

WAGING PEACE.
FIGHTING DISEASE.
BUILDING HOPE.

CARTER CENTER NEWS

FALL 2013

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ON THE COVER

Alidu Kemisa, 47, of Uganda's far northern Moyo district, has suffered from river blindness disease for more than 10 years, including severe itching and pain, but received her first treatment two years ago. Read about the Carter Center's effort to eliminate the disease from Uganda and other countries on page 4.

From the President and CEO

Technology Aids Center's Work

The Carter Center is pioneering the use of today's newest technologies in our efforts to wage peace, fight disease, and build hope in the most isolated and inaccessible places on earth. As a result, we are helping people improve their lives more efficiently and cost-effectively than ever before.

Our work to eradicate and control diseases is a good example. In Ethiopia, the previously labor-intensive, monthlong process for evaluating progress and planning next steps now can be accomplished in only two days with the use of handheld computer tablets, unique on-screen Amharic-language keyboards, and specialized soft-

ware. We are combating river blindness in Latin America and Africa with low-cost, in-country laboratories that let us analyze weekly hundreds of skin and blood samples, along with thousands of flies.

These new tools also are proving invaluable to our mental health program in Liberia. An innovative system of hardware, software, and training allows for patient anonymity, improves the knowledge and skills of clinicians, and facilitates communication even to the hardest-to-reach areas.

Additionally, special software developed for The Carter Center is enhancing our election monitoring capability. Now, vital information from even the most distant polling stations — from ballot availability to the presence of intimidation or inappropriate campaigning — is recorded on tablets and transmitted instantly to headquarters for evaluation.

Use of technology in Carter Center projects around the world already is having a powerful impact, and we are only beginning. Every day, new devices and applications are being invented that can extend the Center's reach and success.

Trachoma Treatments Reach 100 Million

This fall, The Carter Center reached a trachoma milestone: supporting the distribution of more than 100 million doses of the trachoma-fighting drug Zithromax, donated by Pfizer Inc. These treatments were provided over the last 11 years to trachoma-endemic communities in six African countries: Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Sudan, and South Sudan.

The 100 millionth dose was distributed in Ethiopia's western Amhara region in early November, during MalTra week, an intense effort for widespread treatment and prevention of trachoma and treatment of malaria. MalTra reaches millions of people each year; the eastern part of Amhara is treated in the spring and the western part is treated in fall. The event is a collaboration among Ethiopia's Ministry of Health, The Carter Center, and the Lions Clubs International Foundation. Amhara is one of the world's most trachoma-endemic areas of the world.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter joined Ian Read, Pfizer's chairman and CEO, for an early November event in New York City to recognize the treatment milestone.

U.S.-China Relationship Debated at Conference

In early November, the Carter Center's China Program and Emory University brought together renowned China-U.S. leaders and scholars to discuss the importance and future of the bilateral relationship between China and the United States. Speakers included former U.S. President Jimmy Carter; Xu Kuangdi, president of the U.S.-China People's Friendship Association; Dr. Xu Kuangdi, former mayor of Shanghai; and Dr. James Wagner, president of Emory University.

The forum marked the launch of a new Carter Center project on U.S.-China relations that focuses on reducing misperceptions held in both countries, promot-

Now in her 80s, Jozefa Ortiz Rosa remembers facing the early symptoms of river blindness many years ago. “I used to have trouble with my sight, soon after discovering I had nodules,” the Guatemalan grandmother said, referring to

A group of 60 human rights defenders, religious leaders, and scholars representing 15 countries gathered at The Carter Center in June and called on all believers to work to seek solutions for violence against women and other gender-based violations of human rights.

“The tremendous influence exerted by religious leaders carries with it the moral responsibility for them to take action to address human rights violations of girls and women, including the global problem of sexual violence,” said former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The stories of two “Mobilizing Faith for Women” forum participants appear

Zainah Anwar

below: Zainah Anwar, a Malaysian woman working for equality within her Muslim faith, and Aaronde Creighton, member of an anti-trafficking group based in Atlanta, Ga.

Zainah Anwar

Sisters in Islam, Malaysia

“God cannot be God if God is unjust.”

All eyes were on Zainah Anwar as she spoke these words during the Carter Center’s human rights conference in June. One sentence, seven words, embodied the three-day forum on the role of faith in women’s rights.

“I always understood that the different treatment between me and my brother in the

home was due to culture and to tradition,” she said, “never religion. But as an adult confronted with issues of domestic violence, polygamy, marital rape, obedience, and all forms of inequality and discrimination in the private and public sphere, justified in the name of Islam, I was outraged.”

Other Muslim women in her Malaysian community felt the same way. So in 1987 a small group began meeting in Anwar’s home to find ways to challenge the laws that discriminated against them. In Malaysia, as in many Muslim countries, the source of Islamic family law is the Quran. That led the women to examine the Quran with what Anwar called “adult eyes, feminist eyes.” What the women found was liberating, she said. “We were searching for justice, we were searching for equality, we were searching for compassion, and we found that in the text.”

The group of eight women formed

Anwar is focused on the big picture, but rejoices in everyday victories. “I receive letters from young people who say ‘finally I feel comfortable about reconciling my faith, my religion with my feminism,’” she said. “I’m very, very happy to get those kinds of messages.”

Aaronde Creighton

Street Grace, Atlanta, Ga.

Street Grace began in 2009 after a group of eight churches formed a plan to end domestic sex trafficking of minors in Atlanta, Ga. The need to combat sex trafficking may have come as a shock to many

Atlantans, but not to the folks at Street Grace, who knew the statistics issued by the Georgia governor’s office: Every month, 200 to 500 girls are commercially exploited for sex in the state.

Aaronde Creighton, who sits on the organization’s board of directors, believes the term “trafficking” is too polite for what he calls the rape of children for profit. “Trafficking is slavery,” he said. “We don’t like to use the term ‘slavery’ because of past connotations, so we’ve come up with this nice term called ‘trafficking.’ Unfortunately, they are one and the same.”

The strength of Street Grace is that instead of trying to solve the problem single-handedly, it mobilizes community resources and reaches out to public, private, nonprofit, and faith-based partners to amplify results that will bring an end to human trafficking.

Participating in the Carter Center’s human rights conference on faith groups and women’s rights, Creighton said he believes the opportunity to share information and experiences with scholars, activists, and religious leaders from around the world

From Other Forum Participants

“Throughout much of history, men have defined religious norms and texts, and women’s voices were silenced. It is time for women to reclaim their religion.”

Dr. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, a founding member of Musawah Global Movement for Equalitqu

Social Media Helps Map Syrian Conflict

Chris McNaboe knows his Syrian rebels. For the current conflict, he can tell you exactly when a particular rebel brigade formed from previously separate battalions around Aleppo, Syria, how many people are in the brigade, their reason for forming, and what weapons they have.

The primary source for this top-level insider info? Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

“For a very long time people said, ‘We don’t know who the rebels are. We have no idea—should we support them? Should we not?’” said McNaboe, who works in the Carter Center’s Conflict Resolution Program. “But the truth is, the rebels have active public relations. Each group maintains a very strong online presence. We see Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and YouTube accounts where they advertise their strengths and show off their accomplishments day to day.”

By documenting and analyzing information found through social media, McNaboe has been able to understand the players and structure of rebel groups in Syria. Groups that would have remained anonymous in the past now can connect with potential fighters, funders, and suppliers and spread their message much farther than previously possible.

McNaboe extracts the online data to draw a sophisticated conceptual map showing the connections among and evolution of armed groups.

“We’re drawing upon citizen journalism. By having that many primary sources—people pointing their camera phones at events on the ground—you can triangulate some sort of a truth from the chaos of data,” said McNaboe.

The Carter Center provides the information to neutral parties

From his desk at The Carter Center, Chris McNaboe, program associate, explains the connections between various armed groups in Syria. McNaboe mines social media sites to find information about rebels and their activities.

working toward a peaceful end to the crisis. The Center is among the first to use social media mining for the Syrian conflict in such a comprehensive way and, as a nongovernmental organization, is uniquely positioned to use the information to help push for a more nuanced and well-rounded political solution.

Collaborating with a team of independent researchers, The Carter Center now has a detailed database of all known battalion formations and can determine the structure of the opposition throughout the country.

But armed groups are not the only ones to use social media, so this approach also allows the Center to look at political and civil society organizations and activists to see how they relate to the online community.

The Center also has learned more about Syria’s civil society through a new partnership with Palantir software, which has created a platform for The Carter Center and a number of humanitarian organizations to share information. The aim is for the Center to be able to provide information about armed groups and opposition power structures in each region of Syria to the humanitarian organizations that operate in those regions, allowing them to work safely in a fragile area. The humanitarian workers will in turn be able to provide information to The Carter Center on their own distribution networks and relationships with the armed groups. When all the dots are connected in this way, the Carter Center’s understanding of the conflict will be enhanced, humanitarian aid distribution will be improved, and the budding civil society groups operating in Syria will be identified and supported.

“This Syria conflict mapping project not only enables us to respond better to the Syrian crisis, but will enable us to respond to future conflicts and hopefully prevent them,” said McNaboe. “Really, the question is why limit it to Syria?”

Syrians who join rebel groups make their identity known on YouTube and other social media sites. The Carter Center takes such information and turns it into a constantly evolving graphic that shows who belongs to what groups and how different groups might be connected.

Vestergaard is an innovative global public health company that develops solutions for improving the lives of disadvantaged people around the world. Since partnering with The Carter Center in 1999, Vestergaard has provided \$1.2 million cumulatively through in-kind donations to the Center's campaigns against the parasitic diseases Guinea worm and lymphatic filariasis.

The 56-year-old company has donated pipe and cloth water filters that protect individuals from ingesting the parasite that causes Guinea worm disease. People in endemic communities pour their household water through the cloth filter or drink from stagnant sources using the portable pipe filter to strain out the water fleas that contain Guinea worm larvae. Vestergaard also has donated its PermaNet®

people through several projects aimed at bolstering their rights.

The Center's work in the DRC is focused on three main issues: strengthening and protecting local human rights groups, advancing transparency in the mining sector, and supporting local efforts to improve future elections. Core support is provided by the governments of Sweden (SIDA) and the United States (USAID), which have each given grants of \$4 million.

That support provides training to a network of over 250 Congolese nongovernmental organizations. The U.S. State Department provided \$1.25 million to launch an alert system used to mobilize local civil society support, legal and financial resources, and diplomatic pressure when human rights activists are threatened. Funds from SIDA and the Open Square Foundation are expanding the system into eastern DRC.

Grants from Humanity United (\$165,000), Belgium (\$405,000), and the United Kingdom (\$220,000) are helping the Center push for transparency in the use of DRC's vast mineral wealth. The Center successfully advocated for the public release of a \$6 billion Sicomines agreement between China and the DRC. That and other information about mining contracts, operations, and revenue can be found on the Center's French-language mining website: www.congomines.com.

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WAGING PEACE. FIGHTING DISEASE. BUILDING HOPE.

Law Helps Liberian Investigate Exam Failures

By Laura Neuman

When Liberian high school student George Toddy failed the math and science sections of his college entrance exam, he was disappointed but not surprised—he had heard that his region had a very high failure rate compared to other parts of the country.

After attending an awareness-raising activity held by The Carter Center to discuss Liberia's freedom-of-information law, he began to wonder: Why did students in the Southwest do so much worse in the exam than those elsewhere, and why were the low scores always in the math and science sections?

"I needed to figure out why this was happening. I wanted a fair chance to go to college like anyone else in my country," said Toddy.

With his newfound awareness of the law, he made a freedom-of-information request to his school and to the local department of education to obtain a copy of the math and science curriculum. He compared the national curriculum to the classes he had received and found that his teachers had been skipping a number of the requisite classes. That was why he and many of his friends were not able to pass the national exams. Toddy contacted his school and the district education office to inform them of the discrepancy.

Since then, new procedures have been put in place to monitor the actual classes taught to ensure consistency with the national curriculum. Toddy also helped launch a freedom-of-information club at his school so more students could learn about and use the resource.

Because of Toddy and his request for information, future students in the Southwest region now have a greater chance to pass college entrance exams and enter college the same as anyone else in Liberia.

The Carter Center has worked with Liberian civil society groups since 2009 to raise awareness of the country's freedom-of-information law and its ability to transform lives.