

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE
SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
216 EAST 47th STREET / 8 FL
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017
PHONE: (212) 355-6213 - FAX: (212) 355-4014
e-mail: orderofmalta@un.int

INFORMATION NOTE ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHT

Pakistan

In October 2005 a massive earthquake struck Pakistan, India, and the disputed region of Kashmir, leaving 3.5 million Pakistani people homeless. People who had found shelter in camps put up by international and local relief organizations on the outskirts of villages are now being told to return to their villages by the Pakistani government, even though the villages remain largely in ruins from the earthquake. The Order of Malta has established a program to assist these people in the reconstruction of their villages by flying in the necessary materials to build up to 640 emergency shelters in the remote mountain villages of the Pallas Valley. These half-round huts are made out of steel pipe and corrugated iron sheets that can easily be built up or struck down depending on the future needs of the occupants.

Vietnam

For the past year the Order of Malta has been coordinating a holistic poverty alleviation program in four districts in central Vietnam. The program focuses on providing healthcare for women and children, small business enterprise development for women, as well as other income generating activities. Almost 2,000 families are participating in the program. Now the Order is expanding its programs to include agriculture, health, and nutrition to enhance sustainable development in the region.

Angola

The Order of Malta remains active in its efforts to assist in the rebuilding of Angola following 27 years of civil war. With emergency relief programs ending, the top priority for the Order is expanding access to healthcare for those who remained outside the reach of the relief efforts due to their inaccessibility. Healthcare centers will be rebuilt and assisted by the Order. Training courses will be offered for the locals, allowing them to staff the healthcare centers themselves, with an emphasis put on educating the population about HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, as these diseases remain a threat for the people of Angola.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Order of Malta continues 10 years of medical aid in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and is expanding its work to include medical and psychological care to women and girls who are commonly victims of violence. It is difficult for women to seek aid after rape due to the fear of stigma and ostracization they may face from their family and community. The Order has instituted a "sensitization program against sexual violence" to change attitudes toward rape victims, allowing the victims to come forward more easily.

New York, April 5, 2006