GISCorps Activities in 2005

25th ESRI Users Conference in San Diego, CA
July 26, 2005

Presented by:

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Mission of GISCorps

- Operating under the auspices of URISA, GISCorps coordinates short-term volunteer GIS services to under-served communities worldwide.

- GISCorps volunteers contribute to the well-being of communities in development by providing GIS expertise in areas such as humanitarian relief, economic development, sustainable development, indigenous capacity building, aboriginal rights, health, and education.
GISCorps operates under URISA and it is run by a committee.

GISCorps coordinates on a project-by-project basis between sponsoring agencies and volunteers.

GISCorps does not pay for its volunteers’ expenses, the partner agency does.

GISCorps guards strongly against promotion of private interests or business goals of its volunteers or sponsors.

GISCorps is responsible for:
- establishing relationships and partnerships with recognized agencies, and associations such as UN, GSDI, Peace Corps, ICMA, etc.
- screening projects in host countries to make certain they match the GISCorps’ objectives.
- screening and evaluating volunteers.
- matching volunteers’ expertise with project needs.
Who are GISCorps volunteers?

- We currently have 268 registered volunteers
- We currently have 345 registered ‘friends’
- Volunteers have an average of more then 8 years GIS experience
- Over 40% of them teach or have taught GIS
- They are almost equally distributed across the following sectors
  - Governmental
  - Educational
  - Private
  - Non Governmental
- They have a wide variety of skills and expertise, but top ones are:
  - Environmental analysis
  - Database design
  - Training
  - Strategic planning
  - Needs assessment
Where do GISCorps volunteers reside?

- They reside in 35 countries and in all 5 continents
- 69% of them reside in the US
- 10% of the US based volunteers are non US born
- The US based volunteers reside in 36 different states
Our Accomplishments in 2005

- Strengthening and consolidating our own organizational structure and enlarging the circle of volunteers and ‘friends’
- Implementation of four missions, three in the Indian Ocean region and one in Afghanistan
- Setting strategic partnerships with associations, NGOs, and the private sector such as with ESRI, UN, VVAF, SeedsIndia, MapAction, and Global MapAid
- Setting up a long term strategic partnership with the GSDI association to match their International Small Grants program with SDI volunteer services
- Received financial support from several organizations and individuals including URISA Chapters of Florida, Southern California, BAAMA, Ontario, Alberta, and New England
Dr. Frank Chang, from South Florida Water Management District, spent his one month vacation, accompanying the GMA to Indonesia in Mid February - Mid March. He acted in a geospatial expert responsibility.

This was mostly a fact finding mission to survey and observe geospatial needs for relief agencies in both short and long term.

They visited numerous cities and regions affected by the tsunami and established a partnership with the Banda Aceh, Syiah Kuala University which is currently acting as a think tank for the government.

We are already in the process of setting up future collaborations and cooperation with them.
Second Mission: Partnership with SeedsIndia & MapAction

www.seedsindia.org & www.mapaction.org

- Strategic partnership with SeedsIndia and MapAction formed in January 05
- US based seven person team was formed with Beni Patel as a Team Leader
- MapAction established an FTP site for transfer of files and Beni Patel established another for internal communications
- The goal was to recreate the physical layout and development pattern of erased villages in Andaman Islands of India as they existed before the tragedy attaching census data to every region and tesil
- Tasks included: spatial and non-spatial data compilation from various satellite imageries and paper copies
SeedsIndia / MapAction
Remote Team

North Harris College, Texas. Professor Peter Price and his students: Sue, Frank, & Doug
SeedsIndia / MapAction
Remote Team

Meredith Williams
Stanford University, California

Chandreyee Lahiri
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
Third Mission: GIS Support for the Tsunami Relief Operations

Jakarta & Sumatra, Indonesia
GISCorps volunteers sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF), assisted the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre in Jakarta Indonesia by...

- Organizing and cataloging data created during the tsunami relief effort.

- Updating UNJLC GIS data layers including ports, airfields, helicopter landing zones, and transportation corridors.

- Creating a draft UNJLC emergency management data model and set of specifications for improving GIS response in future events.
GISCorps Volunteers...

- Created earthquake assessment and provincial logistics maps.
GISCorps Volunteers…

• Standardized layer symbology, created metadata templates, conducted QA/QC procedures and published documentation.

• Offered assistance to Bakosurtanal, the Indonesian Mapping Agency, and provided support to the Humanitarian Information Centre in Meulaboh.
GISCorps Volunteers…

• Assisted in field data collection and information dissemination.
AIMS - a joint venture between the United Nations Office of Coordination for the Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

- AIMS Goals: To build “Information Management Capacity” in government and deliver “Information Management Services” including GIS services.

- AIMS has been in operation for several years serving various governmental agencies in Afghanistan by providing database development, training, and project management.

Mission with AIMS/UNDP

www.aims.org.af

AIMS - Afghanistan Information Management Service
Mainly a fact finding mission to learn about AIMS’ needs so we can deploy the most qualified volunteers. Services included:

- Met with AIMS staff from various divisions
- Lectures on GIS applications, Cadastral Mapping, Image processing, Spatial modeling to AIMS and non-AIMS staff
- Taught Arc/GIS to 26 AIMS and USAID staff
- Held various trouble shooting sessions
- Multiple presentations to elected officials of Kabul Municipality and heads of various ministries
- Met with the faculty of Kabul University’s Geography and Geology Department
- Lectured on GISCorps and Cadastral Mapping at KNT University in Tehran and sought their technical assistance in establishing a GIS curriculum for Kabul University
Delivered a report to AIMS which identified nine potential projects; some of which can be conducted remotely.

Software Training:
- AIMS is switching to an enterprise model and is in need of experts in building enterprise Geodatabases and ArcSDE/SQL Server
- Need for Interactive Mapping capability to serve up their datasets over the Intra/Internet – training on ArcIMS

Other Projects:
- Office of Statistics – Census experts (mobile data collection)
- Geodesy/Cadastral Head Office – Cadastral experts
- Disaster Management applications – Explore possibility of working with a team to conduct a variety of GIS analysis remotely
- Need for mapping standards in Farsi/Dari language
- GIS curriculum for Kabul University
Lecturing at KNT University in Tehran

Tehran’s skyline
At the heart of volunteerism are the ideals of service and solidarity and the belief that together we can make the world a better place.

Volunteers do not ask, “why volunteer?”, but rather “when?”, “where?” and “how?”. These dedicated and courageous individuals are important partners in the quest for a better, fairer and safer world.

Kofi Annan, 5 December 2003

GIS – helping manage our world
The world is changed by seemingly small ideas that are acted upon. It sounds too simple, but it’s the truth – we have a good idea and we act on it – that is how we create a better world.

Jack Dangermond

Transforming GIS into:
Giving International Service?

www.giscorps.org

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