

# GIS Volunteers Providing Relief Assistance

URISA, USA, has deployed 25 GISCorps volunteers to 9 new missions in 7 countries. They are assisting in GIS projects to provide relief support in various humanitarian emergencies. Including these efforts, GISCorps has been involved in a total of 88 projects in 42 countries with 272 deployed volunteers.

At the request of the World Health Organization (WHO), GISCorps volunteers were deployed to a data cleansing project in Libya. The dataset included the locations of health facilities around the country. The information was collected from various resources and by volunteers from two other partner organisations: the Stand By Task Force (SBTF) and the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap (HOT).

Eleven GISCorps volunteers were deployed to a project with Humanitarian OpenStreetMap (HOT). This is the second collaborative project with HOT (the first was in Samoa) and this time the work is conducted in Indonesia. Project Manager is Randal Hale, GISP who also spearheaded the Samoa HOT project. He will be working with ten other volunteers from ten different countries. GISCorps volunteers will collect building information from satellite imagery mainly around the city of Padang, Indonesia which is still recovering from its most recent earthquake. The goal of the effort between HOT and GISCorps will be to digitise all the building footprints visible in satellite imagery that was purchased for this project.

The United Nations Platform for Space-Based information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response or UN-Spider held a one day event in Geneva in November 2011. During the event, running a disaster simulation in Samoa was proposed and December 3rd, 2011 was selected as the simulation date. Several participants including GISCorps expressed interest in participating and making their volunteers available to the exercise.

The Craig Bellamy Foundation requested volunteer assistance for mapping the locations of international and national NGOs in Sierra Leone. The volunteer will geo-code other service related information in the next phase of this project. All of the datasets will become available on a Google Earth based interface.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) requested the assistance of GISCorps volunteers for testing an application. GICHD works for the elimination of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war. The Centre contributes to the social and economic well-being of people and communities in affected countries. They also provide advice and capacity building support, undertake applied research, disseminate knowledge and best practices, and develop standards. In close collaboration with the University of Geneva the GICHD has developed an ArcGIS based tool called the Multicriteria Analysis SCOring Tool (MASCOT) for advanced geo-spatial analysis of mine action data. The main objective of the tool is to score hazardous area for clearance based on geo-spatial data analysis, such as population, land use, infrastructure, water sources etc. The volunteers were asked to assist the GICHD in testing the "MASCOT" tool.

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)'s Satellite Operational Applications Program or UNOSAT requested the assistance of two remote sensing specialists for a pilot project in Somalia. The objective of this project is to implement methods for using free and low resolution imagery to identify the locations of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. Volunteers will first be asked to assist in developing the most appropriate methodology for identifying the camps and then manage additional volunteers who will be responsible for reviewing tens of thousands sq km of imagery.

The SLCS is a non-profit community based organisation committed to the conservation of the local wildlife and natural resources of the National Park and surrounding Game Management Areas. GISCorps volunteer, Lisa Matthies, a GIS and Geography Instructor at Erie Community College in Williamsville, NY has been supporting SLCS' GIS needs since Spring 2009. Recently, SLCS inquired about the possibility of being trained in GIS, which Lisa will provide. For more details about Lisa's ongoing support for this project, [click here](#).

