

# S H A R E

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|--|--|---|---------------------------------|
|  <b>CEDAR FUND</b><br>慈運基金會<br><i>From Church - Through Church</i> | Suite 504, Rightful Centre, 12 Tak Hing Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong |   | <b>September - October 2015</b> |
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## FOCUS ~ POVERTY REDUCTION

### Barefoot Walk – running with the poor

*Written by: Mindy Kwan, Senior Officer (Partnership Development)*

Since the launch of CEDAR Barefoot Walk in 2001, participants have altogether walked a total distance of 42 km, equivalent to the distance of a marathon. The more we expose ourselves to poverty relief the more we will discover that it is more than ‘taking off our shoes’. Rather it’s a lengthy journey that requires long-term persistence and participation.

This year is my second year of organising the CEDAR Barefoot walk event. I have pleasure to speak through my two friends who are closely connected to Nepal and those living in hardship. They will share their perspectives of this event.

### Barefoot – an experience as well as an act of remembering

As a passionate ultra-marathon runner, Kiliyas has completed the 250 km ‘4 Deserts Race Series’ traversing the Sahara, the Gobi, the Atacama and the Last Desert in Antarctica. Less than 200 runners worldwide (only three in Hong Kong) have successfully completed all four races and Kiliyas is one of them. He just completed a run in Ecuador this August to raise fund for CEDAR’s post-disaster rehabilitation work in Nepal.

Nepal was the first country that Kiliyas travelled to. Since 2007 he has visited Nepal four times together with a missionary, serving the villagers and children living in the mountainous areas. “Upon hearing about the massive earthquake in April, I worried for those

villagers I had met, and hoped that I could do something for Nepal.” Kiliyas continues, “My missionary friend is involved in CEDAR’s relief work in Nepal. From her, I understand how CEDAR operates in Nepal and agree with CEDAR that long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction for the community is very important. I hope through the ultra-marathon I can bring more people aware of the required relief work in Nepal, as people often forget and/or neglect. And increase in awareness can hopefully lead to long-term support.”

Kiliyas shares with me one heart-touching experience. “In 2009 we drove 20 hours followed by a walk of 2 hours to a remote mountain village in Nepal. Upon arrival we served the villagers by cutting their hair, cleansing their wounds and playing with the children. A girl of around six, appearing sad and lonely, watched us from afar. After a whole day of travel and service, we felt exhausted and rested on a straw mat; this girl also sat with us. We made funny faces and eventually a smile broke out on her. That smile wiped away my fatigue and I felt great contentment. To us from Hong Kong, this half day in the village might add a very tiny part to our lives, but to those children living in remote villages, this half day could be an unforgettable memory impacting on their growing up.” Kiliyas believes that children who have been loved and cared will themselves love and care for other people when they grow up, passing on the blessing they have received.



Running ultra-marathons challenges one’s confidence and

strength. What does CEDAR Barefoot Walk mean to Kiliias? "God created man to be able to walk barefooted on natural grounds. But when people build 'concrete forests' they need to wear shoes." What Kiliias finds ironic is affluent Hong Kong people are concerned about which pair of shoes to wear, whereas in the world of the poor, many do not have even one pair. "Barefoot Walk gives me a chance to experience how the barefooted poor live in a damaged world, and be reminded that I need to remember the needs of the poor."

### **Barefoot – a learning as well as being motivated**



Justin is also helping in organizing this year's CEDAR Barefoot Walk. Justin is a medical student and was on practicum in Nepal during the April earthquake. "I was playing pool with fellow school-mates during lunch break. At first only the pool table was moving but then everything around us started to shake violently, even the restaurant's gate seemed to be falling apart. We ran out quickly and a waiter was holding the gate open using his body to allow everyone a chance to get out. I was deeply touched by his bravery and selflessness, caring for strangers even in desperate time."

In fact, Justin was also present at the scene of the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 with his parents. He still remembered he was strenuously fleeing with his parents to escape from the tsunami. But the Nepalese earthquake was even more distressing, "There were many aftershocks measuring 4 to 6 on Richter scale but there was nothing for me to hold onto, none of my possession was useful and I only had God to depend on."

In a remote village of Nepal, Justin met a 90-year old granny who could neither see nor hear. Justin measured her blood pressure and her systolic blood pressure read 230. "If she was in Hong Kong she would be immediately rushed to the hospital A&E. But since she lives in a remote area and does not have money, she just stays in the village." Yet Justin also discovered richness in poverty, "Despite that, the old lady seemed very happy, her neighbours were good to her and often shared their food with her. Immediately I realized a saying, 'Poor and yet rich. Her eyes cannot see but her heart seems to see everything.'"

Justin chose Nepal to be his practicum site so he could experience the impoverished world. So why is Justin helping out in this year's CEDAR Barefoot Walk? "I believe the Walk provides an unique opportunity for its participants to taste what it is like to

be with the poor, just as Romans 12:15 says, 'Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.' It is never easy to live in a country that lacks resources and at the same time susceptible to natural disasters. Poverty leads to deficiency in healthcare, education and emotional satisfaction, but the saddest of all is that people lose hope. It is my wish that through the Walk, the participants, including myself, will be motivated to bring hope to those who are suffering."

Justin will design activities for this year's CEDAR Barefoot Walk to allow participants to understand how medics work with limited facilities, "so the participants can know a bit more how the poor feel, and become more sensitive and compassionate about the poor's needs and difficulties."

### **Barefoot – companionship as well as persistent determination**

Changing poverty is not an overnight matter. Yet through our sharing, serving and walking every step with the poor, we can bring them hope, spur them on, and give them strength to continue. I believe this is important, and this is also the will of our Heavenly Father.

CEDAR Barefoot Walk is symbolic of our willingness to walk with the poor; the road is long and needs our persistence. This is the 15th year of CEDAR Barefoot Walk; we hope that many more people will join us in this marathon of poverty relief! Kiliias has this lovely bible passage to share with us: "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act." (Prov. 3:27) We await your participation!

### **CEDAR Barefoot Walk 2015 – walking with Nepal**

Date > 5th December 2015 (Saturday)

Time > 3-6 pm

Goal > Raising fund to support post-disaster community development projects in Nepal

Event > Walking barefoot, experiencing poverty, raising funds

Meeting point > United Christian College (11 Tong Yam Street, Tai Hang Tung, Shek Kip Mei, Kowloon)

Form of participation > As a group, family or individually

Application > [cedarwalk.org](http://cedarwalk.org)

## STEP INTO THE WORLD



### Nepal's Long Road of Post-disaster Rehabilitation

We thank our supporting churches and individual supporters for their generous donations, so CEDAR is able to render timely assistance to the earthquake victims in Nepal. In the first phase of relief operation, CEDAR collaborated with four local organisations, providing relief materials such as food, medicine, tents, lights and blankets to over 3,900 families in 10 quake-affected areas in Nepal. We also distributed wires and zinc sheets to villagers for building their temporary shelters before the monsoon season comes.

CEDAR's projects in helping to rebuild the communities include provision of relief materials, repairing houses and schools, providing victims with trauma counselling, disaster management training and livelihood restoration plans, and promoting child protection and prevention of human trafficking.

**HK\$200** can provide 2 days of psychosocial support training for 5 relief workers

**HK\$400** can provide 1 set of table and chair for an affected school

**HK\$800** can provide zinc sheets for 1 affected family to build temporary shelter

**HK\$6,000** can build 1 earthquake-resistant house for 1 family

The road of reconstruction is long and difficult, and your continuous support is precious and indispensable. Please continue to support us in the Nepalese rehabilitation projects.

## JOIN HANDS JOIN HEARTS



### Healing Begins Here

Nor Too Hei, a Myanmar local, still remembers the incident happening in her home town 19 years ago, when militants burned down her village and her family had to flee to the forest. Life in the jungle was not easy and they had to guard themselves at all times from the attack of the militants .

Good news came one day: Nor Too Hei's mother heard that a children's home named Fullmoon housed children affected by wars and conflicts. She without any hesitation took Nor Too Hei who was four years old then and 28 other children from the village, and journeyed from the forest to Fullmoon, and from that time on Nor Too Hei stayed in Fullmoon for her entire childhood.

Last year Nor Too Hei returned to her birthplace Karen State. Whenever she sees an expectant mother losing her life due to lack of medical care, she feels deep pain. "My aunt also died while giving birth." Fullmoon helped Nor Too Hei in schooling. She is now a qualified nurse. With this professional training, she now devotes her life to improve the living of her fellow villagers. .

Nor Too Hei is not alone. In fact all the children in Fullmoon are emotionally scarred by natural disasters, wars and conflicts, and separated from their immediate families. They all need comfort and healing. Last year, CEDAR organized a basic counselling training at Fullmoon for 10 care-givers, teaching them to improve their listening skills. Several Fullmoon graduates broke into tears when they shared their own experiences of their families. Only after they themselves are freed and healed, they can then know how to help the other younger children in Fullmoon to properly face the wounds hidden inside their hearts.

CEDAR will continue to support Fullmoon through counselling training so to enhance the support to her children in emotional and spiritual care. ►

## CEDAR'S BLOGGER



### Cultural Self-awareness

Written by Lorraine Yiu (Project Supervisor (Yunnan))

Years ago I took a course on cross-cultural studies wherein a tutor shared with us her cross-cultural worship experience: believers from Africa rejoiced aloud with dancing, while Chinese believers sang hymns solemnly. An African brother asked, "How can you worship God this way?" and the Chinese brother answered calmly, "If we worshipped the King like you do, we would have been beheaded long ago!" Whenever I see something 'disagreeable' in a foreign place, this story reminds me not to be self-righteous and judge other people with my own cultural values.

Before I became a mother, I was adventurous and loved to travel to see different cultures. The places I stayed for some time include Romania (about one year), England (nearly three years) and Yunnan, China, where I lived in the past six years. I love to tell my sons about those places that I have travelled and they would ask, "Which place has the best people?" And I would reply, "There are good and bad people in every place." I can see that my children are not satisfied with the answer.

Sometimes our view of a country or its people is mostly based on our personal experience and limited knowledge. When I first arrived in Romania, I was shocked to see how some Chinese hated the Romanians. They called them names, and I was really puzzled by their animosity and prejudice. Then one day on the bus a Romanian openly tried to steal my mobile phone and I yelled at him, and then I understood why the Chinese living in Romania felt so furious. As I got to know more of the situation there, I realised that due to a deficient system and powerless law enforcement, the Chinese businessmen in Romania often got extorted by the police on tax matters and were victims of robbery. Some of the perpetrators were Gypsies who resorted to begging or stealing because they had neither nationality nor identity so they could not enjoy civil rights such as education, work, housing and healthcare. With more awareness and encounters, I developed an understanding and tolerance for both the Romanians and the Chinese living there.

During my seven years in China, I found this saying interesting: "Connection makes everything alright. It's not alright to have no connection", meaning that good connections with people will

make things easier. Interestingly, the Chinese 'connections' are flexible. How diverse and useful the connections can be is directly influenced by a person's social status, wealth and cultural standing. Raised in a western cultural environment in Hong Kong, I value rights and principles and so at first I opposed views and practices of such 'connections'. But with more exposure I understand that such a culture has a deeply rooted evolution, highlighting the concept of 'ruling by people' behind China's society.

My cross-cultural studies tutor emphasised that when ministering in a cross-cultural arena, we need to start by knowing our own culture, and with respect we can then learn, understand and discern the foreign culture. Having Christ's incarnation as our role model, our faith is cross-cultural and can help us examine both our own and other people's cultures.

## DONATION & PARTNERSHIP

CEDAR would like to appeal to churches and Christians for regular donations so that CEDAR can continue to support ongoing projects.

**Direct deposit**> HSBC 600-385678-001

**Cheque**> Payable to 'CEDAR FUND'

**Autopay**> <http://cedarfundeng.wordpress.com/donations/>

**Online donation**> <http://bit.ly/cedar-online-donation-eng>

## OPERATING STATEMENT

|                          |  |         |                  | Accumulated      |                   |
|--------------------------|--|---------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                          |  |         |                  | Jun 15           | Jul 14 - Jun 15   |
| Income                   | Donations  | HK\$    | 1,208,649        | HK\$             | 12,887,074        |
|                          | Grants   |         | -                |                  | 629,343           |
|                          | Appeal for Relief                                |         | 1,496,051        |                  | 4,322,457         |
|                          | HKSAR Disaster Relief Fund to India Flood Relief |         | -                |                  | 2,889,000         |
|                          | Other Income                                     |         | 72,758           |                  | 227,426           |
|                          |  |         | HK\$             | <b>2,777,458</b> | HK\$              |
| Expenditure              | Projects   |         |                  |                  |                   |
|                          | Asia   |         | 1,299,924        |                  | 5,587,179         |
|                          | China  |         | (213,607)        |                  | 3,177,733         |
|                          | Africa   |         | -                |                  | 1,115,279         |
|                          | Relief Projects                                  |         | 738,739          |                  | 2,102,247         |
|                          | HKSAR Disaster Relief Fund to India Flood Relief |         | -                |                  | 2,889,000         |
|                          | Education Ministry                               |         | 117,600          |                  | 1,173,256         |
|                          | Depreciation                                     |         | 176,437          |                  | 176,437           |
| Administration           |  | 143,286 |                  | 1,515,893        |                   |
|                          |  | HK\$    | <b>2,262,379</b> | HK\$             | <b>17,737,024</b> |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b> |  | HK\$    | <b>515,079</b>   | *HK\$            | <b>3,218,276</b>  |

Please visit our website for a detailed financial statement. (1) Budget for July 2015 to June 2016 is HKD16,202,586. (2)\* included till to end of June, the unused relief fund for Humanitarian Relief in Iraq and Nepal Earthquake Relief. Please remember the needs of CEDAR and partners, through prayers and donation, to ensure all the project to be implemented.