

THE JTI FOUNDATION NEWS

Water is Life!

Water is a vital resource, yet one that remains unfairly shared. According to UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, nearly 770 million people lack access to clean drinking water, while a further 2.5 billion go without the basic sanitation the developed world takes for granted.

And water is a hazard in other ways. Consider periodic and increasingly regular floods and occasional but catastrophic tidal waves. Between 1980 and 2009, these affected an estimated 2.8 billion people across the world. Unfortunately, climate change, deforestation, and intensive agriculture can both reduce access to clean water, and aggravate the impact of flooding and other water-related threats.

At the JTI Foundation, we recognize both the benign and the harmful role water can play in human development – and an increasing number of our programs promote water-related agendas. In this newsletter, we look in detail at three projects in three territories new to us – Myanmar, Sudan, and Hungary. Each underlines how we continue to broaden our range activities to better meet the needs of communities challenged by water-related disasters.



Traditional hand dug water wells in Kayin state, Myanmar



Kayin state, Myanmar

Well done!

PEACE WINDS JAPAN IN MYANMAR

The improving political environment in Myanmar following elections in April 2012 has allowed for the return of previously excluded aid and relief agencies, including our long-time partner, Peace Winds Japan (PWJ).

Nonetheless, decades of bitter conflict between the central government and the country's ethnic minorities means an estimated 900,000 citizens of Myanmar remain displaced in refugee camps, often on the border with Thailand. Many of these originally lived in Kayin state.

While some refugees have returned to Kayin, others are dissuaded by the damage sustained by wells and water storage tanks that prevent a return to normal village life – making restoration of this infrastructure vital to hastening the resettlement of refugees from across the Thai border.

With the JTI Foundation's support, PWJ's project addresses the needs of around 2,500 villagers in five

communities whose water supplies are inadequate. This is particularly so in the months ahead of annual rains, when there is often either no water, or very limited and muddy supply – with waterborne diseases especially affecting the very young.

The project began with detailed stakeholder field assessments. In addition to rebuilding wells and water tanks, the program includes workshops covering well maintenance, and the appropriate use of scarce communal water resources.

PWJ addresses the needs of around 2,500 villagers

Flash floods in Sudan

SHELTERBOX'S RAPID RESPONSE



Beneficiaries of ShelterBox relief tents in El Kriab, Khartoum state, Sudan

When flash floods struck central Sudan on 24 August, water levels rose by up to two meters, immediately destroying 37,000 dwellings. Less than two days later, our partner ShelterBox was on site – and busy delivering 504 tents supported by the JTI Foundation.

A JTI Foundation Program Manager visited flood-affected communities in Khartoum state early in September to evaluate the achievements of this rapid response mission. The representative met a number of families who had been provided with ShelterBox tents – including Ibrahim Amid.

A father of 28, Ibrahim lost both his dwellings to the floods. Rebuilding these, and settling his family will take many years. In the meantime, Ibrahim and many other beneficiaries expressed thanks to ShelterBox and the JTI Foundation for providing the tents from which they can start along the long path to recovery.



The flooded Szigetmonostor ferryboat station, Hungary

Old problem, new partner

Flooding is not a challenge confined to 'remoter' parts of the world – the Danube and its tributaries have flooded for centuries – although with increasing frequency and intensity of late.

This summer, many parts of central Europe were hit by severe flooding, including the island of Szentendre, a little to the north of Budapest. Shortly after, the JTI Foundation started supporting the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service to help fund the rebuilding of a ferry station at the island community of Szigetmonostor, replacing the one damaged by floods.

This support aims at building a new superstructure which will be positioned 40 centimeters above the Danube's highest previously recorded flood level.

In good times, around 1,000 residents, commuters and holidaymakers use the ferry every day. Restoring the service will also benefit up to 120,000 local people dependent on a return to normal levels of economic activity – and particularly the tourism sector, which is a critical source of income for the community in the summer months.

Our new partner in this initiative which numbers nearly 8,000 volunteers was founded in Germany in December 1988 by a Hungarian émigré, Baroness Csilla von Boeselager, in response to humanitarian challenges arising from the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Today, the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service has extended its support to a variety of activities – often tending to groups whose needs are not fully met by civil society institutions.

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