



NEWS BULLETIN 313
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Computers, Cows and Child Labor *From the Blogs of the 2018 Advocacy Project Peace Fellows*

Ten Peace Fellows are volunteering this summer with AP partner organizations in Uganda, Kenya, Nepal, Vietnam, Jordan, and Zimbabwe. This digest offers a snapshot from their blogs. We encourage you to visit their pages and comment.

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Many hands: Chris joins parents to dig a latrine at Awach.

Losing a Computer - and Gaining Perspective

Chris Markomanolakis (University of Maryland) is helping the Gulu Disabled Persons Union (GDPU) in Uganda to install accessible toilets. He had the misfortune to lose his laptop computer on the bus ride from Kampala and arrived in Gulu feeling very sorry for himself: "I was having a personal pity party when I got out

of my taxi. Then I saw a man with no legs sitting on the ground fixing his wheelchair. It was pretty hot outside, even for a Ugandan, so sweat was trickling down his face as he worked. I walked over to introduce myself, but before I said a word he told me how sorry he was to hear about my laptop. News travels fast out here. Charles Okwonga lost his legs after stepping on a landmine and I had the nerve to complain about a laptop." [Read more.](#) Donate to Chris' toilet appeal [here.](#)

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Bonding: Colleen with children at the CPI peace camp.

Kids and Cows Equal Peace in Kenya

Colleen Denny (Johns Hopkins University) is working with the Children Peace Initiative Kenya (CPI), which organizes peace camps for children on both sides of tribal conflicts in northwest Kenya. Colleen (photo left and top) attended a CPI Peace Camp for children from the Pokot and the Ilchamus tribes. After the camp will come the cows: "If the children and

families successfully maintain their friendships and foster peace between the two tribes, then after 2 years' time they are gifted a shared heifer through CPI's Heifers for Peace program." [Read more.](#) Donate to Colleen's heifer appeal [here.](#)

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Lindsey is ready to tackle uterine prolapse.

How Prolapse Punishes Women in Nepal

Lindsey Killett (New York University) is working with Care Women Nepal (CWN) in Dhankuta district to organize a health camp for village women with uterine prolapse. The need is great because - as Lindsey observes in a blog - many women with prolapse do not seek treatment "because of fear that family and/or community members will hate and

isolate them...For some the trip to a clinic or hospital is too expensive. The trip and treatment would also require the women to take off work, which reduces the household income." [Read more.](#)

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Komal is helping wives of the disappeared to produce embroidery and sell Tiger bags in Bardiya.

The Disappeared Still Cast a Long Shadow in Nepal

Komal Thakkar (Fletcher School, Tufts University) is working with the National Network of Families of the Disappeared and Missing (NEFAD) in Kathmandu and Bardiya. After attending a memorial event in Anamnagar, Komal writes: "The most poignant speech of the day came from a 69-year-old woman named Chandrakala. Her three sons were arrested for 27 months and then released. A few months after their release, two of her sons,

Dhirendra and Pushpa, were forcibly disappeared. She is still waiting for them. Her speech reminded me that although the conflict ended over a decade ago the loss of loved ones will haunt families of the disappeared and missing forever." [Read more.](#)

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Mr. Thin and his wife Cao wrap their sons in hammocks to stop them from falling to the ground.

Up Close and Personal with Agent Orange in Vietnam

Marcela De Campos (University of Maryland) is working with the Association for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (AEPD) in Dong Hoi, Vietnam to support survivors of Agent Orange. She blogs about meeting Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Thin, his wife Cao Thi Loan and their two sons, Nguyen Van Phan, 23, and Nguyen Van Lan, 30. The boys both suffer from cerebral palsy after their father was exposed to

Agent Orange. Marcela hopes to launch an appeal to buy a cow for the family. Even though Mr. Thin and his wife are getting old they have not given up. Marcela blogs: "They are hopeful for their future and so are we." [Read more](#). Donate to Marcela's Agent Orange appeal [here](#).

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Escaping the cow shed: Caroline, right, with Dila Kadel and her mother Tulasi in western Nepal.

Step by Step in the Struggle to End Menstrual Banishment in Nepal

Caroline Armstrong Hall (Fletcher School, Tufts University) is helping the Centre for Agro-Ecology and Development (CAED) in Kathmandu and Surkhet to campaign against the practice of *chhaupadi*, or menstrual banishment. Aruna, a field officer at CAED recalled one small victory in the far west of Nepal: "(Aruna) managed to convince 75 households to allow their women to sleep on

the verandahs outside their houses, where they could be closer to their family and away from the dark and damp confines of the *chhau goth* (cow shed). Aruna was happy with this first step. Ten women even began sleeping indoors." [Read more](#).

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In solidarity: By protesting in the US, they are defending the rights of refugees and migrants everywhere.

Language Strips Refugees and Migrants of Their Human Dignity

Teresa Perosa (Columbia University) is working with refugees from war at the Collateral Repair Project (CRP) in Amman, Jordan. She finds parallels between the treatment of migrants in the U.S. and Jordan: "What does the 'zero-tolerance' policy for people crossing the southland border in the U.S. have to do with refugee women seeking economic and psychosocial

support in Al-Hashmi Al-Shamali, a low-income neighborhood in the eastern part of Amman? Between words like refugee, asylum seeker, economic migrant, legal, illegal, border, control, security, much of what is fundamental - preserving human dignity - is lost." [Read more](#). Donate to Teresa's appeal for refugees in Jordan [here](#).

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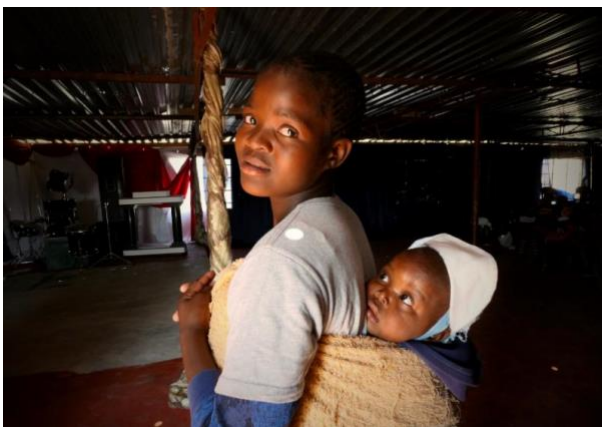
Bijaya Sainju, left, founded CONCERN to protect children. AP is helping CONCERN to place brick workers in school.

When Child Labor Happens Before Your Eyes

Lara Cerosky (Sciences Po Paris) is working with CONCERN in Kathmandu, Nepal to take children out of the brick factories. She recently witnessed child labor first hand: "Yesterday, as I was arriving at my office after my daily 45-minute walk in the dust and exhaust emissions, one young boy

crossed the street. A child-porter, far too weak to carry the heavy charge on his back and his forehead. Was it a bag of rice, potatoes, cement or sand? I don't know, but no child should be subjected to forced labor." [Read more](#).

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The Women Advocacy Project (WAP) works for women like Blessing, seen here with her baby in Harare.

So Why Shouldn't Children Get Married?

Alexandra Kotowski (Columbia University) is working with the Women Advocacy Project (WAP) in Harare, Zimbabwe to combat child marriage. She's aware of the skepticism: "While almost everyone agrees that 12- and 13-year-olds are too young to marry, some wonder what's the big deal for a teenager aged 16 or 17? And if a girl becomes

pregnant, isn't it in her best interest to get married? Taking a broader perspective,

Zimbabwe is suffering from record unemployment and an economic crisis. Wouldn't it be better to focus on the big problems of poverty and hunger?" [Read how Alexandra answers her own questions in her blog!](#)

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Tharu women in Dang District.

A Firsthand Glimpse of *Kamaiya* in Nepal

Michelle Nyaga (Columbia University) is working with Backward Society Education (BASE) in Dang District. BASE has led efforts to combat a system of bonded labor which has tricked many families from the Tharu minority into selling their land: "(Their) debt could

never be paid off and the Tharu became slaves known as *kamaiya*. As a marginalized community, most of their daughters were sent to work as domestic servants in the homes of the landowners. But why does child labor continue to be a persistent issue in Nepal despite national statistics showing a continuous decline?" [Read more.](#)

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- Enjoy [more strong photos by our Peace Fellows.](#)
- Donate to the appeals of the 2018 Peace Fellows [here.](#)

This bulletin was written by Corinne Cummings

Thanks to Humanity United for supporting our 2018 program

