



Western Union Foundation Bolsters the Response of Mercy Corps to Relief Efforts in Indonesia and Samoa

ENGLEWOOD, Colo., Oct 02, 2009 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- The Western Union Foundation is pledging immediate relief to the disasters in Indonesia and Samoa with a grant of \$100,000 to Mercy Corps.

Mercy Corps is a global relief and development organization with a history of quick and efficient responses to disasters and their aftermath. In Indonesia, Mercy Corps immediately deployed an emergency team to the city of Padang, the closest major city to the epicenters of powerful earthquakes which hit this week. Mercy Corps is well positioned to respond in Padang, as the agency has had a longstanding presence there working with local communities on disaster risk reduction strategies.

Samoa was also devastated by a tsunami generated by a strong earthquake, and Mercy Corps is working with a local partner to help families with this sudden crisis.

The teams are performing a rapid assessment of the situation in both of the areas hit, alongside other responders and local authorities. Mercy Corps' response will include distribution of shelter items, clean water and hygiene kits and other relief supplies.

Western Union works with Mercy Corps on the company's *Our World, Our Family*^(R) program. *Our World, Our Family*^(R) is a five-year, US\$50 million initiative to empower migrant workers and their families through education and global economic opportunity programs.

"We have been deeply moved by the suffering and loss of people in Indonesia and Samoa and our priority is to respond quickly to help people in times of crisis. Mercy Corps has a strong operation in this region and we are confident their work will make a meaningful difference," said Hikmet Ersek, Managing Director and Executive Vice President for Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific, The Western Union Company.

"Our hearts go out to the families affected by the devastation in Indonesia and Samoa. We hope these funds will help alleviate some of the suffering," said Luella Chavez-D'Angelo, President, The Western Union Foundation. "The Foundation has an Agent Gift Match program and we will be issuing an appeal to our Agents there in hopes of raising additional funds to assist in reconstruction efforts."

"We're already laying the groundwork for a program that will pay a living wage to residents for clearing debris and rubble from the streets," said Sean Granville-Ross, Mercy Corps Country Director for Indonesia, "This recovery strategy helped communities rebound in the wake of the 2004 tsunami."

About Western Union

The Western Union Company (NYSE: WU) is a leader in global payment services. Together with its Vigo, Orlandi Valuta and Pago Facil branded payment services, Western Union provides consumers with fast, reliable and convenient ways to send and receive money around the world, as well as send payments and purchase money orders. Western Union, Vigo and Orlandi Valuta operate through a combined network of more than 385,000 Agent locations in 200 countries and territories. Famous for its pioneering telegraph services, the original Western Union dates back to 1851. For more information, visit www.westernunion.com.

About the Western Union Foundation

Through Western Union's *Our World, Our Family*^(R) signature program, the Western Union Foundation supports initiatives to empower individuals, families and communities through access to better education and economic opportunity. Recognized by the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy in 2009, the program is a five year, \$50 million commitment reflecting the efforts made by Western Union employees, Agents, and partners around the world. Since its inception, the Western Union Foundation has awarded almost \$55 million in grants and disaster relief to over 1,870 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in 100 countries. For more information, visit <http://foundation.westernunion.com>.

About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps helps people in the world's toughest places turn crises of natural disaster, poverty and conflict into opportunities for progress. Driven by local needs and market conditions, our programs provide communities with the tools and support they need to transform their own lives. Our worldwide team of 3,700 professionals is improving the lives of 16.7 million people in more than 40 countries. For more information, visit <http://www.mercycorps.org>.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=6064664&lang=en>.

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