

# Discover Newsletter for colleagues in Africa

March 2022

Ukraine



Dear Friends and colleagues,

The war in the Ukraine has been a great shock to us all. In the face of such senseless violence, we feel helpless. It is a story many countries in Africa know only too well as many leaders have used unjustified violence to gain power.

Imagine, if the billions spent on weapons were spent on peacebuilding and development!

Here are a few ideas about the effects of this war and how we can respond in a positive way.

1. Show solidarity with the victims. Whether we are Christian, Moslem or do not have a faith, we can hold the victims and the aggressors in our hearts. We can wish that they experience love and peace and a spirit of forgiveness.
2. We can intervene when there is conflict in our own community, so that those involved have a chance to be heard, work through their anger and sense of injustice and come to an agreement that is acceptable to both sides.
3. The Ukraine war is destroying freedom and democracy, which are precious and fragile. We must work hard to make peace and create and protect democracy in our own communities. Each person must have a voice and be given respect.
4. This war will result in higher prices. When the price of oil, gas and petrol increase, the price of everything else increases too. If we use less fossil fuel, it also helps us to combat the climate crisis. Developing solar and wind energy can release us from this price trap.
5. Here in Europe, the price of cooking oil is expected to increase, because much of our cooking oil comes from Ukraine. This shows that we should not become too dependent on any one country for crucial supplies. It is safer to diversify our agriculture so that we are as self-reliant as possible at home.
6. So we have three enormous threats to our future in the world today: firstly the war, then poverty, exacerbated by the covid pandemic, and the climate crisis. The way out of this situation is to produce as much food and natural medicine as you can through organic gardening, to plant trees to maintain soil fertility and provide fruits, and to work hard to build good relationships with your neighbours. It is only in this way that we can create thriving, peaceful communities that stand firm in the face of these enormous problems.



Bee keeping and tree planting are two activities that can strengthen community groups, as here shown by the Green4Life project near to Mutare in Zimbabwe. The woodlot and beehives are protected by a barbed wire fence. Flowering trees are being planted to nourish the bees.

Many people around the world are feeling overwhelmed in these difficult times. Remember the words of Wangari Maathai: 'When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and hope'.

Keith Lindsey