

# On the SPOT.

**NOVEMBER 2008**

*Newsletter of the worldwide relief service of the  
Sovereign Order of Malta*

## **I. AFRICA**

### **DR Congo I: Urgent need to intensify humanitarian aid - Malteser International distributes food to more than 30,000 internally displaced persons**



**Malteser International distributes food for 30,000 IDPs in Minova**

In Minova, the region on the border between North and South Kivu in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malteser International is distributing around 1,000 tons of food supplies to more than 6,000 families who have had to flee because of the conflict in North Kivu. "Together with other relief organisations, we have done an assessment in the region of Minova and counted 30,645 internally displaced persons (IDPs)", Dr. Georg Nothelle, Head of the Africa Department of Malteser International explains. "Within one week we will distribute food-stuffs such as flour, vegetables, oil and salt to all of the families. A second distribution campaign is planned for December."

The distribution which aims to assure the food supply for the IDPs during the next two months will be financially supported by the World Food Programme of the United Nations (WFP). In a current evaluation of the WFP, Malteser International has been highly commended among the cooperation partners of the WFP. „Following the evaluation we are seen as the highest capacity partner in South Kivu“, Nothelle says with pride.

Further distribution campaigns for January 2009 are already being planned.

Since the flare-up of the unrest around the city of Goma, Malteser International initially increased the psychological care for the IDPs in Minova.

In order to build on the relief efforts for the growing number of internally displaced persons, Malteser International is in urgent need of donations:

**Donation Account 2020122;**

**Pax-Bank Köln, von-Werth-Str. 25-27, D-50670 Köln, Germany,**

**Sort Code : 370 60 193; IBAN : DE93 3706 0193 0002 0201 22; BIC: GENODED1PAX**

**Reference : "Congo"**

Or online at [www.malteser-spenden.de](http://www.malteser-spenden.de) or <http://www.maltarelief.org>

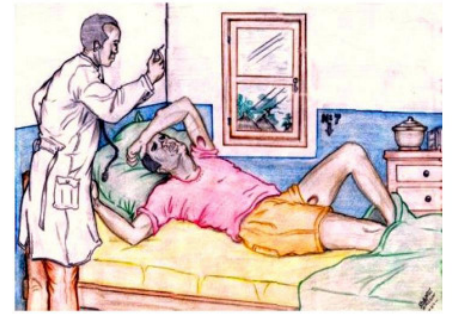
Malteser International has been working in South Kivu since 1996. Currently, there are 80 local and two international staff members working on the spot, implementing projects in the sectors of health care, food security, psycho-social care and the rehabilitation of infrastructure.

## DR Congo II: Fighting the plague in Ituri

In November Malteser International has started a follow-up project of the existing and successful plague projects in the province of Ituri in the northeast of DR Congo. Besides the medical supply and treatment of affected persons, Malteser International also arranges information campaigns and trains the local health staff to identify plague and cholera cases, to report early warning signs of a threatening epidemic, to prevent diseases from spreading and to create awareness among the population. Furthermore, Malteser International will disinfect 5,000 households and treat 4,500 persons who had contact to affected persons in a preventive way. If the disease is identified at an early stage, it can easily be cured with antibiotics. Malteser International provides the health centres with the necessary medicine for free. This project can be realised thanks to the financial support of Pooled Fund for the DR Congo.

The plague is still a major problem in many parts of Africa and is mainly transmitted by rat fleas. Already since 2004, Malteser International provides help in fighting the plague in DR Congo.

### LUTTONS TOUS ENSEMBLE CONTRE LA PESTE



Dès qu'une personne a mal à la tête, présente un corps chaud et un ganglion douloureux, amenez-la vite pour les soins. La Peste se soigne efficacement et gratuitement au Centre de Santé.



**Campaign against the plague:  
“We all fight against the  
plague together”**

## II. ASIA

### Cambodia: 100 year old Traditional Birth Attendant attends training course in Banteay Ampil district

Mrs. Pein Pleurng, a 100 year old Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA), participated in October in a training course at the Ampil health centre conducted by the Provincial Health Department and Malteser International staff. She still remembered when Malteser International rehabilitated the health centre in Ampil many years ago and was very glad for the training, one of the activities of the maternal and child health improvement project in Oddar Meanchey province.

The TBA training focuses on the importance of referring women to the health centres for safe delivery conducted by health centre staff. However, there are several barriers preventing women from travelling to health facilities, such as lack of transportation, transportation costs, long distances and poor road conditions especially during the rainy season. Therefore, the training also in-



**Training course for ladies in a  
Cambodian village**

cludes practical instruction of proper hygiene and use of the home delivery kit. So, TBAs can assist those women who are unable to go to the health facility and deliver their babies at home. Much has been achieved in the two years since the project started: initially 18% of the deliveries were conducted in the health centres supported by Malteser International, today it is more than 70%.

TBAs remain playing a very important spiritual and supportive role for women in their community, a role which is passed down through the generations. And Mrs. Pein Pleurng is passing this tradition on to her granddaughter.

## **China: Earthquake relief – Reconstruction of old people’s home in Gu Cheng, Sichuan**

Malteser International in cooperation with Caritas International and the Chinese partner organisation Jinde Charities supports the reconstruction of an old people’s home in Gu Cheng in the province Sichuan. During the severe earthquake in May 2008 in China more than 70,000 people died and 5.8 million were made homeless. Besides schools and other social institutions also several nursing homes were destroyed. With the construction of this new old people’s home, 79 poor elderly people - already chosen - from the surrounding cities will get an adequate home. There will also be created additional capacities for further victims of the earthquake. Due to the one-child-policy in China many old people are alone and urgently need support. – This project can only be realised thanks to the generous donation of an internationally renowned German company.



**Earthquake aftermath in China**

## **Myanmar: Review meeting about the relief after cyclone Nargis**

On the first week end of December all those staff members involved in the first phase of the disaster relief directly after cyclone Nargis will meet in Myanmar. They will discuss what they have achieved during the first days and weeks after the disaster, will have an outlook on the future of the relief and rehabilitation projects and commemorate their joint efforts.

Malteser International would like to express its sincere gratitude to all staff members on the spot who – thanks to their enormous commitment and their huge efforts – have enabled the organisation to help more than 150,000 survivors in Yangon, in Labutta and on Middle Island. Some of the relief workers on the ground also suffered from the loss of family members and friends or heavy damages of their own houses. Others came from Malteser International project locations in other parts of the country that had been spared by the disaster to support their colleagues in Yangon and in the Irrawaddy Delta. All of them have worked tirelessly to help those who had lost everything and were desperately looking for support. Malteser International will not forget this enormous effort and says “THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!”

## Pakistan: Malteser International organises relief support for the population

After the severe earthquake of 28 October in the north of Belutchistan, Malteser International has distributed winter sets with tarpaulins, woollen blankets and warm clothing, household and hygiene sets with drinking water containers and purification tablets to 580 families. Many people have lost all their belongings after the earthquake. In the Ziarat District alone, more than 50,000 people have been affected by the consequences of the earthquake. The earthquake relief of Malteser International is supported by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and ADH (Action Campaign Germany Helps).



Distribution of aid in the aftermath of Pakistani earthquake

## Sri Lanka I: Handing over of houses in “tsunami model village”



Women presented with the certificates proving their ownership of new houses and land deeds.

With a solemn ceremony attended amongst others by the Sri Lankan minister for cooperatives, Malteser International handed over 26 houses together with the relevant land ownership certificates to families in Karimalaiyoothu who had lost their houses and all their belongings during the tsunami in December 2004. In this village at the east coast of Sri Lanka, Malteser International, together with its local partner „Trincomalee District and Development Association“ (TDDA) and with financial support of „FC Bayern hilft e.V.“, furthermore constructed a community hall and a playground for the children of the village. All the houses have their own toilet as well as access to drinking water and electricity.

During the ceremony, the minister thanked all those who have been involved in the construction of the houses and the infrastructure of the village and expressed his hope that the 26 families who have now found a new home will live a better life in the future.

Dr. Jürgen Clemens, Senior Desk Officer Sri Lanka and Pakistan of Malteser International had a special present for the youth and the children of the community: a football. “I hope that the children and the young people in Karimalaiyoothu will enjoy playing football and being able to relax and to overcome stress by such exercise.”

In the neighbouring village of Sumethangarapura, 17 more houses have recently been finished and will be handed over to their new owners in a few weeks. “We are really happy to have built those houses and given these families a new home and a place where to build up a better future”, Dr. Jürgen Clemens says.

## Sri Lanka II: Inauguration of a children's house and a playground in Kosgoda

In Kosgoda, a village at the west coast of Sri Lanka, the last buildings within a large tsunami resettlement project have now been inaugurated: a children's homes and a playground. Between 2005 and 2008, the village received 50 new houses for families who lost all their belongings during the tsunami, a pre-school, a college, a medical centre, another children's house welcoming six girls, a community hall and a vocational training centre where young people can learn the professions of cook, carpenter, automobile mechanic, electrician and tailor. Up to now, more than 100 young people have started their vocational training. Many of them have already found jobs in the surrounding area. The new children's house – built with financial support of Stadt Wesseling (Germany) – will accommodate another six girls, as soon as the government will have inspected the new facility.



Children attending the festivities in Kosgoda at the opening of the school.

## Sri Lanka III: “Annual Meeting Asia” taking place in Hikkaduwa



Annual Meeting Asia in progress

Hikkaduwa, a village in the south of the Sri Lankan island that has also been hit by the tsunami in December 2004, was the venue for this year's „Annual Meeting Asia“ of Malteser International bringing together the senior staff members of the organisation's projects in Asia. From 12 to 14 November, the staff discussed current subjects of humanitarian aid, exchanged experiences and lessons learnt and worked on new concepts. One of the focal points was disaster preparedness and disaster risk management. Additional workshops and field visits on the subject of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) completed the programme.

## Thailand: New funding for Avian influenza project along the Thai–Myanmar border

Malteser International is able to continue its avian influenza project in the refugee camps Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Ma Luang thanks to further financing (USAID-sub-grant) of the project in the period October 2008 until September 2009. The project aims to reduce the threat of avian influenza transmission in birds and humans in the two displaced persons' camps where Malteser International provides primary health care services. The main aspects of this project are:

- surveillance of household poultry flocks
- surveillance of patients with influenza-like symptoms presenting in the in-patient and out-patient departments
- strengthening human response by upgrading knowledge through training and proper management of suspected and confirmed cases
- strengthening animal response by teaching/upgrading proper poultry husbandry, decontamination and reporting.



Presentation of certificate after an avian flu training course.

### III. STAFF

#### “PORTRAITS OF OUR HELP”

Under the new column “*Portraits of our help*“, published for the first time in the June edition of “On the SPOT“, Malteser International presents staff members in Africa, Asia or the Americas to give a more personal impression of the people who are realizing all the projects on the ground.



*This edition continues with the presentation of Nang Thein Hann, nurse in one of the health centres on Middle Island (Irrawaddy delta, Myanmar):*

#### **Nang Thein Hann: “The people here still need our assistance”**

In Thin Gan Kone on Middle Island in the Irrawaddy delta, a little town hit by cyclone Nargis on 2 May 2008, Nang Thein Hann is of great help to the staff of Malteser International. She speaks English very well and can therefore translate the stories and needs of the villagers. But this is not her official job: Nang Thein Hann is a nurse and is working in the health centre in Thin Gan Kone.

#### **Nang Thein Hann**

After having served in the army as nursing officer in the rank of a captain, she retired and started to study English and Chinese in Yangon. When she heard about the cyclone, Nang Thein Hann was in her native town in the north of the country with her family. She heard about the disaster, that many people lost their lives and about the horrible situation in the Irrawaddy delta. She wanted to go and help immediately, but her mother convinced her not to go. She was scared that another storm might follow. So Nang Thein Hann went back to Yangon. There, a friend gave her a job advertisement from Malteser International: The organisation was looking for a nurse to work in the new health centre in Thin Gan Kone. Nang Thein Hann applied, got the job and three days later she was on Middle Island. “Everything went very quickly”, she says. “When I arrived, I was glad to see that the situation is not as bad as I had imagined. But assistance is still very much needed. Many people still lack basic sanitation and clean water; they still live in temporary shelters. And they also still suffer emotionally from what they have experienced. A lot of them cannot eat and sleep. Many of them have lost family members and friends and suffer from depression. It is important to assist these people now.”

This is the first time that she has been working in a disaster relief situation and she enjoys it. With a big smile she says that if she has the chance to grow and to learn with Malteser International, she would like to work with the organisation forever. Then she goes back to her work, right now she is sorting the medicines for the health centre in Thin Gan Kone. Tomorrow, new patients will come and she wants to be well prepared.

*Esther Suchanek*

## STAFF ABROAD

On 01 November, **Thomas Molitor** from Germany started to work as a Project Administrator in Myanmar.

On 15 November, **Arno Coerver** from the Netherlands, former WASH Programme Coordinator in Sri Lanka, started working as Country Coordinator Sri Lanka.

On 29 November, **Juliana Helmerich** from Germany, former Project Assistant in the Asia Department in Cologne, left to start work in Cambodia as a Project Assistant.

### **Malteser International likes to express its sincere gratitude to the following staff members leaving the organisation for their exemplary commitment:**

**Hernandez Organero** from Spain, who has worked for us as IT Team Leader and Advisor Health Information System in Indonesia.

**Oduma Lawrence** from Kenya, who has worked as Country Coordinator in Sri Lanka.

**Kelvin Shingles** from New Zealand, who has worked for us as a Project Coordinator in Galle/Sri Lanka.

**Milcah Oduma**, from Kenya, who has worked for us as a Human Resources Officer in Sri Lanka.

**Herny Mugassa**, from Tanzania, who has worked for us as Water & Sanitation Engineer in Ampara/Sri Lanka.

**Basit Ahmady**, from Afghanistan, who has worked for us as Programme Administrator in Ampara/Sri Lanka

**Alisa Grabus**, from Bosnia-Herzegovina, who has worked for us as Programme Administrator in Islamabad/Pakistan.

**Thank you very much for all you did and all the best in your professional and private life!**

## IV. OTHER NEWS

### **Cologne: Visit of H.R.H. Princess Astrid from Belgium to the Headquarters of Malteser International**

On 23 September 2008, H.R.H. Princess Astrid accepted an invitation by the Order of Malta to visit the Headquarters of Malteser International in Cologne. The reason of the visit was the interest of the Royal Household and the Princess in the international humanitarian work of Malteser International. Accompanied by her counsellors and a delegation of Malteser International headed by its President and one of the Vice-Presidents, Princess Astrid visited the offices and talked to the staff of Malteser International to get a personal impression of their work. The visit was completed by a Mass celebrated in the chapel of the Headquarters. In a letter afterwards Princess Astrid expressed her sincere gratitude to have had the possibility of having visited Malteser International. She underlined how much she was impressed by the work that Malteser International is realising in its projects worldwide.

Ingo Radtke

Petra Ipp-Zavazal

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