were new to the Network, so spending the week together allowed us to build relationships and share vision, expertise and contacts.

Network members returned to their nations inspired by one another's work – we believe there is no substitute for face to face meetings where members can support, equip and encourage one another in the vital work they are doing to challenge the causes of poverty in their communities across the world. Since the conference we have seen a new level of ongoing communication between members across the world with Skype conferences playing a major part in the development of strategy for the next phase of Network activity.

Our members have continued travelling all over the world to different Network bases to share best practice and see one another's projects in action. The London base is looking forward to receiving Leonard Kamara from Sierra Leone for a month in March 2011 as part of the

Commonwealth Fellowship Scheme. Leonard will be working with members of UK-based staff to develop business and management skills and will have input into projects based in London.

Over the past few months, we have invested heavily in ensuring the world knows about what our members are up to, through a new e-newsletter, Round Table discussions and a shiny new website (www.lifelinenetwork.org).

In December, two of our members based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, took part in a series of live programmes on the BBC World Service about reconciliation in Sierra Leone since the civil war, speaking about their experiences as child soldiers and the work they are doing with children affected by war through the Nehemiah Project.

During the conference we held an event at Portcullis House to showcase our members' work with vulnerable children and young people. Stephen Timms MP hosted the event, which drew a crowd of over 30 funders, practitioners and researchers who had the opportunity to hear from some of our members about their work and experiences.

Jamie Singleton

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LOCAL AUTHORITY

The Local Government Association

(LGA) promotes the local government role in both international development policy and partnership programmes. After a successful project with the South African Local

Government Association in 2010, we are developing, in partnership with United Cities and Local Government Africa (UCLGA), a 'Pan-African Peer Review' project supporting the

improvement of local government associations across the continent through peer-to-peer monitoring and exchange. The LGA is currently working in partnership with the Mexican State of Nuevo Leon to support the development and delivery of their Waste strategy – including helping establish a municipal waste officers regional network; seeking improved private sector partnerships and procurement; and building community waste partnerships. We are also beginning a Local Government strengthening project in Kosovo, in partnership with Coffey International.

In terms of policy, the Local Government Association participated in a United Nations / World Bank 'Local Government and Millennium Development Goals Forum' in Kampala, Uganda this September, and the 'European Development Days' in December to share some of our current activities with donors and look at how decentralised cooperation might be further enhanced and expanded. As members of the 'European Platform for Regional and Local Authorities for Development' we are working to influence the new EU Green Paper on 'development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development'. We have been lobbying, in partnership with ICLEI, to enhance the local government elements in the new UN Climate agreement included in the

negotiations at Cancún and at Johannesburg next year. We will be working with Local Government partners in the run up to key international forum, including the next Forth High level meeting on Aid effectiveness, 29 Nov – 1 Dec, 2011 in Busan, Republic of Korea, as well as the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Conference in Cardiff, 15-18 March 2011.

We are also members of the 'UK Local Government Alliance for International Development' (LG Alliance) who promote the role of local government in international development and encourages UK councils to get involved. LG Alliance sends out regular e-newsletters with details of current opportunities for councils to get involved, as well as the latest funding opportunities and development news. The LG Alliance has recently developed an online toolkit bringing together a variety of resources to support councils in their international development work. It is also developing training opportunities for those working in or with the local government sector. The next training event is in Edinburgh on **27 January 2011**, focussed on funding, media and communications. www.lg-alliance.org

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BUILD'S NEW TRUSTEES

Tina Alexander – Lifeline Dominica

Tina Alexander is a British Social Worker who emigrated to Dominica with her Dominican Pastor Husband in 1994. She has a degree in Social Work and, having served for seven years as the psychiatric social worker for the island employed by the Ministry of Health,

undertook her Master's in Counseling with the University of the West Indies.

As one of very few qualified counselors in Dominica, she offers her services to Dominicans and ex Pats with a variety of psychological and relationship difficulties. She is also on call to the Police Welfare Dept. and

various banks and businesses for emergency purposes. Another role added to her portfolio recently was that of the British Honorary Consul and so she is available to assist any British visitors who get into trouble.

If there is anyone worthy of the saying “wears many hats,” it is **Sister Tina** Alexander. She is an active member of the Dominican Cancer Society, Life Goes On, the Sustainable Living Initiative Centre, and New Day Church and Projects Division, as well as an integral part of running the Grotto Home for the Homeless.

As the Executive Director of Lifeline Ministries in Dominica, she works to provide support to community based organizations and individuals. With its ten years of implementing more than 100 projects and disbursing over US\$1,000,000 of funds, the NGO has an impressive track record. In addition to preparing proposals, Lifeline promotes good governance, monitors progress, provides reports for funders, and offers unique mentoring and support for those implementing the projects. With a vast network of contacts, Lifeline welcomes international volunteers with open arms whether as interns or to use their more specific skills and qualifications.

Lifeline has current opportunities for volunteers to help install alternative energy generating technology in primary schools or to assist with computer maintenance and repair classes for marginalized youth. Ongoing projects include promoting universal access to education, accessing support for disadvantaged children, persons with disabilities and those coping with HIV, as well as developing skills training programs in the State Prison.

For over ten years, school children in the UK have collected toys and sent them in shoe boxes courtesy of Geest Shipping for

distribution to children in the various partnering organizations. Unfortunately this source has recently dried up. Tina is seeking a new source of supply to continue this practical demonstration of linking communities across the world.

GADA's (Gender & Development Action) WORK AT PROMOTING BUILD'S VISION IN NIGERIA

The value of development links and partnerships between people, institutions and communities for mutual benefits is gradually gaining wide acceptance. This global understanding has transcended the “simplistic and traditional development pattern(s)” of mobilizing communities within boundaries and across boundaries for action and changes.

This new concept of global linking institutions for rapid and sustainable global development is shared by the Senior Programme facilitator and head of the Policy and Advocacy Office, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION (GADA) in Nigeria. Since her involvement in the work of BUILD; Ms Nsikan-George Eman has laid some fundamental steps towards the popularization and further institutionalization of BUILD's vision in Nigeria through the Nigeria One World Linking Association (NOWLA).

The following activities have been undertaken to jump-start the initiative in the pilot linking site(s) in Nigeria:

1. Initial informal discussions held with the representative of the village head of Ikot Obioko, (a small locality in Ikot Abasi LGA of Akwa Ibom State); Chief G.G Ufford who also runs a small community assemblage of pupils for pre-basic education was a success. (Details can be found in the *REPORT ON FOLLOW UP*

ACTIVITIES TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF PLEDGES MADE DURING THE BUILD MEETING IN CAMEROUN). The meeting was facilitated by Schools network for community development have been held

2. At the state level, discussions have been held with the Commission of Gender Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Eunice Thompson on the possibility of developing schools and community partnerships as well as articulating a framework for its implementation in the state.
3. Issuance of official correspondence to the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State to kick-start some concrete actions towards institutionalizing NOWLA. (Yet to get concrete feedback from Governor's office)
4. Proposal to hold a meeting with CSOs to begin consultations for collaborative engagement on the linking idea in progress.
5. In the course of implementing a biodiversity project in Kuta, Shiroro local government area of Niger state, Nigeria; we have built new community links with a representative of one rural community, Apegala, challenged by the absence of a primary school. We have started some discussions with them on the possibility of securing funder's approval and resources towards providing a small community school. We are hopeful that when this is achieved, we shall encourage linking partnerships between this school and school in Yaoundé, Cameroun or in Ghana where we have our partners.
6. During the seventh Africa Development Forum in Ethiopia, I met with and discussed the possibility of community friendship between the LUNGOS Commission in Seychelles. Discussion was fruitful and we are having some encouraging feedbacks from Mrs Marie-Nella Azemia, the vice-chairman and Secretary General, Gender commission of LUNGOS.ⁱ

ⁱ LUNGOS is a liaison unit of non-governmental organization of Seychelles

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