



NEWSLETTER N° 11 - December 2005



EDITORIAL



2005 : ENERGY ASSISTANCE RUNNING AT FULL SPEED



For Energy Assistance, 2005 will be remembered as the year of the Tsunami. This disaster, which stimulated an unprecedented spirit of generosity amongst our members and volunteers, created a considerable amount of work for our organisation – represented by some 146 man-days working on site and 76 man-days given by our volunteers in Belgium to help with organisation and logistics.

But our projects in the rest of the world should not be neglected. In this respect, 2005 should be considered a vintage year. One can judge for oneself:

- Since the foundation of EA in 2001, 110 projects have been given consideration, of which 40 have been completed or are currently underway.
- In 2005, 21 new projects were submitted to the Project Committee. At the same time 6 projects were approved by the Board of Directors and 11 were carried out by our volunteers.
- Our volunteers' missions abroad totaled 554 man-days, of which 146 were taken up by our involvement in the Tsunami.
- Financially, the budget for our activities was around €300,000 (of which €25,000 was specially allocated to the Tsunami). Nearly all the money was devoted to purchasing equipment and the costs of missions, given that the work allowances are voluntary. Projects' running costs were not above 2%.

In 2005, the following projects were carried out successfully:

- Ensuring electrical supply to essential equipment at the Kabinda General Hospital

in Kasai (Congo) using solar energy panels.

- Electrification of a clinic at Natitingou (Benin)
- Electrification and supply using solar energy panels at a clinic in Dombila (Mali)
- Mission to assess the impact of the Tsunami on electrical infrastructure in Sri Lanka
- Renovation of an internal electrical system at an educational centre for street children in a Favella in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)
- Supplying three bush clinics and a maternity clinic using diesel generators
- Technical and financial assistance for the renovation and extension of a network in the village of Smau Kney (Cambodia).
- Continuing the electrification of the

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Kabinda (DR Congo)	2
Energy Assistance France	4
Lemfu (DR Congo)	5
News	6



hospital at Kaliua (Tanzania), which is intended to be a centre for research into sleeping sickness

- Bringing into service a group of diesel generators and carrying out an electrical installation at a new children's hospital in Kabul (Afghanistan).
- Restoration of supply and internal distribution network at the Banda Aceh General Hospital on the island of Sumatra (Indonesia), which was damaged by the Tsunami.
- Restoration of a hydroelectric power station and the supply network to schools and the medical centre at Lemfu, Lower Congo (D.R.Congo).



Indonesia

We can be proud of these achievements, which have contributed to securing essential services for communities of deprived people, and that this has been done in a spirit of sustainable development.

This is, let us remember, entirely the work of Energy Assistance's volunteers, with the exception of our two permanent staff, who valiantly look after our administration and secretariat. Energy Assistance consists of: 18 directors, of whom 6 are members of the Bureau; 25 members of the Projects Committee; 9 members of the Communications Committee; 8 members of the Finance Committee and – last but not least – those at the sharp end: the 48 volunteers who went on missions in 2005. I hope they will all share in the happiness and the gratitude that they bring.

Jean Bouckaert
EA Chairman



Mali



Tanzania



KABINDA (DR CONGO)

SOLAR PANELS AND MAKING THE ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION SAFE AT THE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Newsletter 8 (March 2005) reported on the mission to Kabinda carried out in August 2004 by Daniel Benoît alongside an Aquassistance mission. In September 2005, Daniel Benoît was reunited with R. Cl. Gastout on a second mission.

We will remember that the town of Kabinda is in the province of Eastern Kasai, 150 km from the capital of the

province Mbuji-Mayi, a major centre for commerce and the diamond trade, and also the nearest airport. The zone covered by the health services around Kabinda is an area of 10,600 sq. km with 187,000 inhabitants.

The beneficiary of the project is the Kabinda General Hospital (HGRK) a State hospital linked to the Diocese of Kabinda and run by the Commu-

nity of the Beatitudes.

We will also recall that HGRK has an operation building with two theatres, as well as radiological and ultrasound services. Within the hospital compound, there are also various supplementary medical services: internal medicine (women), internal medicine (men), paediatrics, maternity, surgery and ophthalmology. Specialisms such as ophthal-



mology and dentistry provide precious services to invalids who have travelled great distances in search of care.



Gathering Goodwill

Since his 2004 mission, Daniel Benoît has been working with Dr Richard Hardi, a member of the Community, to establish the essential needs of HGRK, which is to say: to ensure a reliable and larger electricity supply using solar panels and battery storage; and to protect the installations, electrical medical equipment and ultimately the site itself, from the lightning created by the numerous violent storms in the region.

The project will also benefit another institution - the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary (FMRA), who are supported by the Diocese and run another clinic as well as an orphanage. They are getting their own solar panels too.

Most of the supplies had arrived in the Congo in May, and the mission was programmed to start after the independence celebrations on 30 June. But in the end our two ‘Congos of the two river banks specialists’ didn’t set off for the country until the beginning of September.

To make up for the delay, the mission was enhanced by a third ‘missionary’ in the person of Nicole Devy, a friend of Daniel’s and a nurse in the operating unit. She had never set foot in Africa before, but was eager to discover the continent and to help care for the population.

The journey started with two days in Kinshasa waiting for a licence and for the flight to Mbuji-Mayi. Claude made good use of this time by visiting the Economic Attaché at the Belgian Embassy, the representative of the Belgian Development Cooperation, as

well as the general management of the National Electricity Company (SNEL) in order to tell them about Energy Assistance’s projects in the Congo.

Daniel knew the difficulties of the route from Mbuji-Mayi to Kabinda from having followed it in 2004. It wasn’t any easier in 2005, but there is one gleam of hope for the future, in that the Belgian Technical Cooperation (CTB) had put teams of roadmen to work, whom one can see at their labours all along the route.

Despite the late hour, our arrival in Kabinda was greeted by drumming and singing – a very warming reception! The whole Community joined us for the evening meal.

The next day we got to know the staff at the hospital and took a look at its installations, so that we could establish a programme for the works and decide what was needed in terms of workforce and local supplies. We had an agreeable surprise when we found that the advice Daniel had given in 2004 on improving the internal cabling had borne fruit: the new installations were clearly a lot more professional.

We set to work, even though some of the small equipment and tools for the job had not arrived from Belgium. Nicole got ready to help out in the operating theatre.

Personal Safety – A Priority

The hardest job was to replace the existing lightning protector (with its radioactive capsule), which was attached to the top of a smooth-sided mast around 25 metres high, with a new lightning protector. After some discussion, the hospital’s own welder agreed to climb the mast by welding on to it 12 steps of steel bars of reinforced concrete, one by

one as he went up, and then to fix the new lightning protector in a slightly lower position than the old one – a task which was achieved after three days of toil and stress!

In the end the old lightning protector was left where it was because of the risks involved in removing it and getting it down to the ground.

At the same time, the 300 metre trench for the bare cable that forms the earth cable had been dug and partly filled in again after the cable had been laid, and we had started to connect up to the earth terminal for the switchboard which was being installed in the various buildings – just as we were taking down the lightning protector. There wasn’t much time – the first rains were upon us!

Since we didn’t have a ground meter, we carried out a quality check on the earth terminal by measuring the current by putting a battery across the earth terminal and measuring its resistance. This gave a reading of 4 Ohms, an entirely satisfactory result.

Daniel supervised the installation of the solar panels and the additional batteries, as well as the solar fridge. He checked the batteries and the temperature of the fridge. All was ‘OK’.

In quiet moments we put our minds to other little problems such as the hospital laundry, which had been out of action for a number of years. By bringing all our grey matter to bear on the problem, we managed to get it working again. All we needed was to replace a reverser.

A week had already gone by. It was time for Claude to return to Kinshasa and for Daniel to concentrate on installing the solar panels at the FMRA orphanage. As the construction of the clinic wasn’t



The lightning conductor



yet finished, it was decided to postpone its electrification for a future mission.

In Mbuji-Mayi, Claude endeavoured to release the small equipment intended for Kabinda but still held up by the authorities.

At Kinshasa he met again with the Embassy and the Belgian Development Cooperation, to whom he presented a request from HGRK for finance for a maternity reception unit; and with SNEL, with whom a co-operation agreement was to be signed, relating to the Goma and Kapolowe projects, amongst others.

And finally, Daniel and Nicole

said their goodbyes to the Community of the Beatitudes, and returned to Kinshasa.

To Sum Up

The works carried out during this short mission mean that from now on HGRK will be able to:

- benefit from a standard level of protection for people and their property thanks to installations being connected correctly to the earth;
- protect the site from lightning strikes;
- have a minimum level of lighting at night time;
- use electrical medical equipment for emergency

cases at night;

- store vaccines and other temperature-sensitive products.

Claude Gastout – Project manager



■ ENERGY ASSISTANCE FRANCE ■

When it was set up along the lines of its big brother Energy Assistance, Energy Assistance France was able to obtain the status of an organisation recognised as being in the general interest right from the start. "This new structure was created in order to better organise the work carried out by volunteers from the Energy and Services division of SUEZ in France, but also to make it easier to raise money in France, thanks to the tax advantages relating to gifts", explains Eric Bassac, President of Energy Assistance France. "Because we are established under French law, this means we can appeal for public money, especially for sending materials abroad and for customs clearance."

Bringing Energies Together

Operationally, EAF is seen as a branch of Energy Assistance, while all the decision-making bodies such as the

Project Committee, the Board of Directors which is in charge of approving projects, and the Communications Committee, remain centralized within Energy Assistance. An agreement on how the two associations will work together is being prepared. In particular it is expected the all members of Energy Assistance will be members of Energy Assistance France and vice-versa, demonstrating the close overlap between the two.

EAF receives an annual grant from SES to cover part of its budget, but will also be soliciting donations from companies inside and outside the SUEZ Group, as well as from local communities, and will promote the activities of Energy Assistance to other French companies within the Group. "The object of our work is also to encourage meetings and sharing experience inside the Group, which is why we tend to favour missions undertaken in partner-

ship between volunteers from different divisions" comments Cédric Girod, Vice-President of EAF.

How to Join

Colleagues who would like to join EAF can do so by sending a subscription of €20 by cheque made out to Energy Assistance France at the office of SES at 235 avenue Georges Clémenceau, BP4601, 92746 Nanterre. Please let us have your address details so that we can send you a tax receipt (all donations and subscriptions to EAF are tax deductible in France up to 60%).

For more information, do not hesitate to contact us at:

energy-assistance-france@suez-services.com

or by phone at :

+33 1 41 20 13 30.

«The object of our work is also to encourage meetings and sharing experience inside the Group»





LEMFU (DR CONGO)

THE LIGHT SHINES ANEW FOR THE PEOPLE OF LEMFU



On September 28th, amid general rejoicing, our colleagues Grégory Choquet, Guy Bemelmans and Eric Choquet officially switched on the hydroelectric power station which serves the housing, clinic and schools at the Lemfu mission in Lower Congo.

This event marked the happy conclusion of one of Energy Assistance's most important projects to date. It had taken no fewer than two years, 25km of cable, three planes, a boat and an expenditure of €50,000 for 45KW of green energy to raise the future hope of progress amongst a population left exhausted by the civil war of 2000-2003.

Quite apart from the technical feats performed on the ground, the Lemfu project was above all rich in human experience.

In a constantly unstable political situation – the last mission had to be delayed following the postponement of the national elections – we find ourselves coming face to face with personalities as different as they are engaging. From the project's instigator, Antoine 'Papa' Ghonda, to John the technician in charge of maintaining the new equipment, the whole population is motivated by a desire to get ahead.

That's to our 45 kW of electricity, the school has reopened its doors, the mechanic's workshop is again open for the repair of machinery, and the aid dispensed by the Sisters of the Catholic mission has been greatly improved.

The renovation of the Lemfu power station has been completed. EA hopes that it will serve as a trigger for sustain-

able development in the region.

Christine Levêque
Project manager



On the road – Kisantu to Lemfu



Thanks at EA

Guy digs



...Grégory connects





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The ENERGY ASSISTANCE NEWSLETTER is written and composed by the Energy Assistance bureau and communication committee. The authors are responsible for the articles published.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE IS LOOKING FOR PROJECT MANAGERS

To face the increasing number of projects submitted to E.A., we are looking for volunteers interested to join the Project committee in charge of analyzing and eventually developing and following up the realisation of the approved projects.

Interested? Send your application to **J.P. Germeau**
(jp.germeau@skynet.be)



Localisation of our projets



- America:** Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua,
- Africa :** Burkina Faso, Benin, Burundi, Cameroun, D.R.Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo,
- Asia:** Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor, Vietnam

In order to reach its objectives, **ENERGY ASSISTANCE** needs its **MEMBERS'** support.

For Belgium The annual membership fee for **2006** is **€ 20** for full members and **€ 5** for associated members. (Please send your contribution to our bank account number ING **310-1675876-93** - IBAN: BE98 3101 6758 7693 - BIC: BBRUBEBB).

IMPORTANT : In the message with your payment, please mention the amount being paid for membership (€ 20 or € 5) and/or the amount of the donation. The donation is tax-deductible and you will receive a tax certificate for any donation of **€ 30** or more. The membership form can be downloaded from the site (<http://www.energy-assistance.org>) or can be obtained from the association.

For France, Every one who would like to join EAF can do so by sending a subscription of **€20** by cheque made out to **ENERGY ASSISTANCE FRANCE** at 235 avenue Georges Clémenceau, BP4601, 92746 Nanterre. Please let us have your address details so that we can send you a tax receipt (all donations and subscriptions to EAF are tax deductible in France up to 60%).

Thank you in advance.

REMINDER: Please send any changes in your personal data (address, telephone number, e-mail) to the **ENERGY ASSISTANCE** secretariat.