


10 Stories of God's Transforming Power

**CEDAR's 30th Anniversary
Special Issue**

The background features a dark brown, textured vertical strip on the left side. The rest of the image is composed of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes, primarily hexagons and triangles, in various shades of light brown and tan. These shapes create a layered, architectural effect. Centered in the middle of this composition is the text "To all supporters of CEDAR Fund".

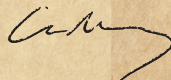
To all supporters of CEDAR Fund

Prologue

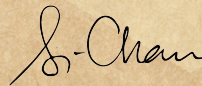
Transformation is a term that Christians often talk about. But what does transformation mean?

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of CEDAR's establishment, we have produced this special issue, which tells the stories of 10 friends of CEDAR, including those from members of staff from our partnering organisations, recipients of CEDAR's ministries and former and current members of staff at CEDAR. These stories feature different aspects of life transformation, such as continuing the Christian mission, connecting communities, supporting freedom, advocating justice, and caring for creation. The protagonists are not prominent figures, but they give what they have out of their beliefs and the hope from the Lord. No matter how hard times are, how far the road ahead is, they try to make miracles happen.

Transformation is not just a change in outward behaviour, but also a qualitative change in one's inner life. Just as CEDAR's 30th anniversary theme 'Beyond Feeding the Poor', it emphasises the Christian belief that people should not only have enough food and clothing, but also have an integral development in all aspects of their lives. We hope that you can feel the emotions of each character when you open this special issue. Though the outlook may be grim, let us follow the way of the Lord, be transformed by Him and be determined to walk in His righteousness.



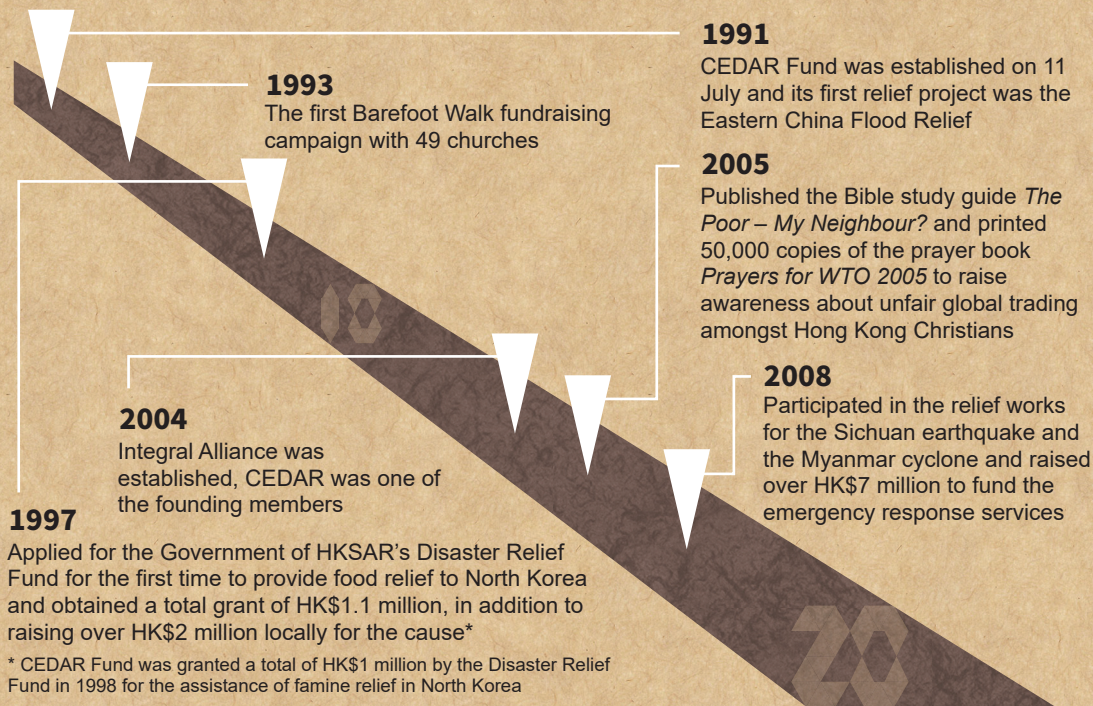
Chairman of Board of Directors
Dr. Chan Nim Chung



Chief Executive
Dr. Chan Pui Si

July 2021

CEDAR's Milestones





2011

Formed Integral Mission Network connecting local Christian communities, churches, theological seminaries, NGOs and commercial sectors to promote and carry out integral mission

2017

- > Launched ministries in the Middle East and supported a Christian satellite television station to produce educational programmes for children in refugee camps who were without access to education, around 2.6 million children and youths benefited from the ministries
- > CEDAR Network International Ltd was registered in China to act as a representative organisation for overseas NGO

2013

Launched the 'Global Discipleship' scheme to help Christians develop a caring heart for the world

2019

Received two grants totaling HK\$10 million from the HKSAR Government's Disaster Relief Fund to provide relief to flood victims in Maharashtra and Bihar in India

2020

CEDAR distributed over HK\$2.6 million to 32 anti-epidemic projects in 12 countries and regions for COVID-19 relief work

2021

CEDAR has been established for 30 years. As of June 2021, we have the support of 9,500 benefactors, 90 schools and 520 churches and Christian organisations



CEDAR's Ministry Map



In the year 2020/2021, CEDAR was able to walk alongside Christian partners to carry out relief and development projects in 14 countries and regions in Asia, Africa and the Middle East

(As of June 2021)

CEDAR's Ministry Catagory



Anti-human
Trafficking



Children and
Youth
Development



Creation Care



Peace and
Reconciliation



Church and
Community
Mobilisation



Livelihood
Development



Humanitarian
Relief and
Disaster Risk
Reduction



Health



Urban and
Rural
Development



Advocacy

Educator

When I see the bright smile of a child, I know I have come to the right place.

▲ Raja, a Syrian teacher continuing the mission of education.



Continue the Mission

I am a Syrian. In 2014, I fled to Lebanon.

When I was unemployed, I wandered in the streets and found that many children were out of school. Most of them were Syrian refugee children. Some lost their parents or siblings during the Syrian War. I also saw Syrian mothers and their children begging for a living on the streets.

One day, I prayed in the church, and the pastor heard that I loved education and had been teaching in Syria for five years. He introduced me to an education centre supported by CEDAR and local Christian organisation, providing basic literacy and knowledge to refugee children.

To me, education is beyond transmission of knowledge. The children in my class came from different parts of Syria with very different cultural and political routes. I deliberately arrange for students of diverse backgrounds to work on presentation together; this is particularly important for children who have grown up on battlefields so that I can help them learn to live peacefully with others.

The war has destroyed our homeland, but it will not take away my love for Syrian children.

**Follow the way of the Lord,
be transformed by Him.**

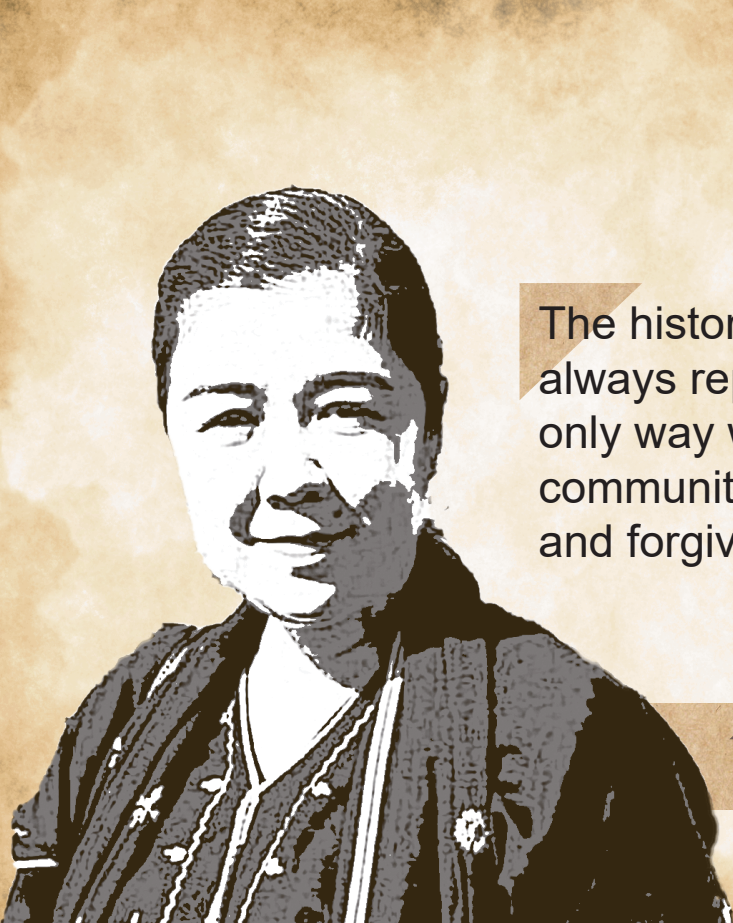


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Uniter

The history of conflict has always repeated itself. The only way we unite communities is through love and forgiveness.

A portrait of Ni Sat, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark patterned shawl over a light-colored top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a textured, warm-toned surface.

▲ Ni Sat, a poverty alleviation worker in Myanmar who devotes herself to peace and unity.

Unite Communities

12 years ago, I lost my dearest sister. She passed away while she was with her husband carrying out post-war development work in the community. They were mistaken for government spies by ethnic armed groups who killed them.

The loss still wounds my heart, but through God, I can truthfully forgive the old general who killed my sister. Facing the broken relationships in the nation, society and between ethnic groups, I begged the Lord for mercy, and He taught me to resolve my grievances with forgiveness.

I set up a children home in the outskirts of Yangon to take care of children affected by wars or natural disasters. The children there learned to resolve conflict with hugs and kisses. With the support of CEDAR, today, many of these grown-up children work as nurses, teachers, and social workers. They have returned to their war-torn hometowns to participate in the reconstruction of their communities. Even though the trauma still lingers in their mind, they strive hard to rebuild the communities through the love of God.

Under the current unstable political situation, many of the children homes and local communities are suffering from the effects of inadequate food supply. I will continue to support the poor and the needy by all means. I hope to see the people of Myanmar walk alongside each other, not to fight, but to help one another and share with their neighbours, united as one.

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Life Transformer

Although
I am living
with HIV,

I'm not scared
of the eyes of
others



▲ Branda, a girl grown up in a poor village in Zimbabwe, transforming the lives of others.

Bless the Others' Lives

I was once boycotted and discriminated by schoolmates because I am HIV-positive. I once hated my mother for transmitting HIV to me. Some years ago, I drugged myself to commit suicide. The label 'HIV carrier' shrouded my growth like a nightmare.

Till I met Girls Club in my community, I gradually picked up myself and gained self-confidence with the encouragement of club members and leader.

Girls Club belongs to the sexual education programme of Trinity Project, supported by CEDAR Fund. In the club, I relearned about HIV/AIDS and understood that my daily life would not be affected much by taking the medicine as prescribed. More importantly, by talking to the club leader, I realised that my mother was unintentional about the transmission of virus, because she did not know herself as a carrier during her pregnancy.

I always chatted with the club members, exercised together, acted in dramas and even made handcrafts with them for making income. There were members infected with HIV, like me, and members who are uninfected. I shared my testimony of transformation and helped one another restore their dignity in the Lord. As a young master of the pen, I love writing poems, which help voice my desire for love and peace, and call on the world to eliminate discrimination against people infected with HIV.

Their accompany made me strong. I know I am accepted in Lord. HIV/AIDS cannot define me, can it?

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Empowerer

What touched me most when I worked for CEDAR was when I saw the women who had never received education nor left their villages spoke up for themselves and were affirmed by the village community.

▲ Joanne Choi, deputy director at Fair Circle and former colleague at CEDAR, who strives to empower the underprivileged in poor countries.



Let the Women Speak

Caring for the poor and the oppressed have been my calling since the beginning. Positions and titles might have changed over time, but my calling has not been shaken.

A few years after I graduated from university, I joined CEDAR to focus on the development project of rural areas in the northwest of mainland China, where I taught villagers how to make a living for themselves.

Back then, women had no status, yet they bore the role to fulfil central responsibilities (for example rearing animals). When I was at the village meeting, I intentionally left some space for the women to speak up and express equally. Having witnessed the gradual development of their communities, increase of their family income, and improvement of interpersonal relationships among community members, the villagers' impression of women was also being transformed.

Women are not a bunch of fools. Who says they have to be housewives all their lives and sacrifice their own dreams? They are dreamers too. From what I see, the most crucial factor is that they lack opportunities.

I believe empowering the underprivileged is the way to realise their potentials and transform their strengths into valuable opportunities. 10 years ago, I changed my role to advocating fair trade movement, which calls for fair returns between men and women while utilising the traditional handicrafts of the poor in developing countries.

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Liberator

I am eager to speak up for those who are voiceless and be a big sister of trafficked or sexually exploited girls.



Ayesha, the administrator of a Nepalese organisation that frees vulnerable women.



Embrace Liberty

Since I was a child, my family and I would go to the Nepalese organisation Asha Nepal to visit women and children who have been trafficked or sexually assaulted. I played games and sang hymns with children. I remember one girl who was segregated from everyone; she was infected with HIV. I decided to go and sit at the same table with her and used her tableware. As a stubborn child, I always chose to do good.

I ended up studying law and became the administrator of this organisation. I realised that saving women and children is not an easy task. I have to ensure women believe that I am not selling them, and I have to communicate with border police or deal with brothel owners. Sometimes, these challenges are beyond my capacity to cope with, yet I see these challenges as an opportunity to witness the Lord who makes a way and frees those in captivity.

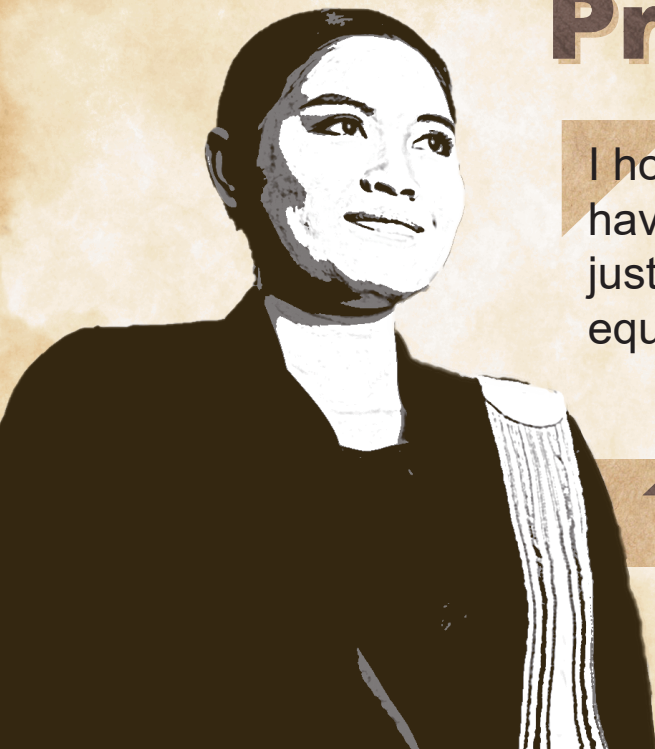
I believe that the Lord has a clear plan for me. When trafficked or sexually exploited girls are in need, I am willing to stand by their side. My hope is that there will be an end to human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Whenever I see victims released and regain their dignity, I feel joyful and satisfied.

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Protector

I hope that everyone will have equal access to justice and strive for equality.

▲ Pik, who is using her legal knowledge in protecting vulnerable groups who have been trafficked.

Pursue Justice

As a lawyer, I really want to use my legal profession to help the disadvantaged.

In Thailand, whether a person can seek the proper administration of justice depends on how rich you are. The poor will not have equal opportunities. I know I cannot change the judicial system, but I can help those in need. If everyone gives up because they cannot change the world, what change will there be?

I am currently working at a non-profit organisation that combats human trafficking in Thailand. We assist the police in identifying victims of trafficking, collect evidence and provide legal support to victims. As a lawyer, I have appeared in court many times. One of my cases involved a criminal who imprisoned children to film pornographic clips online. He was heavily punished, and all the victims were fairly compensated. Most importantly, this case caused more arrests of such criminals and has helped combat the rampant increase of child trafficking crimes.

On the road to justice, I will not be alone, because CEDAR is walking with me.

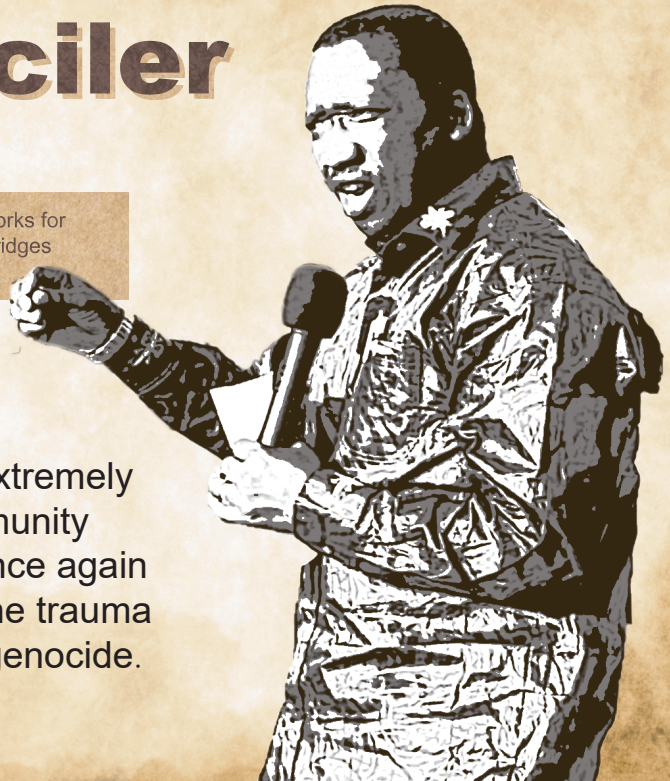
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Reconciler

▲ Christophe, a Rwandan who works for peaceful dialogue and builds bridges for social reconciliation.

Unless there is true reconciliation, it is extremely difficult for the community members to unite once again after experiencing the trauma from the Rwandan genocide.



Restore Communal Relationships

I was born into an exiled Tutsi family. Ethnic conflicts and violence affected my upbringing, and my heart has always been filled with anger, hatred and the desire to seek revenge.

Millions of people died in the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. I asked the Lord, 'If we were made in your image, why did you allow us to suffer this way? Why do people kill each other?'

I tried my best to find answers in the Bible, and discovered that while we cannot escape from suffering, we are given the ministry of reconciliation by God who reconciled the world to Himself. He called me and showed me that what the Rwandan communities need is not revenge but repentance and forgiveness.

The genocide left many problems in families and societies. They include family and intergenerational conflicts, and psychological trauma. My team and I invited former victims and perpetrators to participate in trauma healing workshops. Through biblical reflection, emotion management and truthful dialogue, we encouraged people to face the truth of history and to reconcile with others.

Reconciliation does not happen overnight. I am very happy to have the support of CEDAR in our ministry of reconciliation.

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Caretaker

Caring for the land is
caring for our
neighbours.

▲ Tui, CEDAR's programme consultant
who has been serving the poor in the
northern Thailand for years.

Care for God's Creation

My name is Tui, which means water. I am from Karen tribe and a third generation Christian.

For a long time, I have served the poor in the mountainous areas of northern Thailand. I taught them about organic farming and land protection that the poor peasants' farming methods were more suitable for their lands, and hence their income increased in the long term. I also cooperated with CEDAR, assisting those hill tribes without farmlands to grow vegetables on small land spaces next to their houses. They could then provide themselves by growing seasonable vegetables with natural fertilisers, or keeping chickens, pigs and fish. If they manage their small farms in backyards well according to the seasons, their produce should be sufficient for their family, and even sell in the market or share with their neighbours.

As a Karen tribal man, I love nature very much. As a Christian, I believe that God has entrusted us to be good stewards of the land, just as He put Adam in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

We cannot separate human life from the land. To care for the land is to love our neighbours and love the Lord.

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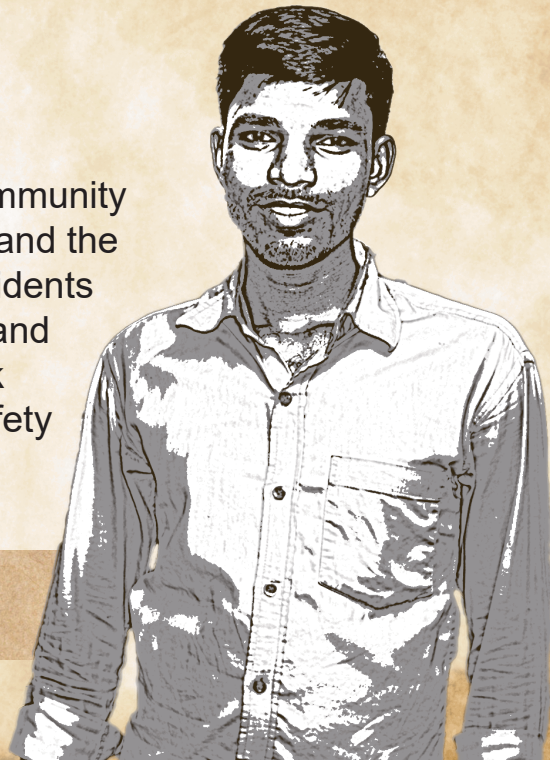
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Rescuer

I would like to see the community has the capacity to withstand the impacts of disasters. Residents form disaster prevention and response teams and work together to ensure the safety of the community.

▲ Krishna, an Indian villager who advocated disaster prevention in communities.



Advocate Disaster Prevention

I live in a village in the poorest state of India. Floods occur every year during the monsoon period. A flood will cause us to lose relatives, friends and family properties. It is of utmost importance for us to be equipped in disaster prevention and disaster relief.

In recent years, I joined the disaster management committee set up by the Indian Christian organisation in the village. There, I received training of disaster response and life-saving.

I remember a time when a teenager in the village shouted, 'Someone is drowning!' I immediately jumped into the pond, pulled up the drowning child and gave him first aid. The villagers admired my rescue work and decided to let some of their villager youths learn life-saving techniques too. This has transformed the community in ways I have never imagined.

Education is vital to reduce the impact of disasters in communities. I am very happy to see other young people work together to increase villagers' awareness of disaster relief and contribute to the village's sustainable development.

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Doer of the Word



Needs are everywhere. To know where we give our hands, the only way is to search for God's heart through prayers and do our best as His plan unfolds.

▲ Chan Pui Si, the Chief Executive of CEDAR, a humble, diligent servant of God who has been helping the marginalised for over 30 years.

Persist in Serving

It's been more than 30 years since I left the healthcare industry as a nurse and worked for NGO on poverty alleviation.

With the strong belief that 'everyone counts', I embarked on the bumpy journey of poverty alleviation. God allowed me to see the needs of the poor, and I could not turn my back to these needs.

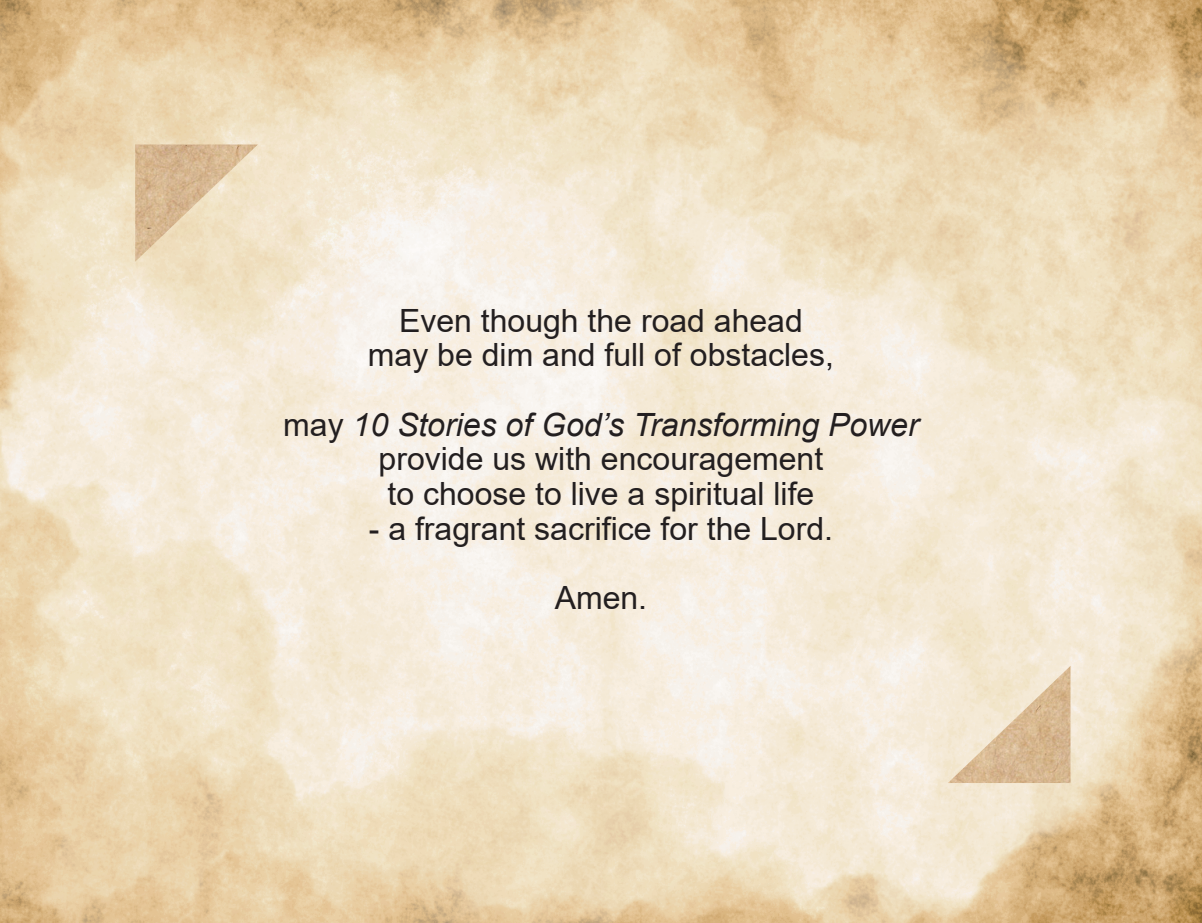
Eight years ago, I switched from a large multinational NGO to a comparative small organisation – CEDAR Fund, which is where I am right now. Over the past years, I witnessed God's grace and how He has made my past experiences a valuable asset as I lead and work with my colleagues.

In retrospect, some projects were more successful than others – witnessing lives being changed through successful programmes and seeing rooms for improvement when our projects were not fitting for the poor community. As I have shared with my colleagues in the past, it is never about how experienced we are at ministry strategy but the mission to save the poor that our God has entrusted us with.

While there is no panacea for the issue of poverty, I will persevere and not be disheartened, for I know it is God's work after all.

**Follow the way of the Lord,
be transformed by Him.**





Even though the road ahead
may be dim and full of obstacles,


may *10 Stories of God's Transforming Power*
provide us with encouragement
to choose to live a spiritual life
- a fragrant sacrifice for the Lord.

Amen.




From Church • Through Church





 (852) 2381 9627


 www.cedarfund.org


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 施達基金會 CEDAR Fund

 G.P.O. Box 3212 Hong Kong

 sharing@cedarfund.org

 [cedar.fund](https://www.instagram.com/cedar.fund)

 (852) 6383 6861