

## **EARTHQUAKE IN YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA**

### **Handicap International helps the survivors**

The Handicap International operational centre for Indonesia is located in Yogyakarta, the principal city touched by the 27<sup>th</sup> May earthquake. Our organisation was therefore able to provide immediate assistance to the population.

There have been no casualties among the 12 members of Handicap International team in Yogyakarta. However, the houses of some collaborators have been seriously damaged.

Once their immediate safety was secured, the team immediately started working to meet the needs of survivors:

- Our logistics and human resources in Banda Aceh (north of Sumatra) and in Solo were rallied towards Yogyakarta. Two experts in trauma and a logistics expert arrived in Banda Aceh yesterday.
- A needs assessment has started in the hospitals of Yogyakarta, Solo and Klaten, as well as with our medical and local partners.
- Emergency equipment (e.g.: wheelchairs, pairs of crutches, plaster bands) is being dispatched, in close collaboration with all the organisations working on the emergency.
- A specialist in the care of the wounded following natural disasters will arrive mid-week.

Handicap International's experience in Turkey in 1999, in Iran (Bam) in 2003 and recently in Pakistan, shows that earthquakes inevitably create a strong increase in the number of disabled people. It is particularly important to intervene with the wounded as soon as possible, to improve their chances of recovery and avoid life-long disabilities. Although the needs in orthopaedic equipment and rehabilitation are still hard to know exactly, they are already considerable and will remain for years.

#### **Notes for editors**

Handicap International is an international charity working in around 60 countries in the fields of rehabilitation, inclusion of disabled people and in disability prevention, including landmines and cluster munitions clearance. The organisation is co-founder of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which was awarded the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

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