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INFORMATION NOTE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-NINE

India: Kutch

On April 1st, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta started a new project in the earthquake-affected region of Kutch in the north of Gujarat together with its partner agency “Organisation for Development Education” (UNNATI). The specific objective of the project is to enable 150 families to gain control over earthquake resistant secure shelters made of local material. The targeted beneficiaries are especially vulnerable groups such as elderly persons, widows, single woman headed households, and physically challenged persons. Since the labor to build these homes is provided by local skilled and unskilled laborers, who are paid wages directly, not only the 150 families for whom the houses are built benefit from the project. Moreover, the residents of all the identified 15 villages and settlements will benefit from learning about safe housing construction technology.

India: Tamil Nadu

Having already started a comprehensive prevention project in 33 tsunami affected villages in the Kanyakumari District in the beginning of the year, the Order is now expanding its commitment in the fight against HIV/AIDS to the Tirunelveli District. Both districts are located in the region of Tamil Nadu, which ranks second in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in India. As within the Kanyakumari District, the purpose of the project is to enhance the quality of life of “people living with HIV/AIDS” (PLHA) and their families and to prevent and control further transmission of the disease. People learn how to live with the disease and affected family members receive training on extended home based care and support. About 600 PLHA and their family members (2,100 persons in total) will directly benefit from the project. The Order’s local partner Pro-Vision will ensure the effective implementation of the project by regular visits and trainings for all implementing partners.

Myanmar

On April 11th, a health center in Pandaing, which was rehabilitated by the Order of Malta, was officially inaugurated. The ceremony marked the successful completion of an

integrated project with the aim of strengthening the health status of the population through interventions in the health and water/sanitation sectors. In the framework of the project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, six health facilities in total had been rehabilitated over a period of 12 months now enabling more than 60,000 of the most vulnerable to receive treatment on diseases such as malaria, dengue and tuberculosis. Assistance to pregnant women in order to reduce neo-natal, post-natal and maternal death is another major objective of the project. In combination with the provision of safe drinking water and measures to improve environmental sanitation, the project presents an important basis for a general improvement of the living conditions of the population in Htan Tabin Township. The Order is keen to continue its activities in order to extend the impact of its recent project.

Sri Lanka: Kalmunai

On April 23rd, the first house constructed under the home-owner-driven approach was handed over to a family in Kalmunai in eastern Sri Lanka. Having already built 104 houses with its Sri Lankan partner organization “Centre for Social Assessment” (CSA) in Kalmunai, the Order of Malta decided to work with the owner-driven approach to make the beneficiaries the most important actors of the project. Within the homeowner-driven approach it is up to each family to decide about the design and structure of their house and to hire labor and purchase building materials. A total of 200 families from the Kalmunai Muslim division will be provided with new houses. The Order will provide additional funding and train its partner organization CSA on management and construction issues as well as income generating activities.

Sri Lanka: Galle

The Order has also started a new project in the southern district of Galle which aims at reducing the number of children who unnecessarily live in children’s homes and preventing further children from being institutionalized. There is no functioning foster parent system in place and adoption processes take a long time. The conditions in most of the homes create a whole range of social and psychological problems which the children have to struggle with, sometimes for the rest of their lives. The Order together with its national partner organization Sarvodya now tackles the complex problem with a comprehensive project which includes the following activities: First of all, children living in children’s homes who could be reintegrated into their families into their families are identified and their parents are supported (housing, livelihood, counseling) to create the conditions for a family reunification. Secondly, the project team works with individual families whose children are about to be institutionalized; these families and the local authorities are encouraged to find alternative solutions. Finally, the team assists the local authorities in implementing a foster family scheme and to speed up the adoption process.

Vietnam

The Order of Malta has started a new project which will support the health care of the Vietnamese minority population Co Tu. In three communities of the mountainous district

of Tay Giang, medicine gardens with traditional medical plants will be constructed to offer alternative remedies to the patients. The staff of the health centers will receive training on the cultivation of the plants and learn how to prepare and administer traditional remedies.

Pakistan

The Order of Malta, with the financial support of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and Aktion Deutschland Hilft (Action Campaign Germany Helps), distributed survival kits to 1,000 families affected by the flood disaster in the south of Pakistan. The victims of the devastating cyclone Yemyin and the following torrential rains received material to build provisional shelters, drinking water tanks, water purification tablets, hygiene articles and metal boxes to safely store their personal stuff. Furthermore, volunteers inform the population about important measures of hygiene. Pakistani doctors, midwives and local health workers advise the locals on how to treat the water to make it potable.

Syria

On the basis of a cooperation agreement between Malteser International and the Turkish partner organisation IBC (International Blue Crescent Humanitarian Relief and Development Foundation), 100 Iraqi refugee families will be supplied with so called “start up kits”: a basic kit with soap, further hygiene items and cookware. Additionally, during the next months every family will receive 900 US Dollars. By giving cash money, people can choose what they need and buy these articles on the local market, thereby supporting the local economy. Also, the Order and IBC will distribute school materials such as bags, booklets, pencils and books among both poor Syrian children and Iraqi refugee children.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Order of Malta, together with local partners and with the added financial support of Pooled Fund, will reconstruct an old, completely destroyed road, leading right through the territory of Mulungu and connecting this area with the rest of South Kivu to improve the living conditions of those people. Currently no road leads to the about 180,000 people living in Mulungu. Food stuff, medicine and other goods must be delivered first by plane and then by foot through the bush for several days. Thus, the health situation is much worse in this territory than in others: the number of children under five dying per month is nearly four times higher in Mulungu than in other health zones of South Kivu. Furthermore, 6,539 persons living in Mulungu are direct beneficiaries of the project since they are employed as road builders and receive ‘cash for work.’ In other parts of South Kivu, traffic routes also need to be constructed, reconstructed or maintained. Also, in Kaziba, the Order, with financial support from OCHA/European Funds, is also rebuilding the bridge ‘Luzinzi’ which was destroyed during the last rainy season and, thus, cut off many people.

In order to secure the food supply in ten villages in the districts of Walungu and Mwenga, both in South Kivu, the Order with the financial support of Pooled Fund has started to distribute manioc plants resistant to the plant disease mosaic. This is in addition to the maize that the Order already distributes to promote a balanced nutrition. Altogether 7,500 families are being supported by the project. Thus, the number of beneficiaries amounts to nearly 38,000 people

Angola

In order to strengthen the fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria in the province of Kuando Kubango, the Order of Malta started a wide-ranging prevention program in cooperation with community based organizations (CBOs). The overall objective of the project is to reduce morbidity and mortality of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria in the region. The population targeted is estimated at 350,000. By means of preventive measures including educational campaigns for the communities and sessions in schools, the awareness and knowledge of the population concerning the three diseases is expected to be raised. The program will train community health workers to organize information, education and communication activities in schools, churches and during meetings in their villages. Furthermore, a program for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of HIV and opportunistic infections like TB and Malaria will take place in ten health facilities cared for by the Order focusing especially on pregnant women and children. With this new project, the Order will contribute to prevent the aggravation of the HIV/AIDS situation in Angola and strengthen the cooperation with local partners.

Sudan

Despite the difficult security situation in the crises region of North Darfur, the Order of Malta was able to distribute 6,000 mosquito nets before the beginning of the rainy season. The nets were distributed in Wadah and in forty-eight surrounding villages. In addition to the nets, the Order trained five voluntary health workers in each village who in turn educate fellow villagers about the dangers of malaria and the proper use of the nets.

Peru

The international network of the Order of Malta provided 120,000 US dollars to further relief programmes for the victims of the severe earthquake that hit Peru on August 16th. The money will be employed in transitional and rehabilitation projects. This help will be provided especially to the neediest families who did not only lose their homes but all their belongings due to the catastrophe. In addition, the Peruvian Association of the Order provided first aid for the wounded and distributed life-saving items such as food, clothing, and dressing material.

New York, October 11, 2007