



SOS Malta

Activity Report 2007



January 2008

SOS Malta

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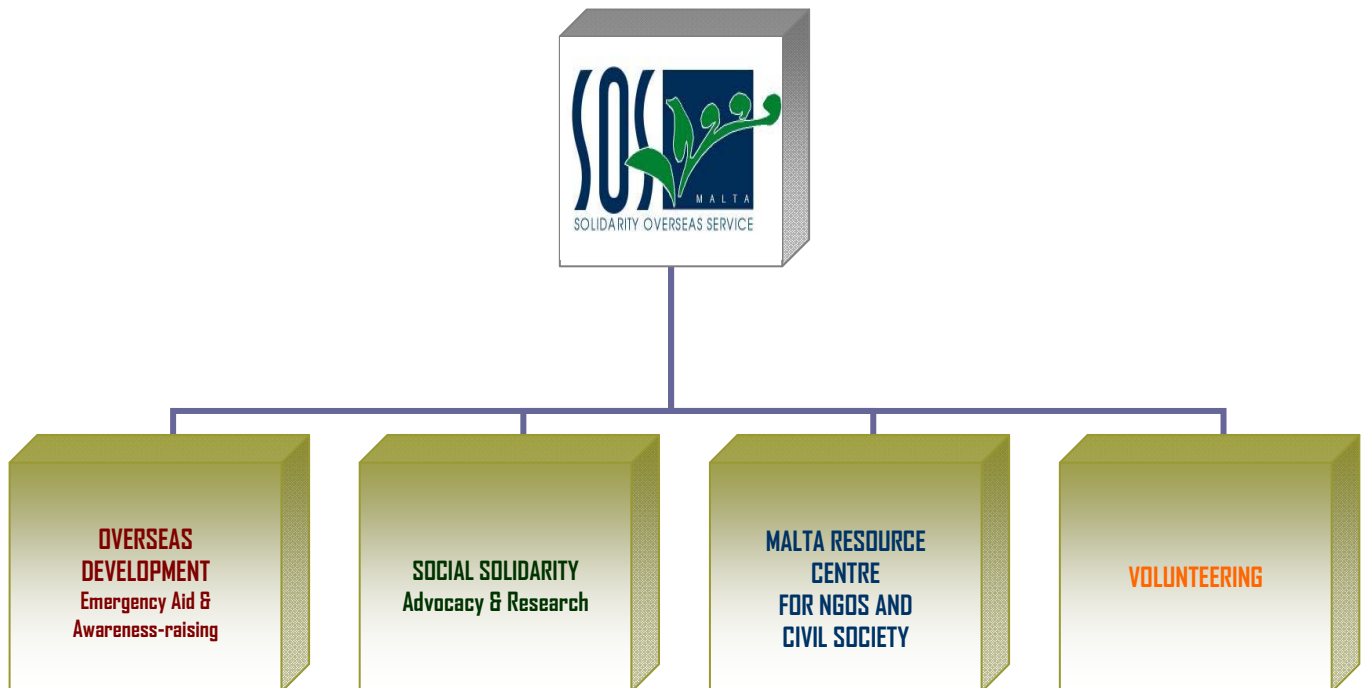
Executive Summary

SOS Malta, 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.

During 2007, the organisation revamped its organizational structure due to the expansion of activities and staff in-take. SOS Malta now has four main pillars of activities. These are:

1. *OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT - Emergency Aid, Livelihood Programmes & Awareness-raising*
2. *SOCIAL SOLIDARITY- Advocacy & Research*
3. *MALTA RESOURCE CENTRE FOR NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY*
4. *VOLUNTEERING*

The activities carried out in 2007 have been classified as falling within either one of the abovementioned pillars.



1. Overseas Development - Emergency Aid, Livelihood Recovery Programmes & Awareness-raising

Overseas Development, emergency aid and livelihood recovery programmes have been at the core of SOS Malta's operations since it came into being in 1991. It work started after the tragic exodus of Albanian refugees to the shores of Italy and Malta. It was then a voluntary organization set up with the objective of assisting materially and morally Albanian refugees and their people in need, especially through projects of a social and charitable nature.

Throughout the 1990's SOS Malta was active in Albania and Kosovo, working in the fields of Palliative Care, Education, and Community Development. On an emergency level SOS Malta was also involved in managing a Refugee Camp during the Kosovo crisis in 1999 and in the repatriation of refugees. In 2004, SOS Malta also formed part of the Malta Tsunami Humanitarian Mission to Sri Lanka, where it set up a fully operational clinic in Matara, Sri Lanka, offering immediate medical relief to over 3000 persons.

Its work in Sri Lanka continues, with a number of activities being undertaken also in 2007.

SOS Malta has also been active in promoting local awareness about the Millennium Development Goals.

1.1 OPERATIONS IN SRI LANKA

In 2007, SOS Malta's main activities to address the needs of disadvantaged sections of society in Sri Lanka included:

- Rain Water Harvesting
- Women Empowerment
- Children's Educational Programs

1.1.1 Rain Water Harvesting

It is estimated that 66% of the world's population will face water shortage by the year 2025, unless water is conserved wisely and used more cautiously. Difficult choices face rural people every day. Is it the family, the cow or the withering crops which is going to survive! It is for this reason that SOS Malta decided to address the need for water on a long term sustainable people oriented basis. This involved promotion of the concept of RWH, keeping in mind the village as a unique individual unit. To overcome the pitfalls of sub standard construction and general village apathy, the

concept of voluntary unpaid labour was introduced.

SOS Malta initiated rural development initiatives in 5 villages in the Matara district through intervention in the areas of health, nutrition, education and community organization. As an extension of its work with women, SOS Malta entered the field of supporting community based ventures for rain water harvesting a way of impacting rural lives in many ways.



Regional seminar organized in Matara on rain-water harvesting (January 2007)

Rain Water Harvesting is accepted as one of the most eco-friendly, sustainable solution for a community. However, its success is entrenched in the capability of the community to come together, own the project, provide labour and look after and maintain the created structures. Community mobilization and involvement are thus the key. A participatory approach of all the concerned parties – the entire village community, the Sri Lankan NGO Healing Hands Women’s Organisation, Lanka Forum as the technical support team and local authority representatives is advocated for the RWH projects which always involve a variety of skills, disciplines and competencies.



Underground water-storage for a school and orphanage in Weligama, Sri Lanka

To reach maximum effectiveness SOS Malta felt the need to train a core team from our ground contacts in Sri Lanka and together with SCESA and SHARE from Mumbai India organized and funded a training program in the Raigad district in India for 5 persons including a mason.

Sessions were planned to achieve specific goals:

- How to assess a village and identify the existing and potential water resources
- Understand the difference between surface water and recharge ponds
- Study the various methods used to cordon the spring water
- Learn different methods used for agricultural ponds
- Learn the methods used for recharging the bore wells

- Learn the methods used for siphoning the water from a tank
- To understand the issues relevant to women
- Exposure to livelihood programs for women
- Learn how to conduct a PRA (participatory rural appraisal)

During the extensive training program 15 villages were visited where RWH projects were completed and goals achieved were:

- Rain Water Harvesting projects to be implemented in Sri Lanka
- To bring awareness about water conservation
- To use water as an entry point to a village
- To share RWH knowledge with other developmental organizations



A domestic water tank produced locally for the rain-water harvesting projects implemented by SOS Malta and Healing Hands in the villages

1.1.2 Women’s Empowerment

SOS Malta in partnership with Healing Hands Women’s Organisation in Matara works to assist Sri Lankan women and girls in improving their social and economic status in society through the provision of targeted programmes. SOS Malta’s overarching mission is to improve conditions of the poorest of the poor, and the economic and social empowerment of women and girls at the grassroots level.

During 2007 SOS Malta:

- Initiated women focused projects
- Empowered women beneficiaries and staff capacities by improving leadership qualities
- Coordinated networking with other Sri Lankan women groups and organisations



David (SOS Malta) demonstrating how to paint some crafts to women involved in the Matara micro-enterprise project

SOS Malta together with Healing Hands focused on designing more women targeted projects in order to improve or rebuild the lives of those vulnerable groups of women in the country. The projects operates in the Matara district over a three-year period and aim to enhance woman's sustainable participation in social and economic activities both at the domestic and community levels.



Sri Lankan women carrying water for kilometres to their village.

Amongst other things, these projects support women in starting their own businesses and introduce them to Rain Water Harvesting.

Specially trained members of staff meet villagers individually and informally through "befriending", they conduct awareness workshops and seminars on issues including women, children and alcohol, and host also special events.

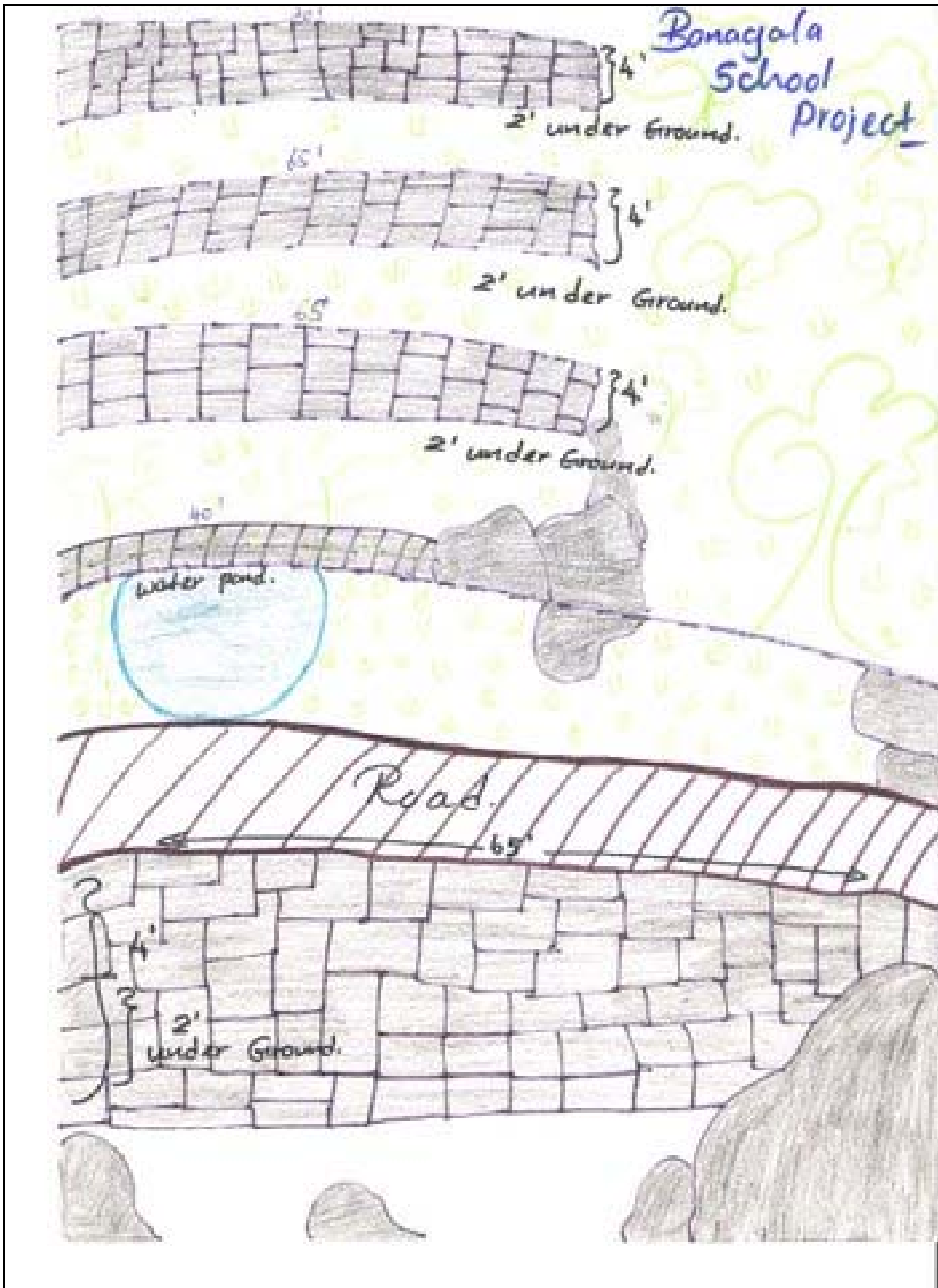
1.1.3 Children's Educational Programmes

SOS Malta's children's program aims to impact the lives of less privileged children, enabling them to maximise their potential and change their lives. SOS Malta works primarily in the field of education, addressing non formal education through the Resource Centre established at St Mary's Convent Matara and the partnerships created with HelpLanka and Healing Hands.



SOS Malta summer camps in Sri Lanka

The SOS Malta summer camps are opportunities for children to spend their summer learning through recreation. Summer camps have included workshops by clowns, drama, yoga and dance and lots of art and craft. Games and field trips are organized for the children. Volunteers are encouraged to take leadership roles in organizing and implementing the summer camp.



Technical Drawing for Rain-water harvesting project at the Bonagala School (2007)

1.2 AWARENESS-RAISING ABOUT DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As new and emerging donor countries, the twelve New Member States within the European Union are to play a significant role in helping achieve the **Millennium Development Goals** through their commitment to MDG 8 by expanding their development cooperation, and increasing the volume and the quality of the aid that they provide to developing countries.

In 2007, the UNDP and the European Commission collaborated on raising awareness and building support for the achievement of the MDGs in the new Member States, including Malta. This was done through the organization of parliamentary debates on the MDGs and development cooperation in the various countries. These debates formed part of the efforts by the UN, the EU and other organizations to take stock of the status of achievement of the MDGs at mid-point and promote the European Development Days.

SOS Malta was the Maltese organisation assigned with the task of organizing the Parliamentary Debate in Malta. The event was financed by the European Commission and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was also supported by the Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The Parliamentary Debate, held on the 19th of October 2007, was attended by Maltese MPs and MEPs, UNDP representatives, EC

representatives, civil society representatives, journalists, and academics.



The Parliamentary Debate – held at the Palace housing the Maltese House of Representatives.

The running theme throughout the event was that of **increasing public awareness and ownership of the MDGs and development issues**. The programme focused on three main aspects:

International - commencing with an introduction to the MDGs and the progress made internationally towards achieving the MDGs by 2015. A discussion followed about the feasibility of the MDGs and what needs to reach the 2015 targets.

European - providing participants with insight about the role of the EU in development. It provided information about the degree of ownership of MDGs by EU citizens and the simultaneous importance being given to awareness-raising at EU level.

National - focusing on Malta's development policy as well as the degree to which development education and awareness-raising in Malta is actually being promoted.



Presentation about the MDGs and Malta's development

commitments as a New EU Member State – delivered by Philippa Arrigo and Mark Rizzo at San Anton School.

Apart from the Parliamentary Debate, SOS Malta also organized a few side events. These included the organisation of TV and radio discussions, as well as presentations and lectures at schools and university.

Brochures and a DVD were also produced and disseminated among stakeholders and the media.

2. Social Solidarity – Advocacy and Research

One of the founding principles of SOS Malta is the that of solidarity. Although in its first years of operation, SOS Malta applied the principle to overseas assistance and humanitarian aid, it eventually sought to promote it on local soil too.

SOS Malta promotes initiatives such as social enterprise and corporate social responsibility aimed at increasing inclusion and empowering the disadvantaged groups. It is engaged in research initiatives as well as in pilot projects.

Recent years have witnessed an increase in both regular and irregular migrants living in Malta – a reality which has lent towards the need for increased intercultural understanding and solidarity. SOS Malta advocates for the introduction and implementation of local measures aimed at the integration and social inclusion of regular migrants in Maltese society. It also believes in the empowerment of migrants in general, as well as in the provision of structured opportunities for those who wish to return back to their country of origin and start afresh.

2.1 SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EMPOWERMENT

2.1.1 DAWL-Energy, Employment and Empowerment

FINANCING PROGRAMME

Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006 (European Social Fund)

LIST OF PARTNERS

- SOS Malta
- Paolo Freire Institute
- Friends of the Earth (Malta)
- Mosta Local Council
- Ministry of Rural Affairs

TIME-FRAME

September 2006 – March 2008

household level and to raise awareness regarding energy and water issues.

One of the objectives was to increase the female participation rate in the labour market by improving the opportunities for women to work. This pilot project provided the blue print for setting up of a medium enterprise providing part-time, flexible hours employment for women as trainers/ information disseminators in the field of energy and water saving. The DAWL project trained 5 women, as well as provided them with interpersonal skills.

In 2007, SOS Malta successfully managed a project entitled DAWL – Energy, Employment, Empowerment. The project is partly funded by the European Union's European Social Fund.

The aim of the DAWL project was 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 aimed 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

2.2 INTEGRATION & RE-INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

2.2.1 The EUNET IN project



FINANCING PROGRAMME

INTI Programme - Preparatory Actions of the Integration of Third-Country Nationals

LIST OF PARTNERS

- Kontakt der Kontinenten (KdK), The Netherlands
- Sonnenberg Kreis, Germany
- IUC-Europe, Denmark
- IPUEL, Portugal
- SOS Malta, Malta
- European Network for Education and Training - EUNET e.V.

TIME-FRAME

September 2006 – March 2008

Since September 2006, SOS Malta has been an official partner on the project EUNET IN, which was co-financed by the European Community under the 2005 INTI Programme - Preparatory Actions for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals.

The European Community's INTI Preparatory Actions promote the integration in the EU member states of third-country nationals 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

In the context of these Preparatory Actions, the EUNET Integration Network project focuses on support of networks and exchange of information and best practices, with a Handbook of Best Practices for integration as one of the deliverables of the EUNET INTI project. For all the project partners, this project was a great challenge to invest in, to gain experience and knowledge and to strengthen existing networks and create many new ones.



Mark Rizzo (Project Administrator, SOS Malta) distributing newsletters produced for migrants in Malta, among the EUNET IN partners in Sonnenberg.

For SOS Malta the project was of great importance because as a member of the European Network for Education and Training (EUNET) they could participate actively in the Network's focus area of Integration of Third Country Nationals. As a network of different and independent institutions, dealing with European issues, all the members have a strong link to their local and regional communities and authorities in common. Therefore SOS Malta played an important role in the process by bringing together their European experience with the local perspective. All partners shared the conviction that more efforts have to be made to build a better Europe for its citizens by encouraging migrants to take a look towards the European level to help them understand that they do not only integrate into a local neighbourhood but that they automatically become part of Europe, with all its chances and diversity. Only too often migrants are not recognized as part of society and SOS Malta through this project is committed to working closer with migrants and their organisations, for the benefit of a more active European citizenship.

EUNET is satisfied that we managed a classical bottom-up process within this eighteen-month project, working as a bridge between migrant organisations and other network members. We managed to set up a new network where those, who are normally working on educational matters and those who are helping third-country nationals to integrate in their community, are brought together. The idea to create the EUNET Integration Network

was more successful than was expected. EUNET will make sure that there will be further steps in the network to secure what was achieved so far and that additional efforts will be taken to establish integration of third-country nationals into the European Union as one of our network pillars.

2.2.2 'Comprehensive Return Programme Including Re-Integration' – DAR



FINANCING PROGRAMME RETURN

LIST OF PARTNERS

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Malta)
International Centre for Migration Policy
Development (ICMPD)
Med Europe (Italy)

TIME-FRAME

September 2006 – March 2008

In August 2007, SOS Malta became a partner of a project, entitled 'Comprehensive Return Programme Including Re-Integration'. The project, codenamed as DAR, is aimed at facilitating the Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) of irregular migrants currently living in Malta.

The DAR project, which shall continue to run until the 31st of January 2009, is being part-financed by the European Commission through its RETURN programme.

Activities in 2007 included the organization of working visits for the partner organisations to other European countries which have AVR programmes in place. These included the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Denmark. SOS Malta participated in these working visits, as well as carried out some research on potential countries of origin which irregular migrants would be likely to return to. SOS Malta also conducted a series of focus groups with various groups of irregular migrants living in Malta. The latter exercise was conducted to provide the project with an increased understanding about the manner in which irregular migrants perceive the option of AVR and whether they would consider taking up such an option in the future.

As of January 2008, SOS Malta shall start conducting interviews with individual migrants who are interested in returning to their country of origin and in taking up the DAR assistance scheme.

DAR's objective is to assist approximately 50 irregular migrants to return back to their country voluntarily. Assistance through this pilot project will include, where possible, pre-departure training in subjects and areas of interest to the respective migrant; flights; documentation for return facilitation; financial assistance and re-integration measures (such as business start-up; training; job identification; accommodation) in their country of origin.

The DAR project is also expected to produce a handbook on re-integration measures, as well as a catalogue of good practices and policy options on cooperation with third countries in the field of return.

2.2.3 Third-Country-National Support Network Malta (TSN Malta)



In the latter half of 2007, SOS Malta assisted in the setting up of the Third-Country-National Support Network Malta, which was established on the 5th of November 2007 by means of a duly signed and notarised statute.

SOS Malta recognized the need for a migrant-based NGO to be established locally, in view of supporting and advocating for the integration of third-country-nationals and for intercultural understanding. It therefore collaborated with Mr. Ahmed Bugre, now President of TSN Malta, and provided the necessary administrative support and impetus for the NGO to be created.



Philippa Arrigo (from SOS Malta) assisting the founding members with drafting the statute.

Founding members, together with Mr. Ahmed Bugri, include Mr. Mark Rizzo, Mr. Aklilu Hagos Ghebru, Mr. Frank Wilmot, Ms. Intesar Bashir, Mr. Gerardo Sagun and Mr. Edward Bol Ateembol.

TSN Malta is the first migrant-based organisation to be founded locally. It is composed of persons who share the commonality of residing in Malta but who hold different nationalities and/or cultural backgrounds. TSN Malta is in itself a NGO with unprecedented aims within the local context. The scope of the NGO is that of representing the interests of third country nationals who are living in Malta, at local, EU and international levels. The organization aims at providing support, service and empowerment to third country nationals enabling them to live as dignified persons within Maltese society, with due regard to their obligations and fundamental rights. Its main thrust

is that of building bridges between third-country nationals living in Malta and Maltese and EU citizens. It aims to build these bridges by promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding as well as the integration and participation of third country nationals in Malta.



Some of the founding members of TSN Malta

The organisation aspires to be a point of reference for third country nationals in general, providing them with counselling and assistance in regard to integration issues.

In 2008, SOS Malta, through its Malta Resource Centre, shall continue to provide the requisite administrative backing and office facilities for TSN Malta to function.

3. Malta Resource Centre for NGOs and Civil Society

The Malta Resource Centre (MRC) www.mrc.org.mt is an integral part of SOS Malta. The aim of MRC is capacity building of civil society NGOs to become more effective and efficient and better equipped to operate and participate within the European Union, specifically to influence policies and plans and access EU funds. This is done through: setting up of networks, provision of training and consultation, research, projects development, providing technical assistance.

2007 was eventful, marking the initiation and implementation of various projects which had been designed in 2006. These included capacity building events for NGOs focusing on EU Structural funds and the Volservnet project. The latter included the setting up of the Malta Health Network and capacity building of health NGOs.

Throughout 2007, MRC continued to provide administrative back up to the running of the European Anti Poverty Network Malta, the newly set up National Federation of NGOs of Malta as well as to the new Malta Health Network of non-governmental and not for profit organisations. It also provided administrative back-up to a new NGO called TSN Malta (the first migrant-based NGO in Malta)

Other work included:

- *the organisation of an EAPN Europe Training in Malta;*
- *the organisation of focus groups for EAPN Malta as well as a People in Poverty conference focused on the theme of employment and social inclusion;*
- *project management consultancy to an EU funded project;*
- *advice on EU funding*

3.1 ADMINISTRATIVE BACK-UP TO NGO NETWORKS

3.1.1 European Anti-Poverty Network (Malta)

As in previous years, the Malta Resource Centre continued to act as a secretariat for EAPN Malta. Throughout 2007, the administrative backup service given to EAPN Malta included:

- participation in the work of EAPN (Europe) – Executive Committee and Bureau; Structural Funds Task Force and General Assembly
- Administration of website;
- Communication with the media, the government, EAPN Europe and the member organisations;
- Coordination of meetings: Coordination Committee meetings;
- Liaison and communication regarding training seminars for members;
- Overseeing of the Employment Task Force (re NAP employment);

- Coordination of ad hoc working groups;
- Development and distribution of newsletters;
- Provision of the initial draft of the Statute for EAPN Malta – facilitating discussion for EAPN Malta to take on its own legal identity;
- Organisation of a training course on behalf of EAPN Europe and EAPN Malta, in June 2007



Participants of a training course for EAPN Network members (June 2007)

- Organisation of nine focus groups with categories of persons suffering from social exclusion or poverty. The focus groups concerned the theme of employment and social exclusion.
- Organisation of a conference in October 2007 focusing on the theme, 'Employment challenges and opportunities for persons experiencing social exclusion and poverty'.

3.1.2 Malta Health Network (MHN)

At the start of 2007, the Malta Resource Centre (MRC) unit of SOS Malta started the preparatory work for the set-up of a network of Maltese health NGOs.

The aim of the exercise was to set up a body that would give a voice to patients and health service users and to represent in Malta, in the EU and internationally, the interests of patients. It was also intended to develop better coordination, collaboration, and capacity building through exchange of best practice among health-related Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), not for profit organisations (NPOs) and patient representation groups (PRGs).



Official launch of Malta Health Network, Nov 2007.

A Coordination Committee was set up in April 2007, made up of different representatives from different NGOs and groups. The Committee held several meetings to set the aims and objectives of the network and to draft a statute to give the network a legal status as an association.

The Malta Health Network was officially launched in November 2007 with a Board of Administrators elected.

3.1.3 National Federation of NGOs in Malta (NFNM)

The Malta Resource Centre provided the impetus for the creation of the National Federation of NGOs of Malta, which was officially founded in April 2007. The mission of the Federation is to represent the interests of NGOs operating in Malta, and to strengthen the role of NGOs within civil society.

The Malta Resource Centre provided administrative back-up services to the Federation throughout 2007. These services included:

- The organisation of meetings for the steering group setting up the Federation;
- Support and coordination of the drafting of the NFNM Statute together with the Founding member organisations;
- Hosting of Executive Committee meetings
- Setting up of web page with information about NFNM
- Coordination of applications of new members;
- Promotion of the Federation and its aims, encouraging new NGOs to join;
- Development of NGOs and membership databases;
- Coordination and distribution of NFNM e-newsletters;
- Dissemination and issuing of press releases;
- Dissemination and coordination of a research on behalf of NFNM.
- Logistical arrangements and contacting of speakers for an NFNM Round Table event scheduled for January 2008, to discuss the role of NGOs in a democratic society.

3.2 ADMINISTRATIVE BACK-UP TO NGOS

3.2.1 Administrative back-up service to TSN Malta

The Malta Resource Centre provided administrative back-up to TSN Malta from its inception – including:

- Drafting of the founding Statute
- Sending out of Agenda and Minutes for the Executive Committee
- Minute-taking
- Set up an e-mail account:
- Updating temporary webpage with information about TSN Malta
- Drafting of press releases
- EU funding and drafting of application

3.3 TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING OF NGOS

3.3.1 *The Structural Funds Training and Technical Assistance Programme for NGOs and Civil Society Organisations 2007*

FINANCING PROGRAMME

Structural Funds for Malta 2004-2006
(European Social Fund)

LIST OF PARTNERS

SOS Malta

TIME-FRAME

April 2007 – March 2008

As of the 24th of April 2007, the Malta Resource Centre at SOS Malta coordinated and implemented a project, entitled '*The Structural Funds Training and Technical Assistance Programme for NGOs and Civil Society Organisations 2007*'. It is a sub-project which has been implemented within the scope of the overall ESF Technical Assistance project under the Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006.

The programme was part-financed by the European Union: European Social Fund Co-financing rate 75% and a grant, which SOS Malta received through the Civil Society Fund 2007, was used to finance the remaining 25%. The objectives of the Structural Funds Training and Technical Assistance Programme for NGOs and Civil Society Organisations 2007 were twofold:

- To inform, train and equip NGOs in Malta to plan, access and manage and/or be partners in EU structural funds projects;

- To facilitate partnership among NGOs, and NGO partnership with other civil society organisations and local councils in relation to structural funds projects.

Activities included the organisation of an information seminar on structural funds (ESF) for NGOs, civil society organisations, and local councils. The information seminar, which was held on the 26th of June 2007, provided information about Malta's Operational Programme II for 2007-2013 and the type of projects which would be eligible under the European Social Fund.

The main component of the project consisted of a 50-hour training programme, for 25 representatives, of NGOs, social partners, and local councils. The aim of these workshops was to provide hands-on, practical training vis-à-vis various technical aspects concerning the application for and implementation of Structural Funds projects (in particular those under ESF).



Representatives of various NGOs attending one of the training workshops on Structural Funds

The workshops covered various aspects of project application and management under the European Social Fund and were geared towards providing the participants with the required tools and skills to see through successful projects between 2007 and 2013. They also promoted the principle of partnership between these participating organisations in relation to the implementation of structural funds projects.

A third deliverable which the project involves, concerns the production of a manual of recommendations for future training and capacity-building needs of NGOs and civil society organisations, within the scope of Structural Funds. This manual shall be developed in 2008.



Godfrey Kenely, Project Leader, presenting the Certificate of Participation to Dominic Lewis who attended the training workshops on behalf of St. Joseph Home, St. Venera.

3.3.2 Capacity Building for Health NGOs

A capacity building training session for health NGOs was held in November, entitled '*Understanding the development of Health Directives and National Action Plans (NAPs)*'.



Participants during the training session for Health NGOs

Officials from the Health Ministry were invited to give presentations on the role of local health NGOs in influencing European health policy and legislation as well as on the role of NGOs in relation to NAPs. Furthermore, a representative from the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) also delivered a presentation and facilitated discussion on the role of NGOs vis-à-vis lobbying in order to influence NAPs. Representatives from over 20 health NGOs attended the session.



Caroline Bollars (European Public Health Alliance) – delivering presentation during the training session for Health NGOs.

4. VOLUNTEERING

SOS Malta has promoted volunteering from the moment of its inception. The philosophy behind the organization has always been that of volunteerism. This philosophy was initially applied to the organisation's work in the field of overseas development, emergency relief, and livelihood programmes.

In more recent years, SOS Malta enhanced the promotion of volunteering even locally. SOS Malta believes that volunteers should be a key element in the implementation of all social programmes. The rich mix of skills which volunteers bring with them enlarges the scope of social programmes, but mostly importantly, introduces and reinforces the dimension of community support.

4.1 VOLSERV



The aim of VolServ is the organisation and support of voluntary services in the main general hospital to patients and relatives, as well as in the community. A partnership agreement between SOS Malta and the Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care (currently the Ministry of Social Policy) was signed in April 2007 and VolServ started to operate soon after that, with a first group of 50 volunteers commencing service at St. Luke's Hospital in July.



The key activities of VolServ are the following:

1. Recruitment of volunteers
2. Training of volunteers

3. Support and supervision of volunteers
4. Networking organisations and engaging organisations to act as partners in VolServ
5. Registration of voluntary organisations and volunteers working in Mater Dei, other health institutions and in the community (including identification systems)
6. Development of a code of conduct for volunteers



A group of volunteers who completed the VolServ training course

4.1.1 VolServ in Hospital

Throughout 2007, VolServ trained 161 volunteers and placed 140 volunteers in different areas of the main hospital. By the end of the year, all Outpatient clinics were manned by volunteers including the Renal Unit. Three basic training courses, designed by VolServ management, were held throughout the year, which all volunteers

attended prior to commencement of their service and certificates were presented to all those who attended. In November, over 60 volunteers assisted in the migration from St. Luke's Hospital to Mater Dei Hospital.



Volunteers during a training session

4.1.2 Volserv in the Community

Over 40 youngsters from various schools volunteered in 2 health centers (Floriana and Qormi) distributing information and registering and guiding patients, throughout the summer months, as part of a pilot voluntary service in the community. Following this, VolServ management launched meetings with key stakeholders in the community in order to identify further needs and service lacunae which could be filled by volunteers in the community. A

telephone support line for the elderly was then discussed with Primary Health Care officials and a needs analysis was planned.

4.2 KELLIMNI

SOS Malta is seeking to expand its volunteer training and management services in the upcoming years. One major project it shall be embarking upon, together with the Salesian Community, is the Kellimni project.

Kellimni shall have the aim of offering counseling online to children suffering from any kind of social exclusion, abuse, neglect or psychological difficulties. SOS Malta and the Salesian Community held various meetings towards the end of 2007 to plan a three-year pilot project for online counseling services targeted at children aged between 12 and 16. The project will officially commence in 2009.

Other organisations involved in the project formulation and implementation include the Malta Association for the Counselling Profession, the Malta Association of Psychotherapists and Child Helpline International.

SOS Malta's role will be that of training and managing the volunteers who will be involved in the implementation of the project.

5. Affiliations

SOS Malta is a member of various European and local networks which focus on issues related to its four pillars of activities and advocacy.

5.1 SOLIDAR



SOS Malta shall be taking on the status of affiliate member of Solidar as of 2008.

SOLIDAR is a network of social and economic justice NGOs working in co-development and international cooperation, social policy and social service provision, and life-long learning.

www.solidar.org/

5.2 EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER CENTRE (CEV)



SOS Malta became an affiliate member of the European Volunteer Centre in 2007.

The European Volunteer Centre (Centre européen du volontariat, CEV) is a European network of currently 60 mainly national and regional volunteer centres and volunteer development agencies across Europe, that together work to support and promote voluntary activity.

www.cev.be/

5.3 EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION WORKING FOR CARERS (EUROCARERS)



SOS Malta became an affiliate member of Eurocarers in 2007. Eurocarers, European Association Working for Carers, seeks to represent and act on behalf of all informal carers, irrespective of their age or the particular health need of the person they are caring for. It shall pursue philanthropic, educational and scientific ends with regard to the representation of carers.

www.eurocarers.org/

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING E.V.(EUNET)



SOS Malta is a member of the "European Network for Education and Training e.V.", shortly EUNET. EUNET is a network for European educational-facilities. The network consists of Non-Governmental-Organisations that inform, educate or in any other way spreads the European Idea to teenagers and adults.

www.european-net.org/

5.5 EAPN MALTA



SOS Malta has been a member of EAPN Malta since 2004.

EAPN Malta was setup in May 2004 to create a network of Maltese NGOs involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. EAPN Malta applied to become a member of EAPN (European Anti-Poverty Network) in July 2004. EAPN monitors and analyses EU policies, which have an impact on people in poverty. EAPN lobbies the European Institutions for the adoption of policies and programmes to combat poverty and social exclusion, provides a 2 monthly newsletter and organises working groups & trans-national seminars.

EAPN Malta currently has over 45 member organizations (NGOs and voluntary groups) working in the social field.

www.eapnmalta.org/

5.6 NATIONAL FEDERATION OF NGOS IN MALTA



National Federation of NGOs of Malta (NFNM) aims to represent the interests of NGOs working in all sectors, and to strengthen the role of NGOs within civil society.

More information is available on the Malta Resource Centre website:
www.mrc.org.mt

5.7 ENAR MALTA



ENAR Malta is a network of NGOs and groups working in the field of anti-racism. Its aims include the promotion of human rights in Malta, Europe and elsewhere, as well as the encouragement of co-operation between organizations working to combat racism. It seeks to promote equal treatment and equal rights, and to facilitate the exchange of information between organizations about national and European developments relating to these issues.

More information is available on the general ENAR website:
www.enar-eu.org/

6. Fund-raising



TOONS is an SOS(Solidarity Overseas Services)Malta initiative to generate funds which will be directed into SOS Malta's commitment to raise awareness and build support for the achievement of the Millenium Development Goals by 2015 - not only in Malta but internationally.

The initiative was taken on by SOS Malta in 2007. TOONS is an animation service providing 10 popular character costumes together with animators for commercial launches & promotions, festivals, fairs & exhibitions, TV shows as well as for private events such as birthday parties.

SOS Malta felt the need to explore becoming self-sustaining because of the marked decrease in available grants.

One of the greatest challenges facing non-profit organizations (NGOs) is how to sustain and support NGO activities financially. The primary reasons why SOS

Malta needed to find different strategies for long-term survival are:

- Decreased donor funding in general
- Decreased allocations for NGOs
- Donor focus on other priorities
- Decreased amounts for the social programs

The most sustainable financing strategy is to diversify income sources. A sustainable approach to NGO financing is one that avoids dependency on any single source of revenue, external or internal. However, a balance between externally and internally generated resources is necessary to allow an organization to meet its operating and administrative expenses while maintaining the freedom to determine its program priorities and projects, irrespective of donor preferences. By creating TOONS SOS Malta hopes to meet some of its operational expenses in raising awareness on the Millenium Development Goals in Malta.

