



April 2006 n.3 – Update on Solidar members' activities in the tsunami affected countries

Solidar members are operational in Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and Indonesia. Building on their immediate response to the Tsunami and the emergency phase, Solidar members are helping to reconstruct some of the areas devastated by the Tsunami.

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solidarSolidar visits the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels

On Thursday 6th April, Ian Derry, Solidar International Cooperation Coordinator, and Rossella Della Monica, Project Officer for Communications and Cooperation in the Field, visited the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels to meet with the Ambassador, HE K.J. Weerasinghe and provide an update of Solidar members' activities in Sri Lanka. Ambassador Weerasinghe warmly welcomed Solidar staff, and expressed great interest and support for the work of Solidar in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, on Monday 20th March, Rossella Della Monica attended a reception in the European Parliament hosted by the Ambassador, HE K.J. Weerasinghe, Ambassador, in honour of Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Ports and Aviation of Sri Lanka. The Minister commended the work of Solidar in Sri Lanka and expressed gratitude for the continued support of Solidar to tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction.



SRI LANKA CONSORTIUM



Norwegian People's Aid

(Supported by Progetto Sviluppo, APHEDA, La Ligue/Solidari   Laidue, Volkshilfe, FCD/FOS)

Update on the Solidar Consortium activities in Sri Lanka*Update of the overall Consortium programme*

The Solidar Consortium in Sri Lanka is currently employing 2.100 local staff (including 650 on de-mining and 800 on construction), and projects are benefiting about 340.000 people. Including NPA de-mining activities and ASB projects in the East, the Solidar budget in Sri Lanka is over \$30 million. The next edition of the Solidar Consortium newsletter in Sri Lanka, which has a distribution of some 10.000 in three languages now, will be published soon. The Tsunami Education Project is being supported by UNICEF, and UNHCR is planning to support the reconstruction programme.

The Solidar Consortium is currently in consultation with the UN in regard to acting as an umbrella organisation for them in the North of Sri Lanka. The Consortium would assess proposals and help disseminate and assist implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs).

Foundation Laying ceremony in Uduthurai (UNOPS)

Solidar's housing construction in Uduthurai started in the last week of March with a ceremony that was organised to mark the laying of the first foundation stone. Amongst those present at the ceremony were Kathleen Glenz, ASB's desk officer (Asia), and T.Jayaseelan, Additional Government Agent of Vadamarachchi East. Additionally, respective staff members of both Solidar and UNOPS attended the occasion. In December 2005, Solidar entered into a partnership with UNOPS to build 400 houses in Uduthurai. As such UNOPS will oversee construction work in Uduthurai.

For the houses in Uduthurai Village, UNOPS utilizes a different technical design where the houses' structure has a steel frame. This house type provides several advantages compared with the traditional construction method applied in the other villages. It can be constructed faster (30% time saving) and needs less environmentally sensitive materials. The appearance of the completed houses is expected to vary only slightly from houses built with traditional materials but the layout will be the same as in the other villages (All houses have a ground floor of 500 square feet and have two bedrooms, a living area, kitchen, wooden-framed windows with glass panes). The design specifications of the "UNOPS-house" has also been approved by the Urban Development Authority (UDA) and the Planning and Development Secretariat (PDS) technical teams in Kilinochchi.



Foundation stone laying ceremony in Uduthurai



First foundation stone laid in Uduthurai site



Kathleen Glenz, ASB's Desk Officer for Asia lighting an oil lamp with James Martin, ASB Programme Manager

ASB's Edith Wallmeier visits Sri Lanka

Edith Wallmeier, ASB's Head of the International Department, visited Sri Lanka on a week long tour, to see ASB's projects in the country. The objective of her visit was to get first hand information on progress of the work on the ground. During her stay she visited Kilinochchi, Hambantota and Batticaloa. In Kilinochchi, Edith visited Vadamarachchi East where Solidar's housing construction programme is being implemented in three cluster villagers – Uduthurai, Vathirayan and Chempianpattu. While in Uduthurai, Edith Wallmeier met staff of the village liaison centre, a mechanism which has been introduced by Solidar in order to engage with beneficiary communities on regular basis improving communication between Solidar and beneficiaries.



ASB's head of international department, Edith Wallmeier, Kathleen Glenz and Steve Durrant and Kilinochchi staff



Edith getting a brief about community liaison centres from James Martin

Joint northern and southern Sri Lanka training programme

Two trainers from Rainforest Rescue International (RRI), one of Solidar's implementing partners in the south of Sri Lanka, visited Kilinochchi, in the north-east of Sri Lanka, in the first week of April to conduct a three day follow up training programme on Analog Forestry to staff of The Economic Consultancy House (TECH) and farming community in the area who had received RRI's training in the past. Earlier in October 2005, 15

of these people came to Galle to take part in a cross-border training programme on Analog Forestry. At the completion of this workshop, a one year Analog Forestry reforestation programme was designed in order to help assist TECH and its beneficiary farming communities in Vadamarachchi East. The objective of the follow up training programme is to assess the successes and drawbacks of the implementation of the one year model.



RRI- TECH training Programme



Solidarité Laïque produces a magazine for children in Sri Lanka

Solidarité Laïque, in partnership with the well-known photographer REZA, his NGO Aina (<http://www.ainaworld.org>), and Sri Lanka Solidarity is launching a new magazine for children in Sri Lanka: YUTI ! This magazine will be written in the three official languages in Sri Lanka: Sinhalese, Tamil and English. The first publication will be launch in May in the tsunami-affected communities (25,000 copies). The Solidar Consortium in Sri Lanka is contributing to the first issue - which focuses on water-related issues - with a 2 pages article elaborated by the Tsunami Education Project team. This is a new aspect of the partnership between Solidar members in Sri Lanka.

INDIA



SAH and AWO inaugurate the of construction 250 houses



On April 4th, SAH and AWO International inaugurated 250 houses for tsunami-affected people in India. Both the islands of Veerancoilthittu and Nadu Thittu were devastated by the December 2004 tsunami. Today, the Solidar Consortium in India has been able to deliver 250 houses to the islands' communities. *"The Inhabitants of these islands have been hit twice by disasters in one year,"* says Jürgen Störk, SAH desk officer for humanitarian assistance. *"Last November 2005 monsoon, the strongest in the last 20 years, destroyed the few houses that resisted the tsunami".* The Solidar Consortium in India and its local partners succeeded in building the houses in virtually less than 4 months. During the floods, the Solidar India Consortium immediately started its relief activities through distributing food and providing shelters for more than 20.000 people. *"After the water was gone, we jointly decided to stay and keep up with rehabilitation and reconstruction work"* says Barbara Gruner, AWO International Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid. The

Solidar Consortium has additionally started the reconstruction of another hundred houses, four community flood and cyclone shelters and 10 pure-drinking water plants, in the Cuddalore coastal region.



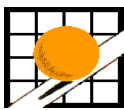
Barbara Gruner, AWO International Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid, with villagers during the inauguration ceremony



Part of the inauguration ceremony



Jürgen Störk, SAH desk officer for humanitarian assistance, with villagers during the inauguration ceremony



Progetto Sviluppo visits India and Sri Lanka

Sergio Bassoli from Progetto Sviluppo CGIL, Danilo Lovadina (CAAF North East CGIL) and Italo Stellon (CGIL Services System) will visit projects in Tamil Nadu from 18th to 24th April and in Sri Lanka (Killinochchi) from 25th to 29th of April. The objectives of this mission are to assess Progetto Sviluppo support in both countries.



La Ligue and Solidarité Laïque visit India and Sri Lanka



Alice Coat from La Ligue and Louis Bourgois from Solidarité Laïque will be in India and Sri Lanka in April to work with their partners in the field of education. In India, they will visit a Volkshilfe project, and work with Progetto Sviluppo to coordinate the support they give for the construction.

INDONESIA



Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA programs in Aceh

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA began supporting emergency relief activities in Aceh shortly after the earthquake and tsunami on 26 December 2004.



Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA office in Aceh

More than a year later, Union Aid Abroad –APHEDA still has a strong presence in a number of districts in Aceh, with an office in the provincial capital of Banda Aceh, with Deb Leaver as Aceh Program Coordinator, eight permanent local staff, volunteers, and project activities in four districts. Networks and partnerships have been established with local NGOs, local and international unions and community groups. With the support of Australian and trade unions and donors, Union Aid Abroad –

APHEDA works to build self-reliance through support to educational and training programs for workers and their trade unions.



Vocational training in Sigli with KSBSI

In order to assist those in need of new economic opportunities, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA is working together with the People's Crisis Centre (PCC) and with the Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity Labour Unions (KSBSI) in a number of areas in Aceh, to provide training in sewing, tailoring, embroidery and printing to Acehnese women and men. Lynne Butler, a Vocational Education Technical Advisor has also been sent to Aceh to develop and implement a small business management training program. In Lhokseumawe, where the oil refinery workers have been laid off, 20 men have finished a silk screen printing course, and 60 women a tailoring course. In Sigli 40 women have completed a tailoring course. Now these 120 are learning small business/cooperative skills. These training programs are also supported with funds from the UK Trades Union Congress.



Planning workshop for trade union development in Aceh, 14-15 January 2006

In line with Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA's aim of strengthening workers' rights in developing countries, a number of training activities and workshops on basic unionism and union development have been held with local, national and international unions. In mid January, there was a strategic planning meeting of local and Indonesian unionists, along with representatives of several of the Global Union Federations, and other trade union donors. There is a concern amongst local unionists that there is a lack of union education and a many sectors of the Acehnese workforce are yet to be organised; New unions of nurses and NGO workers are being formed.

Working together with WALHI, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA is also supporting the construction of an Environmental Resource Centre in Banda Aceh, and conducting training and public forums to educate workers and communities on the importance of environmental protection. Further capacity building has taken place through a series of trainings for community workers, implemented in partnership with PCC.

Union Aid Abroad –APHEDA is supporting the Indonesian Nurses' Association (PPNI) in Aceh, who have teams of volunteer doctors and nurses providing health care for displaced people in six camps.



Icut Hindon and Jamadi from WALHI at the start of construction of the Environmental Resources



Volunteers from PPNI, the Indonesian nurses' association, run a clinic in a devastated part of the city of Banda Aceh



Along with these completed and ongoing activities, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA also has a number of projects planned in Aceh, to be implemented over the next six months.

Working together with Volkshilfe Austria, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and three local community organisations in west Aceh plan to construct twelve community centres, to be used for meetings and decision-making discussions, and seventeen houses for tsunami-affected families. In order to provide access to sustainable livelihoods for a number of Acehnese women, 64 salt production units will be constructed and provided to women-headed households. Women's economic empowerment will be further supported through the construction of a women's training centre in Meulaboh, where ongoing training will be held. Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and Volkshilfe Austria will also help improve access to health care and sanitation, through the construction of public toilets, and the establishment of a mobile health service team in Aceh Barat Daya.

With support from SASK on behalf of the Finnish trade unions, via Union Network International, the Trade Union Care centre in Banda Aceh has begun construction of four regional community training centres, in Nias, Cot Suruy and Meulaboh. The centre in Calang has been completed. It is hoped that other Solidar members will support vocational and other training activities once these centres become operational. With the peace agreement proceeding thus far, and some hopes for the development of civil society and a revival of the Acehnese economy, along with other Solidar agencies, planning has begun on integrating former combatants into vocational and other training courses.

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA plans to remain in Aceh until 2008, and to continue to implement projects that will assist workers and communities engaged in post-tsunami reconstruction.



The Olof Palme Center activities in Aceh

The Olof Palme Center (OPC) has been involved in supporting the peace process between GAM and the Indonesian Government up until the signing of a MoU the 15th August, 2005. One of the main points in the MoU was to facilitate a local election before the end of April 2006. The Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was established by the EU to monitor the MoU.

The OPC discussed with GAM their priorities, which mainly were focused on the local election preparation. This election is to decide on around 2000 persons for different positions from the village level to the Governor level. The OPC implemented a two weeks course on Election Campaigning by training 45 persons in Kuala Lumpur in January 2006. After this training, Jan Hodann, desk officer for Asia, went to Aceh and travelled across the region to better understand how the MoU was being implemented: meetings with AMM were organised (head office and local offices) as well as 12 other major meetings, in order to learn and understand the demands and priorities from former GAM representatives.

Meanwhile, the OPC started planning to set up a small office in Banda Aceh to manage general education training courses (adult learning) aimed at promoting the MoU especially the paragraph 3.2 (reintegration into society). APHEDA supported the OPC in setting up this office, since the house next to APHEDA's office was rented. The office is currently operational, and has started planning the training courses.

As the elections were postponed -and fortunately the AMM stayed – the OPC was asked to support GAM in training and creating a political party. This support started in Stockholm during a one week training course for GAM representatives (13th -19th March). A special campaign training course for women will soon be held in Kuala Lumpur.

Jan Hodann will go to Aceh at the end of May.

Other News and Interesting Links

Interesting links:

- The Humanitarian Information Centre for Sri Lanka: <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/srilanka/default.asp>
- The Humanitarian Information Centre for Indonesia: <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/sumatra/>
- The EU Response: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/tsunami/index.htm>
http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/whatsnew/tsunami_fr.htm
- Aceh Monitoring Mission: <http://www.aceh-mm.org/>

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