



Annual Report 2006



Executive Summary

SOS Malta (www.sosmalta.org), a Maltese registered NGO set up in 1991, aims at aiding people experiencing times of crisis and empowering them by providing support services and opportunities to implement development and change in their country to ensure a better quality of life. It encourages advocacy on behalf of social causes, as well as promotes models of good care and practice. In all its operations in Malta and overseas SOS Malta also promotes volunteerism for effective sustainable development. The organisation is a source of knowledge and advice about the role and contribution of volunteerism and the benefits of civic engagement.

SOS Malta has two main departments through which it seeks to reach the abovementioned aims and objectives. These are the *Development* department and *Malta Resource Centre for Civil Society NGOs*

Through its development department, SOS Malta carries out emergency aid and development work overseas. It has operated various relief missions and development projects in overseas countries. They are present in Albania, Kosovo and Sri Lanka.

Through its **Malta Resource Centre** www.mrc.org.mt , it provides capacity building, training, and consultancy to NGOs and groups working for social change, development, and the fight against poverty and social exclusion in view of becoming more effective, efficient and better equipped to operate and participate at national and EU levels. The MRC vision is to provide stronger identity for the NGO sector and to develop structured systems of NGOs representation. This is done through the setting up of networks, providing a forum for sharing good and useful practices, provision of training and consultation, research, projects development, providing technical assistance for applying and managing EU funding, the promotion and development of corporate social responsibility (CSR), and, the provision of administrative back-up to NGO civil society networks.

Projects

2006 Post Tsunami in Sri Lanka

The tsunami killed 35,322 people, displaced 1,000,000 persons and affected over two thirds of the island's coastline and outlying 13 districts. Besides the tremendous loss of life and injuries, the tsunami caused extensive damage to property and disruptions of fisheries and other livelihood activities and business assets.

Thanks to the quick response by the government, local communities, local NGOs, private sector and the international community, the country recorded no additional deaths because of tsunami related diseases or lack of delayed medical treatment. SOS Malta was amongst the international community cooperating in order to ensure that humanitarian assistance reached those in need.

In 2006 SOS Malta went beyond the emergency level and has been working on the ground assisting in the recovery and reconstruction process.

Our main focus has been to work within the outlined projects presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for funding namely:

- St Mary's Convent School Improvement in Matara
- Livelihood Recovery Programme

However having acquired the expertise of Mr Marco Cremona on Water and Sanitation SOS Malta took a decision to implement Rain Water Harvesting Projects because most of the communities where we are working are unable to reach or cannot afford safe drinking water. SOS Malta acknowledges water as a human right and recognises the key role of water in agriculture, energy, health as well as in combating poverty. SOS Malta is committed to enhancing all efforts to satisfy basic human rights and help meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Livelihood Recovery Programme

The establishment of two fishing co-operatives amongst Matara Fort and Pollhena fishermen took place over a period of 4 months. The aims of the project were to provide a form of livelihood for the fishermen as part of the post tsunami rehabilitation process. Before actually talking about providing boats and engines, we spent the first couple of months getting to know the fishermen and collecting information on each one, we also worked in close contact with the FAO, exchanging information. The point of this lengthy process was to ensure that we did not repeat the same mistakes that other NGO's had committed. We noted that other NGO's had given equipment and boats to individuals who already owned the latter and as a consequence one year after tsunami, fishermen who had lost everything had still not received any form of aid. Another aspect of the co-operative was to make the fishermen pay a minimal monthly amount for the boat, engine and nets,

this money would then go towards funding other projects and providing more aid. It also gave us some assurance that the fishermen were indeed using the boats.



Cylinders for the Dive Centres



Engines for Boats



Pollhena Cooperative

St. Mary's Convent School Improvement

To continue our commitment to the development planning at school and classroom levels SOS Malta made further contacts with the Society of the Sacred Heart in India and arranged for teachers to undergo a Master Training Course in Mumbai for a month. Ms Gloria De Souza from the Institute Parisar Asha was invited to join us to assess the teachers and design a course to fit in to the Sri Lankan curriculum. We are happy that the first four head teachers of St Mary's Convent School have completed a month's training in Mumbai and are now ready to pass on what they have learnt to other teachers through the Resource Centre set up by SOS Malta in Matara.

The COURSE-CONTENT for the month dedicated to 'MASTER-TRAINING', focussed on 5 crucial elements:

1. From VISION to MISSION
2. DEFINING our CHILD-CENTRED GOALS
3. CURRICULUM PLANNING for a COMPREHENSIVE/INTEGRATED SCHOOL-EDUCATIONSYSTEM
4. FOCUSSED IMPLEMENTATION
5. PARTNERING/NETWORKING for SYNERGISED STRENGTH

The Director of Education in Matara has praised this initiative and is eager to extend the programme to other schools. SOS Malta will be looking at the possibility of offering the course again after receiving a full report from Mumbai.

The junior school reading room is now fully refurbished and equipped to include a Television, DVD and computer.

The success of SOS Malta's programme of assistance to St Mary's Convent is measured by the increase of commitment of all the sisters and teachers in meeting the vision and the set of goals decided upon together in March 2005. The school is now a better place for pupils to learn with all the improvements made as a distinct approach to educational change.

Junior School Reading Room



Reading Room



Over 500 Books were bought for the Library

Rain Water Harvesting



Rain Water Harvesting

Community Rainwater Harvesting in Sri Lanka

Presently Sri Lanka ranks among the countries with the highest annual renewable quantity of water, the rainfall volume being 5900 cubic metres per capita. Yet the provision of a clean water supply in most of the country remains a problem. The problem has been aggravated by the salinization of a large number of shallow wells in coastal areas because of the Tsunami.

Sri Lanka is blessed with two monsoons, namely the South-West from May to September, and the North-East from December to February, interspersed by two inter monsoons. All areas of Sri Lanka receive some amount of rain annually, which although varying in intensity, never fails entirely. This presents a favourable situation for the development of rainwater harvesting projects since there is little risk in the security of supply.

The challenge of supplying adequate water and disposal of excess water to meet the societal needs and ensure equitable water access throughout the year, both rural and urban has been identified as one of the most critical problems facing the decision makers of Sri Lanka. So far, much attention has been paid to conventional, centralized approaches – with limited attention paid to alternatives. Rainwater harvesting bridges the gap between the dearth and excess of water. In the light of the high average rainfall (ranging from 750 – 6000mm

across the country), Sri Lanka presents the ideal opportunity for a community rainwater harvesting project.

Principles of Rainwater Harvesting and Utilization

Traditionally Sri Lankans do not collect rainwater falling on the roofs of their houses. Moreover there is much scepticism on the fact that rainwater is one of the cleanest sources of water available. This traditional belief is identified as one of the biggest obstacles in convincing a large part of the Sri Lanka population to install simple and inexpensive water harvesting devices for the collection and re-use of this water.

Clearly, a lot of time and effort needs to be provided in order to educate the community on the quality of rainwater collected from rooftops, and the benefits resulting from making maximum re-use of this sustainable and readily available source of clean water.

What needs to be explained are facts like :

- All current water sources on earth originate from rainwater. Sri Lankans are unaware that the origins of the water in the public water supply (which they consider as a good source of potable water) is actually rainwater.
- The continuous sun-powered purification and delivery of the hydrological cycle makes rainwater the most naturally purified among all forms of available water sources – the price of which is independent of market sources.
- Rainwater in Sri Lanka is a sustainable and reliable resource, which can be stored and treated to meet all the water requirements in the household.
- Rainwater harvesting instils a sense of ‘self-sufficiency’ and self-help, whilst encouraging family level operation and maintenance.

Official Rainwater Management Policy Objectives

In the document entitled “National Rainwater Policy and Strategies” issued by the Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply, Battaramulla, June ,2005 it is stated that “rainwater harvesting shall be made mandatory, yet introduced in phases, in all areas under Municipal and Urban council jurisdiction within a prescribed time period, as will be prescribed in law, for certain categories of buildings and development works, and shall be strongly promoted in all Pradeshiya Sabha areas”.

The Ministry also recognizes that investments in water harvesting are “investments for life, and a gift to be bestowed for the future. Hence its economic benefits far outweigh its costs”.

The SOS Malta Rainwater Harvesting Project

It was the objective to kick-start rainwater harvesting at a community level in Sri Lanka, which would endeavour to:

- provide technical support for the design of a tailor-made inexpensive domestic rainwater harvesting system suitable for Sri Lankans
- provide training to a number of local trainees on the benefits of domestic rainwater harvesting as well as on the sizing and the putting-in-place of the domestic rainwater harvesting system in houses. The trainees will also be trained to carry out basic water quality tests so as to demonstrate that rainwater is actually 'cleaner' and 'safer' than or a par with their current water supplies.
- distribute a number of components for the installation of domestic rainwater harvesting systems to a number of households at a subsidized price, and 'hand-hold' the households in the proper installation of the system. (It is especially important to identify the more 'influential' people in the community – who may not necessarily be the most needy – and encourage these people to be the first to 'take the plunge').
- Monitor and offer guidance in the optimum utilization of the rainwater being collected
- Evaluation and dissemination of results to community leaders, public officials, etc.
- Lobbying to make rainwater harvesting techniques standard in all building Designs and Bills of Quantities, in all future new Government buildings, as utility and demonstration purposes, within a prescribed time.
- Survey and evaluate the possibility of incorporating rainwater harvesting techniques in community and public buildings, such as schools. This will provide the opportunity for mass demonstration of 'rainwater harvesting at work'.
- Liaise with Universities, Technical Colleges, National Institutes of Education and Health, and Government Training Institutions, to include rainwater harvesting in their curricula. This will encourage awareness and research & development in such systems.
- Propagate the message through religious institutions, by incorporating (and partially funding) water harvesting practices in their establishments.
- Identify and conduct awareness programmes for consumers on the economic benefits of the domestic rainwater harvesting system

Welligama Project Objectives were:

To collect sufficient rainwater from:

The Orphanage building complex

The Christ the Healer Church building complex

A Sri Lankan home close to the orphanage

- offset most of the mains water costs of the orphanage
- offset most of the mains water costs of the church operations
- provide safe drinking water to the orphanage and the church complex to include the pilgrims who stop by the church throughout the year
- provide sufficient water to meet all the domestic water uses of the Sri Lanka home
- provide safe drinking water to 50 households in the vicinity of the orphanage

Channels around the buildings and underground water reservoirs have been constructed for orphanage, church and home. Pumps and UV filters installed for the system to provide complete self-sufficiency of the water needs as well as being a source of safe drinking.

SOS Malta will be extending the programme of Rain Water Harvesting to two other villages in the south of Sri Lanka in partnership with Caritas and SHARE Foundation of India.



Underground Sump



Natural Spring



Domestic RWH Water Tank

Sanitation

Communities needed to be encouraged to be responsible for their own environment through sanitation after water. Sanitation referred to the safe management of human excreta and included both the hardware (latrines) and software (personal hygiene) to reduce faecal oral diseases.

Latrines provided the primary barrier against the spread of faecal matter, the source of most diarrhoeal pathogens, in the environment.

Total sanitation coverage in rural Sri Lanka is poor - at 14 % of households.

Marketing non-health benefits of sanitation, and providing culturally appropriate and low cost technology involving community involvement addressed 4 areas :

- Health issues arising as a result of poor sanitation.
- Gender impact of poor sanitation with women suffering from lack of privacy and also being burdened with additional tasks.
- The economic costs imposed by poor sanitation in terms of increased disease (morbidity) and mortality
- Status

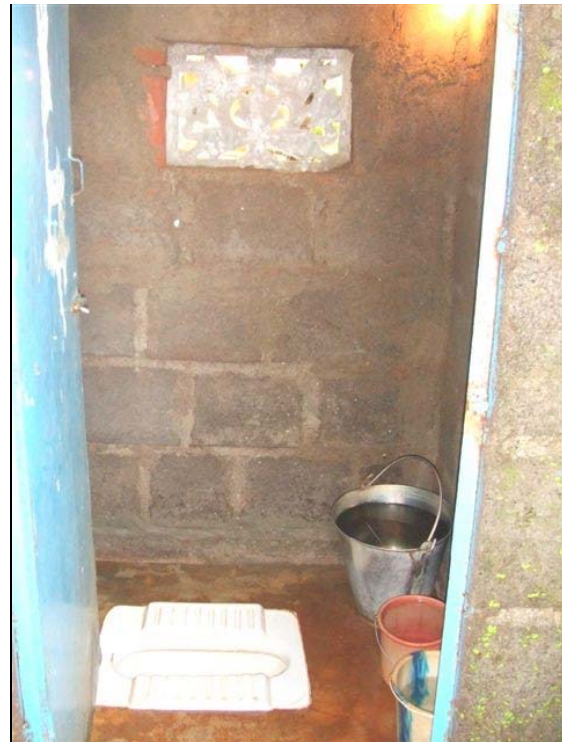
Dissemination of knowledge in this sector through educational sessions, exposure visits and sharing of documented innovative experiences, was a way of getting communities to invest in sanitation improvements.

All these issues were highlighted through :

- Self–Help Groups
- School Children
- Other forms of mobilization at the local level.

This generated demand faster and provided greater latrine coverage in villages.

The impact of educational programs was not limited to the women and school children, but affected the wider community as well.



Toilet in Rural area

Walking miles for Water

ESoDoc

Part Funded by Media Plus Programme

SOS Malta has been successful with an application it submitted to the European Community's Media Plus Programme.

ESoDoc – European Social Documentary is a new training initiative offered by the **ZeLIG School for Documentary, Television and New Media**, in Bolzano, supported by 6 partners from 4 different European countries and the European Union's **Media Plus Programme**.

ESoDoc explores wholly new terrain. It takes up the challenge of bringing together the demands of different players involved in documentary film production: independent documentary film makers and producers; non-governmental and non-profit organizations (NGOs and NPOs), whose needs for new communication strategies have become ever more pressing; television broadcasters and New Media.


ESoDoc's ambition is to **create new production opportunities** for European documentary makers interested in broadcasting films that draw attention to human rights, social justice and environmental protection, particularly in the developing world; and to encourage NGOs and NPOs to make more use of film and New Media as tools in development such as, for example, the use of Participatory Videos.

A journalist from Media Link Communications was our participant.

ESoDoc www.esodoc.eu



DAWL – Energy, Employment, Empowerment

	<p>STRUCTURAL FUNDS PROGRAMME FOR MALTA 2004-2006</p> <p>PROJECT PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION: EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND</p> <p>CO-FINANCING RATE: 75 %</p>	
---	---	--

SOS Malta, in partnership with Paolo Friere Institute, Friends of the Earth (Malta), Mosta Local Council and the Ministry of Rural Affairs and the Environment has launched a project entitled DAWL – Energy, Employment, Empowerment. The project is partly funded by the European Union's European Social Fund-ESF.. The aim of the project is to increase the employability of women who have been out of the labour market for a number of years by providing life learning through hands-on training and development approach to unemployed women

The project also aims to demonstrate cost-effective measures which low-income households can take to lower their monthly water and electricity expenditure resulting in

savings in energy and water consumption at household level and to raise awareness regarding energy and water issues.

One of the objectives is to increase the female participation rate in the labour market by improving the opportunities for women to work. This pilot project will provide the blue print for setting up of a medium enterprise which will provide part-time, flexible hours employment for women as trainers/ information disseminators in the field of energy and water saving. Such enterprise would be set up in partnership with the business sector, local authorities and NGO. In the short term this project will train 5 women in this sector as well as interpersonal skills and will thus increase their employability.

The project addresses SPD Policy Priority2. Developing People and Measure 2.1 Employability and Adaptability which seeks to upgrade Malta's human resource base by reskilling its workforce and to integrate potential workers into the labour force by creating employment opportunities which are suitable to their skills and which take their constraints into account. Studies show that in Malta predominantly more women than men drop out of the workforce to stay at home and take care of the children, facing difficulties when they wish to re-enter the labour market some years on. While it is recognised that every effort should be made to address this imbalance, measures are being put in place to encourage and facilitate women's re-entry in the market.



EUNET Integration Network is a network of education centres and organizations in Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Malta and Portugal complemented by national partner organizations in all five countries.

The EUNET Integration Network project is co-financed by the European Community under the INTI Programme - Preparatory Actions for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals.

Preparatory actions promoting the integration in the EU member states of people who are not citizens of Europe, through specific projects (language courses, information on distinctive, cultural, political and social characteristics of the country in question, including citizenship and European fundamental issues), such as:

- promote dialogue with civil Society
- Develop integration models
- Seek out and evaluate best practices in the integration field
- Set up networks at European level

EUNET Integration Network focuses on support of networks and exchange of information and best practices.

The main goals are:

- Promote actively and contribute together with partner organisations to the integration of third country nationals in the EU

- Important parts of the programme are to exchange information, strategies, approaches and involved staff between the partner organisations
- To select and formulate best practices of integration
- Develop and implement pilot projects for better understanding about EU policies, regulations and practices
- Improve access and participation into existing and new networks
- Develop long term cooperation relations

What we want to achieve is a substantial contribution to the integration of Third-Country Nationals in the EU member states. **Therefore we are convinced that at the end of the project the following point should be attained:**

- The project must contribute to/strengthen - in a structural way- cooperation of networks in EU , like EUNET(and its international member institutes with local partner organizations), with networks of organizations of migrants and refugees on the issues of integration of third country nationals
- The project will contribute to the awareness raising and capacity building of the networks and will set up an international team of trainers,
- The networks will function as a vehicle for the distribution of successful, innovative approaches, methods and materials, in conferences, seminars, through websites and in a handbook about the integration of third country nationals
- The project will contribute to the development of midterm and long-term strategies of networks, like EUNET, trans-national and national networks

There is a **great diversity of project partners** and that will make the project and the cooperation interesting. It is always amazing to see how history shapes the future. The present situation of Portugal and The Netherlands is mirroring the colonial past; In Germany the “former emigrants” to Central and Eastern Europe play their active role in returning and migration, Malta saw many migrants coming, settling and going and is now very strongly experiencing its location near to Northern Africa .All countries – including Denmark - are however facing now the arrival of migrants and refugees from all over the world and looking for ways to develop strategies for integration and citizenship for their “rapidly changing diverse societies”.

1. NGOs Capacity Building events focused on EU matters and funding

1. Two-day training seminar on EU Funding

MRC organised a training seminar in partnership with Impetus Europe Consulting Group Ltd by Welcome Europe experts on 2nd and 3rd February 2006. Over 40 NGOs participated in the two-day training event. The training was based on a **progressive dynamic approach** in order to allow a good acquisition of the knowledge. It offered numerous possibilities of exchanges between participants and the trainer. It was also completed and illustrated by case studies and examples chosen according to the areas of activities of the different participants. For further details in the MRC website:

<http://www.mrc.org.mt/page.asp?n=Eventdetails&i=1930>

2. Training session for Curia

MRC provided a training session on EU Funding for 60 parish volunteer representatives was provided on 20th February at the Curia. The session included an overview on direct funding and structural funds.

3. ROUND TABLE- *Ir-responsabbilita' li ssemma' lehnek*

MRC organised a round table discussion on 24 May 2006 regarding the NGOs' role and responsibilities with regard to participation in the EU legislative process. The RT focused on the capacity building measures which are needed in order to enable civil society NGOs to make their voice heard in negotiations leading to the enactment of EU legislation. The RT was organised in partnership with Forum Malta in Europe.

For further details in the MRC website:

<http://www.mrc.org.mt/page.asp?n=Eventdetails&i=2161>

4. Drafting of Recommendations as a follow up to the Round Table

MRC has drafted a number of recommendations as a follow up to the Round Table held on 24th May 2006. The recommendations were presented to Forum Malta in Europe.

5. Roundtable discussion on Structural Funds

MRC organised a roundtable discussion on Structural Funds 3rd August - How can Maltese NGOs manage Structural Funds Projects?

The roundtable addressed the following two issues:

- Co-financing solutions and national policies for structural funds projects managed by NGOs

- The use of Global Grants for structural funds projects to be managed by NGOs

[EAPN Malta](#) presented the EAPN Manual on the Management of The EU structural Funds. Free copies of the Manual were given to the NGOs which participated in the RT.

The Hon Tonio Fenech, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Finance addressed the Round Table. The RT was also addressed by the [Managing Authority](#), and by Impetus [Europe Consulting Group Ltd](#)

Over 120 participants attended the Round Table

The media covered the event

For further details in the MRC website:

<http://www.mrc.org.mt/page.asp?n=newsdetails&i=8082>

6. Round Table discussion meeting - Structural Funds a contribution to Social Inclusion

A meeting with EAPN (Europe) was organized as an exchange meeting on best practice re structural funds and EU funded projects with other EU member states on 3rd November 2006. The theme of the RT was Structural Funds a contribution to Social Inclusion - focusing on establishing the best systems for NGOs to contribute and participate (consultation, managing and monitoring)

The seminar included the following stakeholders:

- EAPN National networks
- EAPN experts
- EAPN Malta member organisations
- Malta Managing Authority
- UK Managing Authority – London intermediary body
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity

The seminar was organised in correlation with a seminar on Social Economy which took place on 3rd November. The round table was organized by the Employment and Structural Funds Task Forces of EAPN, with the support of the EAPN secretariat based in Brussels and the local EAPN network, EAPN Malta.

The seminar was attended by over 90 representatives from EAPN national and EU networks, Maltese NGOs and public authorities, the roundtable thus aimed at:

- discussing common challenges faced by social inclusion NGOs throughout the EU in relation to access to structural funds;
- sharing examples of practices from different Member States allowing NGOs to best contribute and participate in key phases of the structural funds process (consultation, managing and monitoring);
- learning more about the Maltese experience.

2. Project management consultancy for EU funded projects

Tal-linja Project

MRC in partnership with Impetus Europe Consulting Group Ltd is provided project management consultancy to an EU project lead by OASI Foundation in partnership with Integra Foundation, Richmond Foundation and Jesuit Refugee Services.

The project called *Tal-Linja* provides an opportunity for EU citizenship values to be addressed and promoted via a combination of education, youth involvement, cultural elements, and open dialogue. It does this in Malta, as one of the new EU Member States. It focuses on the EU citizenship values of human dignity, equality, solidarity and pluralism and among the direct target groups of the project are youths between 16 and 18 years of age. It incorporates the principle of inclusiveness by seeking to involve youths in this age-bracket from six different categories: youths within post-secondary education, undergoing vocational/skills training, immigrant youths, youths suffering from mental health problems, illiterate youths, and working youths.

A working committee has been set up to provide a forum where project decisions are taken. It is made up of partner NGO representatives and of three youths representing the six categories of youths and having a consultative role. MRC is hosting the meetings of the working committee and attending all the meetings. The committee will meet at least nineteen times during the 10 month project.

MRC has helped OASI and the partners to develop the project concept and to submit the application for funding

MRC and Impetus will be assisting the partners to identify sponsors for the project in 2007

Dawl Project

MRC assisted SOS Malta, Paolo Friere Institute and Friends of the Earth to submit a structural funds project

MRC participated in the training organised by PPCD on the management of structural funds

Community Action Programme to combat social exclusion 2002-2006

MRC developed a project concept for the application for EU funding regarding a call for proposal under the Community Action Programme to combat social exclusion 2002-2006. MRC had a very good response regarding potential partners for the project. The following organisations/entities had expressed interest: Mount Carmel Hospital, Cana Movement, Social Assistance Secretariat, Richmond Foundation, FOPSIM (Foundation for Social Inclusion Promotion), and Mental Health Association, Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association, Dar-it-Tama, Integra Foundation, Caritas Malta, ADHD Family Support Group, Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity and SOS Malta

MRC organised two meetings to discuss the concept, give some practical details and start the process of filling in the application. The application highlighted the importance of having the Ministry responsible for Social Policy to support the project and preferably be one of the partners. Although MFSS had participated in the meeting no reply regarding the co-funding commitment was received and therefore the application was not submitted.

3. Development of a health project called Volservnet

Volservnet - Voluntary Services and Networking

A Malta Resource Centre project in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care

Through out 2006 MRC has developed and worked on the setting up Volservnet. The aim of Volservnet is the organisation of voluntary services in the main general hospital to patients and relatives, in the community and in the state residential homes for the elderly. The Volservnet project will also develop a network of health NGOs and provide capacity building events to enhance civil society contributions to the development of national health plans and policies and health EU directives and policies

Objective/s: develop project and hold discussions with the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care Authorities in order to have a 3 year agreement

Work implemented regarding the above objectives:

1. Developed the project document
2. Developed the setting up strategy
3. Held various meetings with the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care Authorities
4. Developed a pre implementation plan and services identification phase plan
5. Developed general objectives, purposes, expected results and indicators of the project
6. A 3 year strategic and action plan - November 2006 – November 2009
7. developed a Draft Policy for Volunteers of the Hospital Voluntary Service Unit and Guidelines on rules and interaction with patients and staff
8. A framework for the Malta Health NGOs Network
9. Developed the roles and responsibilities for the staff and volunteers to work in the project

10. Established contact with EPHA (European Public Health Alliance) to have the local network affiliated to it.
11. MRC hosted a delegation from Latvia in mid November 2006. MRC invited a number of local NGOs working in the health sector for a discussion on networking
12. MRC drafted a 3-year agreement with the MOH

The next step (in 2007) is the signing of a 3 year agreement with the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care

4. Development of a National NGOs on-line database

MRC has drafted an on-line NGOs database and is currently developing the database with Alert Communications. The database will cater for social, health, environment and arts and culture NGOs. The database will have the facility to be updated by the NGOs themselves. The database will be launched in 2007

5. Setting up of a National NGO Council

MRC has developed a document and organised a number of meetings with various NGOs to discuss the idea of setting up a national NGO council.

The Council can play an active role in safeguarding the interests of NGOs and in cultivating mutual understanding between Government and the NGO's role in:

1. Ensuring that NGOs have the necessary independence and freedom to operate
2. Ensuring that Malta has an adequate Voluntary Organisations Act for NGOs and that it allows for their development and growth.
3. Ensuring that adequate resources for the capacity building of NGOs are provided through public funds
4. Ensuring that the practices and systems of fundraising in Malta do not discriminate against NGOs and do not jeopardise their existence
5. Ensuring that in Malta we have sufficient available and clear information for the general public, the business community and the EU to be aware which organisations are non-governmental and which ones are set up by the government or have government appointed chairs and members
6. Ensuring the participation of NGOs in EU related matters including EU directives concerning NGOs and their projects, programmes and services
7. Ensuring that NGOs are allowed to participate in EU funding especially participation in EU structural funds through monitoring and suitable systems to allow management of the funds
8. Ensuring the active participation of NGOs in the drafting of National Action Plans and Policies which concern NGOs and their services (Mainly: inclusion, poverty, health, environment, overseas development and culture)
9. Promoting stronger Corporate Social Responsibility within the business sector in Malta

The first meeting took place on 30th November 2006. The NGOs present agreed to set up the NGO Council the follow up meeting will take place in January 2007.

MRC recorded the minutes of the meeting and distributed them to all the representatives for approval and amendments. MRC distributed also the contact details and the power point presentation used to illustrate the concept.

The representatives agreed that MRC is to provide administrative back up to the NGO Council and to act as a secretariat. Two coordinators were nominated from the NGO representatives. MRC staff will not chair the council

6. Development of a two year National Training Development and Technical Assistance Programme for NGOs 2007-2008

As a means of reaching the aim to provide capacity building through training, consultation and technical assistance, MRC has developed a two year training, development and technical assistance programme for NGOs in 2007 and 2008.

Focus on small and medium NGOs

Most of Malta's NGOs are small and medium NGOs. Small NGOs in Malta support and sustain our society in silence. Many of these NGOs are unknown, yet their work is highly valuable. Small NGOs help children with learning difficulties, support persons suffering from chronic illnesses, support persons with disability to integrate in community life, give formation to young people, promote art and culture, protect our environment, help people out of poverty and empower social excluded persons to have a better quality of life. Small NGOs very often operate through volunteers and function through a very small annual budget. Yet the little work carried out by each organisation makes our life a much better one even if most of us do not often realise.

Very often small NGOs are focused on delivering their service with little time, energy and money to see to their own training and development needs. MRC highly values the contribution provided by small NGOs in our country and thus it seeks to support such NGOs providing them with training and development events in line with their needs. MRC will seek to achieve this aim through the planned training programme for NGOs 2007-2008,

Types of training and development events:

- Training Courses
- Introductory courses
- Advanced courses
- Seminars
- Roundtables
- Conferences
- Local lecturer/speaker
- Foreign lecturer /speaker

Areas of training

- Organisational and management Skills
- Volunteers personal development skills
- EU funding
- Social Inclusion and Social Economy
- Public Health
- Environment
- Overseas Development Work

MRC developed a detailed plan and budget for the above training programme. MRC submitted project proposals and held meetings with business companies regarding sponsorships. This will be finalised in January 2007

7. Development of a National Information, training and Technical Assistance Programme on Structural Funds for NGOs 2007-2008

One of the key areas of training for NGOs is on access and management of structural funds projects (ESF and ERDF)

Aim: to have NGOs in Malta informed and trained to plan, access and manage and /or partner in EU structural funds projects

Objective: to offer a full training programme to approx 20 NGO representatives, other civil society organisations and a limited number of local councils in one year. (2007) to re-offer the training programme to other NGOs representatives in the 2008

Method: MRC plans to organise seminars and practical workshops

Seminars

The aim of the seminars will be to provide information on:

1. How Structural Funds work,
2. understanding the Malta operational programme
3. Which type of projects are eligible,
4. When and how to apply

Workshops

The aim of the workshops is to provide hands on practical training:

1. Identifying partners
2. Developing a project
3. Developing a budget
4. Developing co-funding solutions
5. Malta's priorities (social, environment, education etc)
6. Writing the application
7. Managing a project
8. Using the Procurement Act as a guide
9. Using the Procedures Manual
10. Promotional work (marketing systems and EU regulations)
11. Financial management (systems and regulations)
12. Record keeping for audits

13. Sustainability of projects

MRC will provide the above training in small groups as means to promote the development of project concepts and to encourage partnerships.

The training will also be opened to limited number of other civil society organisations such as unions and to local councils as means of promoting partnership with NGOs

MRC has submitted and discussed the above proposal with the Managing Authority (PPCD). An agreement and final plan will be finalised in early February 2007.

MRC services

1. Office and meeting facilities

Service aim: provide small and medium voluntary organisations and groups with working and meeting facilities

- a. Use of office and meeting facilities including a board table
- b. Use of computer
- c. Use of Internet
- d. Use of computer/ printers
- e. Use of visual equipment including whiteboard, flip chart, video, data projector, screen,
- f. Coffee making facilities

Further details are available in the MRC website <http://www.mrc.org.mt/page.asp?p=7453>

The following NGOs made use of MRC: ADHD support group, Equal Partners Foundation, Integra Foundation, Amnesty (Malta) Soroptomist International (Malta), *Tal-Linja* Project partners, European Anti Poverty Network Malta, European Network against Racism Malta

2. Administrative backup to the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) Malta

1. participation in the work of EAPN (Europe) – Executive Committee and Bureau (Vice president); Structural Funds Task Force and General Assembly (Toledo in Spain)
2. EAPN Malta website development and administration;
3. Communication with the media, the government, EAPN Europe and the member organisations;
4. Coordination of meetings: Coordination Committee meetings. (once every two months)
5. Liaison and communication re training seminars for members abroad;
6. Overall coordination of the 6 Target Groups Committees (which input in the NAPs);
7. Overseeing of the Employment Task Force (re NAP employment);

8. coordination of ad hoc working groups (such as re structural funds and open method of coordination);
9. Development and distribution of the newsletters including an electronic update newsletter)

The coordination of the annual EU Presidency meeting of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the representation in the EAPN (Europe) Social Inclusion working Group is carried out by Richmond Foundation.

The coordination of the EAPN Malta Employment Task Force and the representation and liaison in the EAPN (Europe) Employment working group is carried out by Richmond Foundation

MRC coordinates the overall input and communication with the other EAPN Malta member organisations and stakeholders regarding the EU Presidency meeting of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the representation in the EAPN (Europe) Social Inclusion working Group and the EAPN Malta Employment Task Force and the representation and liaison in the EAPN (Europe) Employment working group

MRC acts as a secretariat for EAPN Malta

Output regarding the above

1. Coordinated the participation of NGOs and people facing poverty and social exclusion to contribute to the monitoring of the current NAP 2004-2006. [A document with observations and recommendations has been produced. A copy was sent to Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity](#)
2. [Chairing of the Consultation Seminar for the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2006-2008 31st January 2006](#) Workshop 5 - To mobilise all relevant bodies
3. Coordinated the participation and contribution of NGOs to influence EU and local social policies. Throughout 2006
4. Coordinated the participation of NGOs and people facing poverty and social exclusion to contribute to the new upcoming NAP 2006-2008. [A document with recommendations](#) has been produced and sent to Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity.
5. [A response document to the draft NAP 2006-2008](#) has been developed and sent to Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity
6. A questionnaire on the quality of life has been developed and administered among 8 different target groups. The questionnaire was designed in [Maltese](#). An [English translation](#) has been done for refugees and a specific [questionnaire for children](#) was also designed.

7. A [report on the on results of the questionnaire on the quality of life](#) has been developed and sent to the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity
 8. A [Seminar and Dialogue](#) with the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity was held on 3rd May 2006 at St James Cavalier, Valletta. The seminar included Focus Groups for the Malta National Action Plan Inclusion 2006-2008. A [report of the seminar](#) was produced and included with the EAPN Malta NAP recommendations document
 9. A [response and recommendations document to National Reference Framework](#) (regarding structural funds 2007-2013) has been developed and communicated to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Managing Authority
 10. Information via email about structural funds to all the EAPN Malta member organizations <http://www.eapnmalta.org/page.asp?n=Eventdetails&i=2247>
- On 3rd August at St James Cavalier, EAPN Malta presented the [EAPN Manual on the Management of The EU structural Funds](#). Free copies of the Manual were given to NGO representatives.
11. A delegation of persons facing exclusion and coordinator to participate in the 5th meeting of People in Poverty organised by the Austrian EU presidency. The delegation was led by Ms Doris Gauci CEO Richmond Foundation on behalf of EAPN Malta.
 12. A number of press releases re the above were issued. See home page www.eapnmalta.org
 13. A seminar on Social Economy and Task Forces meetings on structural Funds and Employment was held in Malta on 4th and 5th November. MRC organised all the logistics (accommodation and transfer of delegates, organization of seminar and meetings logistics,) The event was combined with the Round table discussion on 3rd November on Structural Funds. Maltese delegates participated in the Round Table and 2 Maltese network representatives will participate in the Seminar on Social Economy. Mr Godfrey Leone Ganado presented a paper at the seminar on behalf of EAPN Malta. The paper addressed the issue of corporate social responsibility.
 14. A response paper on the Malta Labour Party's draft plan for the Family. A delegation made up of four members of the EAPN Malta Coordination Committee meet with the leader of the Labour Party Dr Alfred Sant and Dr Marie Louise Preca on 20th December 2006 to discuss and provide feedback on the draft plan for the family.

3. Input in the Health National Action Plan

MRC worked with the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care to identify potential NGOs to participate in the NAP

MRC coordinated the NGOs Focus Group meeting for the Health NAP 10th May

The MRC director was a Rapporteur for the Health NAP discussion seminar 16th May

4. MRC Meetings

- Meeting at OPM regarding consolation with NGOs - 25th January
- Meeting with Foreign Affairs Minister about MRC's work in line with Forum Malta in Europe 6th February
- Meeting with French embassy to discuss MRC's work 6th March
- Meeting with PPCD to discuss structural funds systems for NGOs and discuss planned events for 2006 – 27th March
- Meeting at OPM regarding structural funds 2007-2013 – 21st June
- Meeting with the EU commission Malta office on 3rd July MRC discussed the role and work of MRC and the possibility of joint events with the EU commission's Malta office in the future
- Three Meetings with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health to discuss the Health Volservnet Project for 2007-2009
- MRC hosted a Chinese delegation invited by MFSS on 5th December. MRC provided a power point presentation about its projects and services.

5. Students on placement at MRC

MRC hosted 4 BA Hons Social Policy Students for 200 hours each throughout 2006

6. MRC Capacity Building Consultancy

Provided consultancy services to existing and emerging voluntary organisations on:

- Sustainability
- Setting up of new organizations
- Development and project concept for EU funding
- Networking development with voluntary organisations in other EU countries in the social and health field
- Strategy planning

Organizations:

- Sisters of Charity (EU funding)
- ADHD Support Group (Sustainability)
- FDAT (Setting up a Foundation)

7. Support to the NGO Legislation WG regarding Feedback on the Voluntary Organisations Act draft bill

- MRC hosted and supported the NGO Legislation working Group to provide feedback to the draft bill
- MRC hosted all the NGOLWG meetings
- MRC facilitated the communication between the members
- MRC kept all the NGOs informed about the discussions of the NGOLWG
- MRC coordinated the feedback received from the various NGOs
- MRC sent out the press releases issued by the NGOLWG
- MRC participated in a meeting organised by MFSS on 21st December 2006
- MRC kept NGOs and relevant stakeholders updated on the debate re the VOA draft bill

