

# AUSTCARE IN THE FIELD



SUMMER 2005/2006

## SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE AUSTCARE HELPS COMMUNITIES IN NEED



**PAKISTAN:** Following October's devastating earthquake AUSTCARE immediately launched an appeal to assist the most vulnerable and badly affected families in the most severely impacted districts of Pakistan. Here the earthquake has claimed over 87,000 lives while more than 100,000 people have been injured and 3.3 million are displaced.

Over the last 2 months, efforts to ensure emergency relief supplies reach those most in need have been hampered by high-altitude terrains, snowfalls and landslides. Millions of survivors still urgently need shelter and medical supplies to survive the harsh Kashmiri winter. Without adequate shelter and protection against the cold the chances of illness are increasing.

AUSTCARE has, so far, raised over \$185,000 in our South Asia Earthquake Appeal. With your support we are now helping to fund ActionAid Pakistan's emergency relief response, which has provided basic food items, medical care, drug supplies, tents and blankets to badly affected households. Ongoing relief efforts will target people in inaccessible areas who have yet to receive emergency assistance. Female headed households and people with disabilities are a priority. With your support, AUSTCARE will assist approximately 115 households or 1,300 individuals.

AUSTCARE acknowledges the Australian Government's grant of \$200,000 towards our South Asia Earthquake response enabling purchase and distribution of a further 262 winter tents and 786 blankets.

AUSTCARE also acknowledges the support of St. George Bank for opening its branches to take public donations to our appeal.



*A little girl comforts her baby sister among the ruins of their village, near Balakot. Photo courtesy UNHCR/M.Pearson. Inset: A young survivor waits in a long queue to be taken from Muzaffarabad to Islamabad for treatment. Photo courtesy UNHCR/B.Baloch*



### SBS RADIOTHON IS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

AUSTCARE gratefully acknowledges the help of Australia's multicultural community, who pledged over \$142,000 to AUSTCARE's South Asia Earthquake appeal. This includes \$27,760 from the Hindi, \$8,600 from the Punjabi, \$64,296 from the Turkish and \$42,285 from the Urdu speaking community.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE • CAMBODIA • LEBANON • PAKISTAN

**AUSTCARE NEEDS YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT TO HELP FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN NEED ESPECIALLY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS LIKE THE SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE PLEASE PHONE 1300 66 66 72 OR VISIT [www.austcare.org.au](http://www.austcare.org.au)**

A better world for refugees

# EID WITH A DIFFERENCE



**THIS STORY IS FROM ARJIMAND HUSSAIN TALIB,  
A STAFF MEMBER OF ACTIONAID PAKISTAN,  
AUSTCARE'S PARTNER ON THE GROUND**

**KASHMIR:** The Islamic holiday of Eid ul-Fitr, known as Eid, marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. Recently, ActionAid staff like myself and people from our partner organisations Hussaini Relief Committee and Yateem Trust, spent Eid time with people in several Karnah villages which were razed to the ground.

**As we descended down the Karnah Valley, the human spirit of optimism and triumph over adversity struck us with amazing clarity.** Amidst the rubble of their homes, people insisted we have lunch with them. We explained we were there to share Eid time and not burden them with arranging food. *“What then if we have lost our homes? You have come to us on this big day and how can you leave this place without food?”* said Muhammad Younus, who has given ActionAid his paddy land to store relief goods.



*A father and his daughter seek medical help in the capital, Islamabad. Photo courtesy ActionAid International.*



*Makeshift settlements line the road in Balakot. Photo courtesy UNHCR/V.Tan.*

In a nearby tent at Sulaiman, we shared the indigenous brown rice and fried chicken they cooked for us. There could be no better way to spend the Eid. My colleague Sudipta murmured to me, *“How can these people be so hospitable and strong, even in such conditions?”*

When we entered the village of Gund-i-Sayedan at the base of a mountain, damaged houses in other parts of Kashmir were all too visible. Children played in the rubble of their homes. Many were bare footed. Their faces were red and chapped with cold. As the children eagerly accepted chocolates from us, **people told us they were worried that winter might kill their children.**

Walking through the village and sharing sweets with the children, we met Khatoon Fatima who lost two young daughters in

the earthquake. They were preparing to leave for school when the house collapsed burying them in the rubble. There are so many stories like hers.

After returning to our own camp we asked our local volunteers *“Could Gund-i-Sayedan be lost for good?”* The villagers want to leave. They dread the mountain towering over them, afraid that it will collapse in another quake. They are anxious about the coming cold. Even though ActionAid is doing everything we can, we fear that some people won't survive the winter.

**Although these brave and beautiful people face the struggle of their lives, we hope that human spirit will triumph over despair.**

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT OF JOY

***Mysara thanks you on behalf of the children and families in Aceh for your generous donation to our Christmas Appeal and your messages of hope. With your help, communities like Mysara's can rebuild with dignity and certainty for the future. Thank you for your support.***



# YOUTH WITH A FUTURE



## HALA'S STORY

**LEBANON:** Thanks to your ongoing support AUSTCARE has been working with the Women's Humanitarian Organisation (WHO) in Lebanon, on developing youth leadership, for over 10 years. The project continues to provide educational support and much-needed leisure activities for Palestinian refugee children and youth that they would otherwise not enjoy in the overcrowded and depressing conditions of Bourj El Barajneh Refugee Camp.

Hala Mugarbi was born in the camp in Beirut thirty-five years ago. She knows better than anyone how difficult life can be for children. "There is only one teacher for every 50 students and limited resources for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are no creative activities."

With 20,000 Palestinian refugees crowded into one square kilometre, there is also no space for children to play. They become bored, unmotivated and unable to work together, **which in turn affects family and community life.**

Hala first became familiar with WHO when her daughters joined the after-school tutoring program. "I started to notice improvements in their performance at school and I noticed many aspects of their conduct developed, such as their skills and behaviour," says Hala.

At the same time, Hala recalls that she was looking for a job to improve her and her family's economic situation, so she went directly to WHO.

*"My family had always rejected the idea of women working outside the home, but luckily I had a relative already working for WHO, so she encouraged me to try and get a job with WHO,"* says Hala. *"In the beginning, I worked as a volunteer in the summer activity program, then WHO supported me by sending me to different courses and workshops. I then started working officially as a teacher with WHO."*

Hala says enthusiastically, "Now my role is not just in the kitchen but in community development and encouraging open-mindedness in the community."

**Through your ongoing support AUSTCARE is able to continue helping women like Hala support their children, families and communities.**

Of the children she teaches, Hala says, "Since the day they were born, their life situation goes against their dreams." The project allows Hala to "work with our people to help solve their problems."



Main photo: Children eagerly soak up teaching in one of the camp's classrooms. Inset: Hala Mugarbi loves being part of the Youth Leadership Training Project helping young people in Bourj El Barajneh refugee camp. Photos courtesy Bron Lin, AUSTCARE.

# INTERVIEW FROM THE FIELD



**MISS SRIN DAVY**  
**AUSTCARE Cambodia Country Office, Phnom Penh**

**As an AUSTCARE volunteer, what does your work entail?**

I'm assisting an Australian Property Lawyer who is also volunteering with AUSTCARE as Project Officer, Land Management. Together we carry out research on Cambodian land law for the legal process for land distribution, land titling and registration for de-mined tracts of land in Cambodia. This research is the basis of a comprehensive 5-day Land Law Training Course that I will co-present in early December to members of the Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU) and District Working Groups from Cambodia's northwest provinces.

**Why is this work so important for the future of Cambodians?**

Land is one of the most basic of all resources available for social and economic development in Cambodia. MAPU and the DWG play a key role in the distribution of de-mined land to the poor in northwest Cambodia who lack land for residential and/or family farming purposes. By training MAPU and the DWG on the legal requirements for land distribution, AUSTCARE is assisting the process of fair, transparent and legal land distribution and strengthening land tenure rights to the landless poor in mine affected areas.

**What's the most rewarding part of your job?**

The support I receive from the AUSTCARE staff is great and I've really enjoyed being part of the team. I want to help the people of Cambodia by sharing the legal knowledge and skills that I have. I am very happy that by working with AUSTCARE, I'm taking the first steps to achieving my dream.



## AUSTCARE WINE CLUB

What if you could assist AUSTCARE simply by purchasing good wine from just \$7.50 a bottle?

An innovative idea by Corporate Supporters, the Kollaras Group, enables you to do just that. The AUSTCARE Wine Club has just been launched, with a percentage of all sales going directly to AUSTCARE.

Visit [www.austcarewineclub.com](http://www.austcarewineclub.com) to place your order.

## RADIOTHON RAISES HOPE

AUSTCARE warmly thanks the many SBS Radio staff, volunteers and individuals from the community who united to support the SBS Radiathon from 15 – 30 October 2005. Over \$420,000 was pledged including \$67,000 from the Arabic community and \$133,000 from the Vietnamese community alone. Money will be divided equally between The Children's Hospital at Westmead for medical research and AUSTCARE's programs assisting families in need.



AUSTCARE President the Right Honourable Ian Sinclair, AC supports volunteers at the SBS Vietnamese Language Radiathon



Photo courtesy Jennie Milton

## OUT OF AFRICA

Michael Milton has just returned from Africa where he climbed the continent's highest mountain, Mt Kilimanjaro at 5895m. He is straight back into training for the next Paralympic Games and an attempt at the Australian all-comers speed skiing record. While in Africa, Michael visited our program in Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp where despite severe drought and suffering, children greeted him with beautiful smiles.

## OUR MISSION

*To assist refugees overseas, displaced people, returnees and those affected by landmines to rebuild their lives and to reduce poverty through the expert delivery of development programs in partnership with local communities and other agencies.*

### Patron-in-Chief

Major-General Michael Jeffery, AC CVO MC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

### President

The Right Honourable Ian Sinclair, AC

### CEO

Major-General Michael G. Smith, AO (Retd)

### Ambassadors for Mine Action

Mr Ian Mansfield, Mr John Rodsted

### Ambassador for Protection

The Hon. (Justice) John Dowd, AO QC

### Ambassador for Refugees

The Hon. (Justice) Marcus R. Einfeld, AO QC PhD

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As a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct, AUSTCARE is committed to high standards in financial reporting, management and ethical practice. Further information on the Code is available at: [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)



## YES! I WILL HELP AUSTCARE SUPPORT FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

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### 1. Please accept my gift of:

\$75  \$55  \$125  \$195  \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_ AND/OR

2. I would like to become a GLOBAL ACTION PARTNER and make a regular monthly gift of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (min \$25)

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Please send me information about including AUSTCARE in my will

**3 EASY WAYS TO DONATE:** Post Fill out donation slip and send to address below Phone 1300 66 66 72 Online [www.austcare.org.au](http://www.austcare.org.au)

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. If you do not wish to receive further information from AUSTCARE please let us know by calling (02) 9565 9103 or email [donations@austcare.org.au](mailto:donations@austcare.org.au)



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