THE TSUNAMI LEGACY
INNOVATION, BREAKTHROUGHS AND CHANGE
We wish to thank the wide array of stakeholders and partners that have worked tirelessly over the past several months to support the Tsunami Global Lessons Learned (TGLL) Project and facilitated the formulation of this study report, the first of the project’s many deliverables.

Our special gratitude is owed to the former UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President William Jefferson Clinton, for his inspiring leadership and support throughout the undertaking of the study.

This report was developed under the leadership of Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Chair, TGLL Steering Committee and Director of BRR, the ministerial entity that oversaw Indonesia’s response to the tsunami. In doing so, he had the unqualified support of the governments of the five most tsunami-affected countries, the United Nations and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Coordination and formulation of this study was critically facilitated, with our appreciation, by the UNDP Regional Centre, Bangkok.

Although the partners and supporters of this project are too numerous to name, particular recognition goes to the Hon. Minister I Periaswamy, the Government of Tamil Nadu, India; the senior management team of BRR, Government of Indonesia; Hon. Minister Abdulla Shahid, the Government of Maldives; Hon. Minister Abdul Bathiyutheen, the Government of Sri Lanka; and Hon. Minister Chavarat Charnvirakul, the Government of Thailand. Their inspiring support and unstinted cooperation have been instrumental in the preparation of this report.

The United Nations has played a major role in bringing together the knowledge, expertise and experience of a wide range of recovery actors. The UN Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias (UNORC) played a stellar role as a constant and valued support mechanism of the TGLL Project by collaborating closely with numerous partners in government, bilateral and multilateral agencies, civil society actors and the IFRC to coordinate the inputs and reflections of the international and national community into mandated TGLL deliverables.

A particular word of thanks goes to the IFRC, an ardent supporter of the TGLL Project from its inception, and an invaluable contributor to the depth and breadth of this report.

Thanks are due in great measure to the many national and international non-governmental organizations, as well as bilateral and multi-lateral institutions that have contributed to the report and shared their experiences in order to make this a well-informed document of lessons learned from tsunami recovery.

Last but not the least, we thank all the members of the international community who are too numerous to mention here. We would especially like to express our gratitude to the donor community without which the hopes and dreams of millions of tsunami affected people to begin their lives afresh would be left unrealized.
The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was an unprecedented event of global proportions: from India to Indonesia, Yemen to Somalia, the magnitude and scope of the destruction ranks it as one of the greatest natural disasters in recent history. The subsequent outpouring of concern from across the world in support of relief and reconstruction efforts within the affected communities was equally extraordinary.

The nations most affected by the tsunami – India, Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand – each adopted their own approaches to managing the specific circumstances that confronted them. Innovative solutions were identified to unique (but often common) challenges; solutions that deserve to be highlighted and known. The same is true for the mistakes: the complexity and scale of the task necessarily meant that not all efforts worked as planned. As one of the biggest recovery and reconstruction efforts to date, the knowledge amassed by communities and recovery actors alike is both impressive and rich. But while there is no dearth of learnings from the post-tsunami recovery operations, these have not always been shared – the urgency of rebuilding and reconstructing having taken precedence.

In doing so, he had the unqualified support of the governments of the five most tsunami-affected countries, the United Nations and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The United Nations has played a major role in bringing together the knowledge, expertise and experience of a wide range of recovery actors, organisations and people responded to one of the world’s great natural disasters. In so doing, it identifies some of the main elements involved: challenges, successes and lessons. It also is an attempt, not only to acknowledge the tremendous work of so many people who contributed to the recovery, but to thank the world for its enormous contributions to the devastated communities across the Indian Ocean rim. What better way to thank those who dedicated their time and effort to helping affected countries and communities build back better, than ensuring that the world learns from our journey, avoids our pitfalls, and build on our success.

Introducing the report, the TGLL Steering Committee hopes that disaster mitigation and response continue to be recognised by the international community as priority areas for ongoing policy attention. Since disasters tend to happen without warning, and frequently impact areas where the response capacity is either weak or nonexistent, ensuring that global efforts to strengthen response and mitigation mechanisms reach all corners of the world remains of paramount importance. All governments have a responsibility to look after their citizens – particularly the most vulnerable, including women and children – by preparing for any natural disasters that may occur. Likewise, multilateral institutions have a responsibility to help when national capacities are overwhelmed by a disaster and where disasters occur across national borders, both of which were the case with the tsunami.

Such thoughts are easily said but less easy to put into practice, particularly in the context of a global financial crisis that will divert attention to reshaping and rebuilding the world’s financial architecture while simultaneously diminishing the financial resources available to fight and respond to future disasters, natural or manmade. Yet relief and reconstruction continue to be pivotal to international development and prosperity. With this in mind, the messages from this report may be more relevant than ever.
This report is general in nature, inevitably skimming the surface of events while drawing some broad abstractions from them. It could be criticised, therefore, as much for what it leaves out as for what it attempts to touch upon. Naturally, no document of this nature can seriously lay claim to recognising either the pain felt by those affected by the tsunami or the hardships and risks experienced by those who responded. Nor can it adequately capture the breadth of the team effort involved, by governments; international and national organisations; the thousands of individuals, young and old, men and women, in affected countries and elsewhere, who donated their time, energy and money. In highlighting breakthroughs by certain countries with regard to certain themes, we do not mean to downplay that other countries working on similar issues achieved significant gains as well.

Many believe that those who help are praised for their efforts, when in fact the opposite is often the case. In offering to help, many organisations face complaints that they are doing too little too late, for the wrong people and in the wrong way. Such criticism is sometimes justified but frequently misplaced. As important and justifiable fair criticism may be in helping us learn how to improve post-disaster recovery, it also risks leading those in positions of accountability to wonder if their contributions are really worthwhile. Former United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Bill Clinton has noted: “Our tools have yet to catch up with our aspirations, true, but the effort has been genuine and widespread”. We concur.

Finally, before you delve into the report, there is one more thing that it is not — that is, a “how-to” manual. Ultimately, any lessons drawn from this and other tsunami recovery documents must be embedded in operational practices if they are to have lasting impact. The authors hope they will be. Meanwhile, the first priority is simply to learn from the tremendous range of experiences encompassed by the many actors in tsunami recovery.

The Steering Committee for the Tsunami Global Lessons Learned Project
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**Note:** The table above represents the contents of the document as it appears in the image. The actual content and structure of the document may differ from what is shown here.
Regional map showing countries affected by the tsunami
Yellow shaded area = affected areas
Source: http://www.naturaldisasterhome.com/Naturaldisaster/Images/Tsunami/tsunami-map.jpg
NUMBER OF TSUNAMI DEATHS AND MISSING PEOPLE

NUMBER OF HOUSES DAMAGED OR DESTROYED BY THE TSUNAMI

NUMBER OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) AS A RESULT OF THE TSUNAMI

TSUNAMI COST OF DAMAGE

Total and a Percentage of GDP

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I
n the years and months that have gone by since
the devastating Indian Ocean Earthquake and
Tsunami of December 2004, the affected
communities – from Banda Aceh to Batticaloa,
Puntland to Phang Nga, Noonu to Nagapattinam –
have seen both tragedy and triumph.

Tragedy, because the destructive power of the
tsunami left countless communities without homes or
livelihoods, eradicated key infrastructure in countries
around the region, and irrevocably damaged large
swaths of coastal area. In all, more than 228,000
people – in 14 countries – perished as a result of the
disaster.

Triumph, because while the disaster wreaked havoc
and devastation on the coastlines along the Indian
Ocean rim, it also triggered an overwhelming national
and international response, delivering emergency
relief and recovery assistance through multiple
partners, funds and programmes. Milestone successes
have been collectively achieved in supporting affected
communities to restore their lives and livelihoods, and
to reconstruct their houses and settlements, all with
care to empower future generations to thrive.

Individual citizens, national governments and
international financial institutions around the globe
contributed funds to the recovery, resulting in an
estimated US$13.5 billion in aid.

With an operation of such unprecedented scope, a
number of useful lessons have been learned across the
recovery spectrum about what worked and what did
not. To take stock of these collective and country-
specific findings, this report asks if those involved in
this massive undertaking were able to achieve
meaningful development and reform. The report
takes its cue from former UN Secretary-General Kofi
Annan’s words – “it’s not enough to pick up the
pieces. We must draw on every lesson we can to
avoid such catastrophes in the future” – and from the
call of the UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery,
President Bill Clinton, to “build back better.”

“What Stops to Think?” The Challenges of
Leadership and Coordination

Both the destruction caused by – and the response to
– the tsunami were unusual in terms of scale. The
unique situation warranted intensive strategic
coordination for the recovery to be effective as well as
considerable pressure to deliver tangible results.
Closest to the epicentre, the Indonesian Province of
Aceh faced one of the most complex situations with a
massive loss of life, extensive destruction of
infrastructure, and an extraordinary influx of actors.
In response, a dedicated body, the Aceh-Nias
Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR), was
set up in April 2005, with a 4-year mandate to
coordinate all recovery activities as well as implement
a number of government projects.

Elsewhere, in Sri Lanka, the tsunami was a catalyst for
creation of the Ministry of National Disaster
Management and Human Rights in 2006. The
Government of Maldives moved swiftly to set up a
similar structure. On the same day as the tsunami, it
created a National Disaster Management Centre
(NDMC) to coordinate activities.

This development of lead governance mechanisms for
relief and recovery, tasked with coordinating
ministries, donors, agencies, communities, women’s
groups and others, and with building national and
local capacities to manage the process, turned out to
be a critical breakthrough in all these countries.
Carefully connecting the local body to a broader,
global coordinating infrastructure – as was done in
Indonesia via the Global Consortium for Tsunami
Recovery, the Multi Donor Fund (MDF) and the UN
Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
(UNORC) – was key to facilitating coordination in a complex recovery context involving countless international and national stakeholders. As new structures, void of institutional baggage, these agencies also benefited from the ability to be flexible and quickly adapt to local circumstances.

In India, too, where no new body needed to be created, the government seized on the moment by devolving significant authority to local administrators, a crucial aspect to the Tamil Nadu recovery effort. A network of state- and district-level knowledge centres provided the infrastructure for disseminating vast amounts of information and reliable village-level data; it also became a focal point for NGOs on how they could contribute to recovery. The key to coordinating recovery here and elsewhere was maintaining speedy, flexible and accountable coordination systems and procedures, including at the local level.

Recovery partners in Indonesia learned a similar lesson. By giving the coordination structure full authority and basing it ‘close to the action’ it was able to become more responsive to the local context. Importantly, BRR was given full authority to manage all aspects of the tsunami recovery in Aceh on behalf of the central government, which allowed for a much smoother coordination process, devoid of any potential inter-ministry politics. Significantly, BRR Headquarters was located in the capital of Aceh, and not in Jakarta.

Flexibility and know-how, coupled with a culture of risk-taking, was a central aspect of BRR’s success and led to several important breakthroughs and innovations. These included the Tim Terpadu (a one stop shop for processing all visa, customs, tax and other clearance requirements for thousands of aid workers and equipment) and a mandatory Project Concept Note (PCN) format for all programmes, which helped avoid unnecessary duplication and ensured efficient use of funds.

Similarly, when Maldives faced a shortfall of nearly US$100 million in recovery funds, a number of innovative partnership strategies were implemented to secure additional funding. The unique “Adopt-An-Island” initiative implemented by UNDP, emerged as a particularly powerful marketing tool under which donor support could be matched directly to a specific project. By mid-2006, 44 percent of the US$41 million that UNDP had raised was mobilised through Adopt-An-Island. In both cases the willingness to be opportunistic and take risks with “breakthrough initiatives” accelerated recovery and facilitated ‘building back better’.

In the final analysis, however, lack of local capacity has remained an issue, throughout. In the Maldives, the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) was set up to coordinate activities in a similar vein to BRR. But while the Centre took the lead in many aspects, being new to disaster management it relied on outside help to a significant degree. And in the future, it must be remembered that building local capacity is an important priority if the purpose-built recovery agency is temporary and the local Government is expected to sustain the gains in the long term.

Seeing Those Who Are ‘Invisible’. Achieving Equity In Recovery

While international codes and principles guide relief and recovery efforts, many tsunami affected communities were still unable to adequately access assistance immediately after the disaster because of barriers associated with their gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion or occupation. Often, tight deadlines imposed by the need to deliver fast had the effect of dropping equity issues – or of the wrong projects being taken up by the wrong organisations for the wrong reasons.

Many people could not access assistance after disasters simply because of their gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion or occupation. In particular, it is women and the poorest whose needs tend to be overlooked. Yet the tsunami also provided an important opportunity to address underlying social inequities and strengthen human rights protection for vulnerable groups, a task quickly seized upon by India’s strong civil society and vibrant media. Combined with a state government in
Tamil Nadu that displayed swiftness, responsiveness and openness, this made the difference in bringing all survivors back on the road toward recovery much faster.

As recovery actors in all five locales quickly realised, there could be no more business-as-usual when dealing with a disaster of such unusual proportions. Responding to the initial exclusion, they were quick to catch up in innovative ways, many employing a human rights perspective to create an enabling environment for participation. In India, the State government’s timeliness, responsiveness and openness to working with representatives of different social groups in addressing flaws stands out as particularly praiseworthy. Authorities in Tamil Nadu did not simply respond to practical needs but offered real opportunities for change, through several key steps.

Breakthroughs in India included the implementation of disaster-resistant construction and the institution of inexpensive, 10-year housing insurance against all forms of disasters. Houses were built for indirectly affected families who were also given housing assistance and rights to land ownership. Women benefited from opportunities for strategic change in their status, such as joint housing rights for spouses and funds for the education and resettlement of orphaned adolescent girls and unmarried women, amongst other initiatives.

Across the waters, in Sri Lanka, strong emphasis was placed on equity and the targeting of vulnerable groups after the tsunami, especially with regard to permanent housing, road building and highlighting of issues such as human rights, participation and the environment. Along these lines, a number of successful – and flexible – interventions were initiated, with many partners coming to see the importance of addressing conflict and post-conflict issues in the post-tsunami setting as a consequence. For example, the government resettled the conflict-affected in permanent housing under its Unified Assistance Scheme or had their houses upgraded. Hallmarks of the scheme included clear eligibility criteria, management at local and provincial levels, and significant community involvement.

For equity gains to be sustained it was necessary to anchor innovative practices in the institutional infrastructure of the recovery – good intentions can only do so much if systems are not in place to track and identify vulnerable groups. Rather than a piecemeal approach, then, countries succeeded best when there was a commitment from high-level managers to ensure equity. In India, a series of independent equity audits were carried out in 2005 and 2006, at the request of local and international NGOs, by the Social Equity Audit Secretariat and trained auditors. The success of the audits is reflected in the fact that amongst some NGOs, the percentage of budget that went to directly support interventions for the excluded rose from 10 or 12 percent to 60 percent.

Building on women’s grassroots activism, recovery actors in Indonesia, among other things, sought to ensure that gender issues were considered in all development sectors through a special unit that formulated a comprehensive gender policy. UNIFEM placed a gender advisor in BRR to provide sustained input and guidance and BRR also employed gender-specific data for monitoring and evaluation, developed practical checklists for use in health, housing, education, livelihoods and institutional change, and promoted active participation of tsunami-affected women in plans for their future.

Successes in India and Indonesia underscore the importance of developing institutional anti-discrimination capacity by reviewing organisational culture and offering training to staff on rights-based approaches, including awareness and understanding of gender-sensitive international codes, guidelines and principles.

Depending on the context, this was not always an easy goal to achieve across the board. In Sri Lanka and Aceh, both regions affected by conflict, there was a need to also address the victims of conflict as well as those of the tsunami. However, most post-tsunami organisations largely ignored the post-conflict context, in part due to donor-stipulated restrictions.
on how they could use their funds. This led to numerous grievances raised by conflict-affected communities and perceptions of rising inequalities in aid provision. If conflict sensitivity had been more widespread and funds not restricted to tsunami victims only, building back better could have been more equitable all along. The provision of "untied" donor funds that offer flexibility to modify assistance packages to suit local needs would have enabled more flexibility to address these issues in a straightforward manner.

Creating a ‘Virtuous Loop’: Embracing People’s Participation

While citizen participation is widely considered a cornerstone of democratic governance and efficient programming, too often those most in need after the tsunami were not seriously consulted about planning or implementation of relief and recovery. Concerted efforts were made in all countries affected by the disaster, however, to curb this initial trend. Perhaps the most valuable benefit of promoting participation was something that, in the end, is not easily quantifiable: a feeling of individual empowerment, of “ownership” of community resources, and the unleashing of people’s own capacities to cope.

Efforts to overcome the lack of consultation were particularly successful in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand, where recovery actors employed participation by both women and men, through extensive people’s consultations, beneficiary surveys, Help Desks and community monitoring of projects. The Government of Sri Lanka empowered the national Human Rights Commission to conduct people’s consultations in more than 1,100 tsunami-affected communities in 13 districts. Although it was not always easy to ensure community participation, in cases where participation was enforced, projects were more successful.

As a result of the thousands of complaints received during the people’s consultations, United Nations could provide support to the Human Rights Commission in establishing Help Desks in each district to raise awareness among communities on their rights and entitlements and to follow up on grievances.

In the Maldivian context, community consultations had rarely occurred before to the extent instituted after the tsunami. Beneficiary surveys deepened knowledge of important qualitative dimensions of recovery, increasing accountability to affected communities, and were hailed as “one of the most significant innovations of the tsunami response.”

Thailand, too, made it a priority to give communities a strong voice. Local authorities took the lead in many reconstruction efforts and were supported to improve community consultation, including training to strengthen women’s leadership and decision making. One of the most successful such initiatives was the restoration of indigenous livelihoods in Koh Lanta, an island district of 30,000 in Krabi province. Taking into account the traditional livelihoods of the many ethnic groups on the island, the island was developed by community mobilisation, savings schemes, and cooperatives.

Still, it was not always easy to ensure community participation, especially as some agencies and organisations sometimes tended to approach the issue with only limited enthusiasm. Many, it appears, tacked on consultations as a programmatic afterthought, and did not approach it as a key component of the project’s success. Indeed, several NGOs have acknowledged that mistakes could have been avoided if a more participatory approach had been used earlier on. Many had to readjust along the way to respond to realities and needs on the ground. A key requirement for these organisations was to decentralise authority within the organisation to the local levels. Both CARE and World Vision, for example, put their field offices in the driver’s seat, reasoning that they would be best able to deal with the needs and demands of the tsunami affected people. Some other NGOs, on the other hand, found it more difficult to implement effective participation since many key decisions were being made back in their headquarters, rather than in the field.

Similarly, the success in the Maldives did not come
easy. For one, it proved difficult to engage communities in disaster risk management awareness, given that many Maldivians saw the tsunami as a “one-off” event that would not recur. Critically, however, the Government and recovery partners were persistent, even translating basic disaster risk management terminology into the local Dhivehi language.

**Countering Corruption and Ensuring Accountability**

With large amounts of cash and goods in motion, corruption is always a threat during a crisis. But despite the influx of billions of dollars in tsunami-affected countries, corruption levels across the board were kept remarkably low. Key to this success was a commitment to view corruption, not as a nuisance or unfortunate side effect of the recovery, but as a core threat to the reconstruction effort as a whole. In Aceh, where an unprecedented US$6.4 billion were pledged for recovery, Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, the Director of BRR, urged the recovery community to set the bar high: “We see the fight against corruption in Aceh and Nias as advancing Indonesia’s wider struggle against corruption.” A punitive focus on “finding corruptors” would not be enough.

From the first days of the recovery, then, steps had to be taken to ensure anti-corruption and accountability would inform all levels of operations, starting with the institutions themselves. BRR set out to pay its employees competitive salaries to ensure that the best and brightest were not “poached” by international agencies – and, more importantly, to break a culture of gift-giving.

To enable complete transparent access and tracking of all tsunami-related funds, BRR developed a comprehensive information management system, the Recovery Aceh-Nias Database (RAND). All agencies involved in tsunami recovery were required to register with BRR, set up an account on RAND and send regular updates on funds committed and disbursed. Complementing the process-based RAND, a “survey-based” Housing Geospatial Database (HGD) was created to provide a snapshot of recovery by verifying and digitally mapping the vast housing reconstruction sector. The HGD was recently merged with a third database, covering all other assets – bridges, hospitals, schools, roads, etc. – creating a combined information system which is one of the most comprehensive and “leak-proof” in the recovery spectrum.

As Indonesia realised, however, good systems will not deliver ‘on their own’. Accountability mechanisms need to be client oriented. After being slow to get off the ground, international and national partners, and provincial and district governments were contacted to identify what types of analytical products, as well as what information and in which format, would be useful. Then, RAND changed accordingly – absorbing a major lesson in ensuring participation.

A strong complaints mechanism is equally important. Early designation of grievance focal points and an adequate budget for grievance facilitation are critical for reporting of abuses and corruption, as is empowering affected communities, including the most vulnerable, in understanding and using these mechanisms. Affected people must be empowered to articulate community claims, actively monitor and evaluate reconstruction and make their own choices. Recovery data, however complex it may be, should be shared in layperson terms to the extent possible.

In Sri Lanka the establishment of an effective complaint mechanism through local Help Desks (in response to input solicited in consultations) was a particular breakthrough. The public could here question eligibility for assistance, report potential cases of corruption, or file a complaint. By October 2006, the DRMU had received 17,000 complaints and successfully resolved most. In addition, UNDP Sri Lanka set up an AidWatch initiative to enable communities to closely monitor projects. Such vital linkages contributed to increasing responsibility and accountability toward the community and laid groundwork for continued networking.

Many organisations, notably BRR, responded to the threat of corruption by putting in place more
stringent anti-corruption policies than required by national law. To tackle graft and fraud, BRR became the first government agency to have an autonomous Anti-Corruption Unit (SAK) set up to work with other government institutions, international institutions like the World Bank, and civil society organisations such as Transparency International Indonesia in carrying out its primary objectives of prevention, investigation and education. Since its inception in September 2005, SAK has received 1,530 confidential complaints.

What if it Happens Again? Innovations in Disaster Risk Management

The tsunami has precipitated a critical shift in the minds of policy makers and communities alike. It is no longer tenable to view disasters as isolated events and respond without taking into account the social and economic factors that aggravate the situation. The tsunami drew attention to the importance and urgency of reducing the enabling causes of disaster. In all tsunami-affected countries, a newfound enthusiasm for securing the country and community against future disasters has engendered the creation of disaster preparedness institutions and policies, new regional and national early warning systems, and concerted efforts at promoting community-based disaster awareness and preparedness at every turn.

Critically, new disaster preparedness structures have been established in four out of the five tsunami-affected countries and a regional tsunami early warning system has been operational since 2006, complementing the global commitment pledged by 168 governments to reduce multi-hazard risks and vulnerabilities under the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

Thailand in particular has been a leader in numerous disaster risk management initiatives, and its early warning system is well-positioned to become a regional role model. Through ASEAN, the Thai government swiftly proposed a regional tsunami early warning centre that would coordinate with various nations’ early warning systems to ensure complementarity. It established a Voluntary Trust Fund and donated US$10 million in seed money to it; additional funding came from donors such as Sweden. Thailand was also quick to create a ‘one-stop map server’, combining databases that previously could not be used together into one. This clearing house of information includes high-resolution satellite images, aerial photographs and base infrastructure maps, all available at the touch of a button in an emergency.

Maldives’ first disaster risk profile, created after the tsunami and based on Geographic Information System mapping, represents another innovative approach to disaster management. The government has used the profile as a key source for development strategies to mitigate climate change and future disasters, particularly in developing a “Safer Islands” programme, which provides incentives for voluntary migration to safer islands.

Sri Lanka, too, has come a long way in establishing comprehensive disaster management-related systems. Organised around 7 key themes, a “road map” has been developed, identifying over 100 investments to reduce disaster risk. Under it, numerous innovative initiatives have begun toward developing a multi-hazard approach for disaster management. In addition, the Disaster Management Act that had been under discussion for about a decade prior was passed in May 2005.

Following intensive efforts by 29 governments around the Indian Ocean, a regional tsunami early warning system has been operational since 2006 as part of a coordination plan by UNESCO-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. However, preparedness is not just about high-tech early warning systems. Community participation in disaster risk mitigation is also a necessity. Women, in particular, are well-placed to participate in risk assessments and the promotion of disaster risk reduction, ensuring consideration of gender-specific concerns. Training of a number of community leaders, teachers, local disaster managers and media personnel has demonstrated the use of response techniques.

Even before the tsunami, large community-based disaster risk management programmes existed in vulnerable areas in countries such as India – where...
they have been credited for capacity strengthening in search and rescue, first and evacuation methods that resulted in saving countless lives during the disaster as well as minimising damages to assets and livelihoods. Post-tsunami, excellent opportunities have been presented for deepening community disaster risk management across the region, setting up local and national partnerships. In Thailand, for example, the early warning system was taken to the local level, linked with loudspeakers in rural villages and with more than 100 warning towers along the coast.

The tsunami, finally, brought an increased awareness on the importance of natural defence barriers. Healthy coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, estuaries, wetlands and sandy beaches, are able to provide good protection against the force of tsunamis and storm surges and contribute to disaster risk reduction while providing diverse livelihoods, sufficient nutritious food, shelter and access to goods for communities. Several organisations and programmes, such as Mangroves for the Future, now focus on the humanitarian implications of failure to protect coastal ecosystems. But while most people are aware of the importance of resource-based industries such as ecotourism and fisheries to coastal economies, there is less comprehension of just how important these goods and raw materials are in terms of their multiplier effects nationally and locally.

We have learned that governments need to listen and respond to the voices of those most affected – including those normally not consulted, especially women. However, governments cannot be alone in solving the leadership equation. The many delivery partners who make up the reconstruction community must also develop the quality and effectiveness of their leadership.

Our most important lesson, however, is that disasters themselves should be seen as opportunities for reform and improvement. What stands out in this report is that governments in all five of the most tsunami-affected countries embraced change as a core ethic to confront this catastrophe. The challenge now is to constantly build on and improve these new institutional arrangements. Change must be embraced, not for its own sake, but rather because in a disaster, organisational weaknesses are severely tested and exposed. Continuous improvement is the only way to ensure all new institutional arrangements remain robust and relevant.
It has been over four years since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Those affected by that day of devastation still work to get past the pain, with steps both large and small. Amid an irrevocably altered physical and mental landscape, there will be an aching familiarity to the rituals marking the fifth anniversary of the catastrophe. Yet the need to remember is inextricably bound to a desire to move on – and so much has happened in these years, leaving a legacy of hope despite destruction.

On 26 December 2004, when the fourth-largest earthquake in a century erupted underwater off the Indonesian province of Aceh, it struck a geologically violent region – a “hot zone” where two of the plates that make up the Earth’s surface collide. This powerful jolt, with a magnitude of 9.3, moved a 1,200-kilometre section of the sea floor, and released energy equivalent to that of 550 million Hiroshima atomic explosions. The entire planet vibrated up to 1 centimetre. Then the sea receded abruptly from land – and began to rise up in waves as high as a three-story building, accelerating to speeds of more than 600 kilometres per hour and barrelling one-fifth of the way around the Earth.

Spanning continents, cultures and time zones, the deaths and destruction were, “so brutal, so quick, so extensive that we are still struggling to fully comprehend it,” as then-United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said. None of the most affected countries had warning systems to detect the coming onslaught and alert people to move away from the coastline. And even if they did, national and local capacities were inadequate, given that disaster preparedness has traditionally received only a small proportion of international assistance. So from Banda Aceh to Batticaloa, Puntland to Phang Nga, and Noonu to Nagapattinam, entire coastal zones and ecosystems were destroyed, up to several kilometres inland, and thousands of villages simply washed away.

The numbers are commensurate with the gargantuan force of the waves: More than 228,000 people died in 14 countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia, and as far away as Africa; most were women – in some places 3 times the number of men – the elderly and children. The dead included citizens of 40 nations, and the damage totalled nearly US$10 billion.

In all, nearly 2.5 million people were affected, losing their families, their homes, and their means of making even a meagre living. All these people already were vulnerable, with many of them chronically poor, subject to wide inequalities within their own societies, displacement, environmental issues from over fishing and deforestation, human rights violations, and longstanding armed conflicts. Households headed by women particularly were pushed deeper into poverty. When the tsunami was finished, it was the most destructive disaster of its kind in history.

The key to the full-scale recovery of these regions, which began in the early days of the emergency relief efforts and continues to this day in longer-term development programmes, has been the incredible efforts of the people and governments of the affected countries, supported by an extraordinary spirit of giving from individual citizens, national governments and multilateral institutions around the globe, which resulted in an estimated US$13.5 billion in aid. Donations from the general public, at an astonishing US$5.5 billion, broke many records; and an unprecedented 99 governments and two inter-governmental organisations also contributed.
The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) also received more than $5 billion in pledges.

Within one year, even nearest to the epicentre, in Aceh, hundreds of thousands of the homeless had a solid roof over their heads, even as greater quality of infrastructure naturally continued to be required. Four years on, basic services have been restored to a great extent. Children are now back in school and job opportunities have been created. Restoration of the natural environment is in progress, while tourist numbers have rebounded – in some cases, to record levels – with important benefits for local economies.

Yet building back better, as former United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Bill Clinton, framed it, has meant supporting and strengthening capacities to address not only the recovery itself but also complex poverty-related issues, including creating assets, making policies more gender-sensitive and seizing opportunities for peace building.

Much progress also has been made in strengthening strategies for disaster risk reduction, including the establishment of tsunami early warning systems. Critically, relevant new disaster management policies and standards have been put in place by national legislatures and local governments. Thus, substantial investments since December 2004 are yielding positive results, even as capacities among countries in essential elements of early warning continue to be uneven.

It is instinctive to search for the meaning of an event like this, once shock and grief have begun to subside. We have the ability to imagine a different future, going forward in a way that turns unthinkable challenges into extraordinary opportunities. Have we been able to achieve meaningful development and reform, employing evolving strategies and acting swiftly to address changing demands? What worked, what did not, and why?
Equally important, how can these changes be further applied in the future? In the words of Secretary-General Annan, “it’s not enough to pick up the pieces. We must draw on every lesson we can to avoid such catastrophes in the future.”

To do this, we take a unique, country-based perspective, and our goal is modest: we want to share what we have learned and to look ahead in terms of what we know we still need to do. To help in illustrating our lessons from the long road to recovery, we put post-tsunami events in perspective using the words and recollections of many of those who have been central to the effort.

These narratives provide the scaffolding that ultimately gives shape and meaning to the flow of experience over the years. So while this report is not a scholarly assessment, its stories, collected from a wide range of voices, show that in coming together after this tragedy people have found a way to tap into that most important of our renewable resources – human creativity.

In this report, we focus on the development breakthroughs that have been instrumental in accelerating the recovery effort and building back better, even as we acknowledge some of the unforeseen consequences and missed opportunities. We have reviewed the findings of 183 reports, studies and websites, as well as interviewed 91 key stakeholders in the five countries.

Our specific focus is on breakthroughs in five closely interlinked areas from which numerous useful lessons have been drawn. In all areas, special attention is paid to the role of women, who suffered disproportionately in numbers killed but who have also provided so much to tsunami relief and reconstruction and proactive disaster risk reduction.

The first area is that of Leadership and Coordination, with a focus on Indonesia, where more than 168,000 people died (over half of the total) and nearly half of the total economic damage occurred. Here, a specially centralised
and multi-level coordination structure was created to lead the mammoth task at hand. The agency (BRR) and partners had to perform the delicate balancing act of navigating between high expectations and the need for a speedy recovery on the one hand, and the abiding importance of ensuring a measured and strategic approach to the recovery on the other. Appreciating the constantly changing pace of the recovery, flexibility was made the watchword of the operations here, enabling the recovery to evolve along with the rapidly changing conditions and needs. This ability to quickly identify and seize opportunities fostered many breakthrough initiatives, which were critical to accelerate recovery and build back better. All this work was informed by a strong commitment to transparency and accountability to affected people and international donors alike.

Recovery with Equity spotlights India’s great strides during the tsunami response to include people otherwise often left on the sidelines of development, such as women, tribal groups and people with disabilities. A human rights perspective informed the broader humanitarian approach to ensure fundamental equity and inclusion, and a vibrant civil society helped the government of the state of Tamil Nadu embrace equity as a priority.

The next two areas, People’s Participation and Transparency and Accountability, emerged as key elements to delivering substantial results while simultaneously promoting equity. People’s participation has been identified as paramount by several major studies of lessons from the tsunami and has been borne out in remarkable acts of courage, valour and sacrifice. In this section of the report, we explore the role that ordinary people and their organisations have played in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand through extensive people’s consultations, often initiated or led by women’s groups at the grassroots level, which increased governments’ openness to different needs. Crucial information sharing and culturally sensitive programming further underscored community partnerships.

Looking at Indonesia again, we examine how the fight against corruption was made central to trust and integrity in the disbursement of tsunami funds, given that natural disasters often show human beings not only at their best, but also at their worst. A comprehensive, easily accessible information management system complemented competitive salaries, “integrity pacts” and an in-house anti-corruption unit, leading to remarkable breakthroughs that are all reverberating throughout the country as a whole.

Lastly, as in any humanitarian emergency, the experience has provided new opportunities to both test and enhance national and international capacities to reduce disaster risks and build back better in disaster-affected communities. While there have been numerous accounts of innovative practices in disaster risk management, Thailand has especially taken the lead in community-based initiatives, including public education and awareness, improved response capacities and linkages to a strengthened early warning system. Disaster risk reduction has been incorporated into development policies and programmes in Maldives as well, creating the islands’ first disaster risk profile. Even with these positive examples, however, it remains to be seen whether the new emphasis on regional preparedness can be sustained in the coming years.

For those in affected countries – and millions more around the world – the 26th of December 2004 remains a defining moment in their personal lives and in history. Even today, it is difficult to fully comprehend and account for the devastation and loss of life that resulted from this catastrophe. The world witnessed unprecedented generosity and multi-year assistance in response to that day of devastation. And we fervently hope that in another five years – or five generations – the only destructive tsunami the world will have to remember will be the one that rocked the globe that day in 2004.
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‘Who Stops to Think?’

The Challenges of Leadership and Coordination
At the centre of the disaster in Indonesia, the setting up of a dedicated coordination mechanism, the Aceh-Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR), as a fully empowered ‘mini-government’ proved effective. Overseeing more than 12,500 tsunami recovery projects from its headquarters in Aceh, the agency brought the national government to the centre of the action among some 700 aid organisations. Supported by a complex web of coordination from the global to the agency level, the agency swiftly understood the shifting focus of reconstruction and its pacing, thereby responding well to needs on the ground. Its risk-taking organisational culture led to a number of breakthrough initiatives, including a fast-track central system for clearing projects of all organisations, a “one-stop shop” for cutting through logistical bottlenecks, and active incorporation of gender issues. Maintaining a ‘coordination attitude’ that emphasised facilitation instead of control was crucial.

An Urgent Need to Coordinate

It was early March 2005, barely two months after the tsunami, and Sri Mulyani Indrawati, then the Indonesian Minister of Planning, was speaking at the Paris Conference on Aid Effectiveness. “I wonder how history will judge us – a year or five years from now,” she mused.

“Will the newspaper stories be full of how much money was wasted as donors competed against each other for the best projects, and the government failed to coordinate or lead the effort? Or will they record how, together, we introduced a new way of doing business, in which we work in harmony for genuine results on the ground?”

She concluded: “I believe it can be the latter, and that it can spread beyond Aceh to all our efforts to reduce poverty across the country.”

To achieve this, however, continuous coordination, both in the early emergency humanitarian phase and in the later reconstruction phase, was going to be key. The tsunami created one of the most complex coordination and logistical challenges ever, particularly in Aceh, the most heavily damaged area nearest the epicentre, where some 700 NGOs set to work. Critically, with this influx also came US$5 billion in funds to rebuild the province’s destroyed area, which was 800km long and up to 6km wide. The availability of funding and manpower meant that the challenge in coordination was to ensure there was no duplication of projects and that funds were being used efficiently and equitably.

At the earliest stage, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) took the helm in Indonesia, coordinating the humanitarian and emergency operations alongside the many government agencies, bilateral and multilateral bodies, and NGOs. These included the national coordinating board for disaster management, the Indonesian military, the World Food Program (WFP) and the International Federation of Red
Naturally, given the pressurised environment, the high-profile task at hand, and the sheer size of the recovery community, coordination presented a number of challenges. Although numerous sectoral and thematic working groups were set up, coordination progressed in fits and starts and tended to address information sharing rather than strategic planning. A vicious spiral was at work here: When agency leaders were frustrated with a meeting that was not useful in terms of strategic planning, they were likely to leave these meetings in the future for more junior staff, which reinforced their orientation towards information-sharing instead of strategic planning. And as several NGOs have noted, any NGOs that took the lead in coordination did not have the authority or power to ensure compliance.

Various other reasons also underlay the lack of cooperation: Hundreds of national and international organisations – some experienced, some inexperienced – were under pressure to show quick results amid relentless media attention. Vast differences existed in levels of expertise and experience among these organisations, and support for coordination was often in short supply. Unprecedented funding further limited the incentive to coordinate and led to competition among cash-rich agencies for projects and, ultimately, publicity.

The pressing need for coordination continued into the reconstruction and longer-term recovery phase, when coordination in strategic planning as well as operations was crucial, among all concerned, if “build back fast” was to be transformed into “build back better.” Or, as President Bill Clinton, the former United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, put it, organisations “need to start ‘practicing’ partnering” and how well they work together “can determine the quality and outcome of the recovery process.”

Tensions also in coordination continued into the early recovery and reconstruction phase. Different groups had different perceptions and aims, power plays were frequent, and different cultures needed to be sensitively addressed. An urgent need existed for leadership that recognised these conflicting interests. However, as Bob McKerrow, head of the IFRC delegation in Indonesia notes, “Effective coordination, even in decent circumstances, is difficult, while the scope of damage and communities affected by the tsunami presented an
overwhelming context. In recent years too, with increased media and global communications, along with many humanitarian organisations being better known to the public, the pressure to deliver assistance or be seen as responding rapidly is notably higher.

Coordination would also be needed to address complex gender issues that come into focus in any given emergency. "When recovery and reconstruction programmes respond to the realities and needs of women and support their leadership and organising, many local and effective solutions can be scaled up and women’s voices and networks empowered to build the policies and institutions necessary for a more just and sustainable future,” observed Noeleen Heyzer, former Executive Director of the UN Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and now Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

All in all, the reasons for coordinating were many: the need to work together to share assessments; an equal need to engage with tsunami-affected people, particularly women; directing aid well, given limited information; working out appropriate housing designs and developing effective livelihoods solutions beyond cash-for-work programmes; overcoming inadequate understanding by international organisations of local contexts, which led to stereotyping of options for women, farmers and small entrepreneurs; “poaching” of able local staff; working within a fragmented, sometimes duplicative legal framework; and addressing a shortage of recovery skills.

While there appeared to be widespread agreement on the need for coordination, as the IFRC notes, “Cooperation needs to be placed higher on the agenda – whatever the particular agenda may be”, early efforts did not deliver as promised, perhaps because, as another observer put it more bluntly, “who stops to think?”
The Indonesian Government responded to the complex set of challenges by establishing through legislation the Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi (BRR), the Aceh-Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency, in April 2005. In line with Government Decree in Lieu of Law No. 2 of 2005, BRR was given a four-year timeframe to lead coordination of all recovery projects regardless of funding sources and to implement all “on-budget” projects, where funds were funnelled through the Government.

Importantly, BRR was given full authority to manage all aspects of the tsunami recovery in Aceh on behalf of the central government, which allowed for a much smoother coordination process, devoid of any potential inter-ministry politics and bureaucracy. This necessary autonomy was hard won by Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto (or Pak Kuntoro as he is popularly known), the Minister appointed as Director of BRR, who proved that making the right staffing decisions, including at the top, was critical. Pak Kuntoro brought to the role extensive experience in organisational management, project supervision and corporate restructuring, as well as a distinguished track record in Government, the State enterprise sector and academia. According to Bill Nicol, who began working with Pak Kuntoro as a senior advisor even before BRR was established: “He undoubtedly saw the endgame more clearly than anyone else.”

Significantly, BRR Headquarters was in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital, and not in the national capital Jakarta: this was the equivalent of bringing central government to the centre of the action, a model that worked extremely well in Aceh and ought to be considered as a model for other complex disaster contexts. Thus from the start, BRR was equipped with a mandate and a Master Plan outlining rehabilitation and reconstruction needs, as a dedicated government ministry with a powerful mandate to innovate and reform that enabled it to operate beyond normal bureaucratic restrictions while remaining very much part of the internal Indonesian government structure. In addition to implementing over 5,000 of its own reconstruction projects, BRR coordinated more than 12,500 other projects involving over 60 bilateral donors and multilateral agencies as well as around 700 NGOs.

Recovery takes a lot longer than anyone expects it to. Early on, BRR anticipated the shifting focus of recovery over four years.
Key Coordination Mechanisms

With such a complex recovery environment, how did BRR achieve breakthroughs in leadership and coordination? A key aspect of the answer lies in its organisational approach. Early on, it moved to obtain an understanding of the shifting focus of reconstruction: from housing development to infrastructure, from institutional and social development to economic recovery, with land issues underlying throughout. In the process, BRR worked to create viable coordination structures and mechanisms that could help carry the enormous load demanded by the vast array of recovery contributors who looked to BRR for guidance and support with their programs.

While BRR emphasised facilitation rather than control in its endeavours to help its many delivery partners, there can be no doubt that its legal authority and political leverage were powerful tools in clearing the many serious obstacles that confronted this large-scale post-disaster reconstruction program.

Expectations also needed to be managed. After the initial days and weeks, most people understandably wanted to get on with their lives. But “reconstruction is far more complex and takes far longer than anyone would like or might imagine,” says Pak Kuntoro. “The public, the media and the rest of the world needed to be educated about the challenges and length of time required to deliver an effective post-disaster reconstruction programme.” While it is extremely hard to win the battle to manage expectations, BRR was able with time to reduce (although never really overcome) some of the pressures to show faster (far too many wanted it to be instant) progress which could have led to bigger programmatic problems either for itself or its reconstruction partners.

Armed with its coordination mandate BRR actively worked to clarify and approve donor/NGO projects by mainstreaming project concept notes through the Recovery of Aceh and Nias Database (RAND) that minimised turf battles among agencies and allowed the space for each agency to maximise its contribution. This included general direction, active facilitation and an extensive outreach programme to work with delivery partners in identifying and overcoming bottlenecks. Critically, BRR stood at the centre of a multi-level coordination system that supported and augmented its authority.

The Global Consortium for Tsunami Recovery, led by UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Bill Clinton, facilitated donor contributions at the global level. The Consortium enabled BRR as well as agencies in all other tsunami-affected countries to continually put their case to a high-profile audience and to receive support by maintaining international visibility of post-tsunami activities and mobilising private sector involvement. The consortium also served to underscore a sense of urgency within the United Nations, which Pak Kuntoro pointed out was necessary to “drastically expedite” the organisation’s decision making.
At the national level, other coordination hubs were established to act as relays to BRR. One of these was the Multi Donor Fund (MDF), facilitated by World Bank, for multilateral donor funding coordination. The MDF pooled donor resources to support a mutually agreed portfolio of programmes, with a system in place – integrated into the BRR process – to decide the most efficient allocation of funds. Guided by a Steering Committee of donors, the Government of Indonesia and civil society representatives, it also encouraged participation from observers including the Government of Japan, AusAID, the United Nations and international organisations such as Oxfam, CARE and Mercy Corps. The MDF successfully implemented a number of projects in Aceh and Nias but its impact was limited by the relatively small amount of pooled funds (about US$758 million) and, over time, its tendency to avoid risk, and focus on bureaucratic procedure. Despite its challenges, however, the MDF provided a handy platform for high-level donor dialogue.

At a more practical level, BRR needed to strengthen its coordination capacity in the field. It did so by asking the UN to create the UN Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias (UNORC). UNORC complemented the work of BRR by extending its coordination capacity to cover not only UN agencies but also international NGOs and some donors through the Inter Agency Standing Committee which met regularly to consider recovery issues. UNORC also played a high-value role as an interlocutor with local government, a cross-thematic program advisor to Pak Kuntoro and an institutional builder promoting such initiatives as the Aceh Recovery Framework, the Kabupaten/Kota Recovery Forums, AcehInfo and Solutions Exchange. As an entity operating at arms length from BRR, UNORC was well placed to audit aspects of program delivery in a variety of areas – for example, the housing sector where UNORC field staff conducted an external count that independently verified the completion of the first 100,000 houses.

As Satya Tripathi, United Nations Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias, observed, UNORC has a very clear mandate and a finite timeline, and does not have vested interests in competing for allocation of funds because it does not implement projects. This allows it the credibility to enable coordination, given that it is not

Successful Teamwork in Tamil Nadu

The NGO Coordination and Resource Centre in Nagapattinam, supported by UNDP, has been recognised for success in promoting coordination, facilitating participation and ensuring transparency, and has become a model for disaster-affected districts. Now registered as Building and Enabling Disaster Resilience of Coastal Communities (BEDROC), it works on long-term disaster risk reduction at district level.

Following the tsunami, the Coordination and Resource Centre worked to promote adequate and timely flows of information between all relief and reconstruction organisations and the district administration, which for its part set up 11 teams to manage efforts. Team leaders and members made use of their own capacity and experience, as well as the human resources and equipment under their control. These 11 teams continued to be involved in the recovery process in the areas of livelihood restoration, provision of temporary and permanent shelters, health monitoring, and psycho-social support. Protection of vulnerable groups such as orphans and girls at risk of trafficking, among others, was addressed in a coordinated way.

“All officials from all departments involved in relief were divided into these teams,” says K. Baskara, Joint Commissioner of Relief and Rehabilitation for Tamil Nadu and former Deputy District Collector in Nagapattinam. “Every night at 9 we would meet to review the day’s progress and plan for the next day. For the initial 15 to 20 days, we would disperse at around 2 in the morning. The volume of work increased manifold, but the person who handled it was the same.”

To manage expectations, provide information to NGOs and media, and address people’s needs and concerns, a series of “counters” were set up. They included counters for grievance redressal, police, missing persons, NGOs, health, psycho-social support, media information, NGO material receipt and relief issues. “With 600 NGOs arriving, 11 teams had to arrange the logistics,” Baskaran recalls. “At the same time, I had to disburse funds, report to my superiors and [manage] subordinates. And every day we would have 1,500-2,000 people coming.”
viewed as a competitor – a model that can be applied elsewhere. It has been, in other words, “not just one more UN agency, but rather a ‘One UN’ office that represents and coordinates the whole UN system in Aceh and Nias.”

Meanwhile, BRR also created one of the most comprehensive and inclusive coordinating mechanisms through what became known as CFAN – the Coordination Forum for Aceh and Nias. There were four CFANs in all, one at the end of each year of the four-year BRR reconstruction program. Each was open to anyone with an interest in the program. Those who participated included ministers and elected officials from central and local parliaments, central and local government officials, heads of local, national and international recovery organisations, ambassadors from donor countries and activists from national and local civil society groups. Many of the discussions were forthright and robust. They helped keep BRR sensitive to broader concerns and allowed an airing of different perspectives with which the program was seen by various stakeholders. CFAN sessions helped identify some of the most pressing reconstruction obstacles as well as highlighting the importance of key areas such as gender and environment.

Exercising the Coordination Mandate

BRR realised quickly that breakthrough initiatives would be needed to build back better and respond to the twin challenges of accelerating project implementation during early reconstruction and at the same time ensuring that all funds were being used efficiently, duplication was minimised, gaps were filled and that geographical and sectoral coverage was balanced to the best extent possible.

Speed was also essential. With this in mind, BRR spearheaded the fast-track project approval for up to 12,500 partner projects. Under the mandatory project concept note process, every agency submitted critical information on proposed projects, including funding sources, location, budget and performance indicators, before being given approval to work on tsunami recovery in Indonesia. Approval could be granted even within a few working days. Says BRR Special Advisor Kevin Evans: “The World Bank, with a $30-million project covering everything from village level upward, or a little NGO building a single school in a single village, was going through exactly the same process.”

Furthermore, all the information obtained on approved projects through the project concept notes was made available on the web-based Recovery Aceh -Nias Database (RAND), which was regularly updated by all recovery partners. Information on the recovery activities in Aceh and Nias was thus freely available to all. Key performance indicator data on RAND, including on women’s participation,
helped identify and monitor gaps. This kind of mandatory information sharing - unprecedented in disaster recovery - proved useful in coordination (See chapter 4 for details on RAND). The bi-weekly meetings of an Inter-Agency Standing Committee added to efforts at this level, as did cross-agency working groups facilitated by UNORC.

Another unique and successful initiative in Indonesia was the establishment in December 2005 of a one-stop shop or ‘Tim Terpadu’ for processing international workers’ visas and work permits, international organisations’ import documents, and tax exemptions, among others. This helped greatly in cutting through administrative problems, which had led to delays during early recovery, and contrasted sharply with administrative difficulties faced by aid workers in other emergencies and in other parts of the world. Multi-year projects and budgeting also enabled continuous progress across the government budget calendar for housing, infrastructure, public service facilities and land acquisition.

A transition shelter construction site bustles with activity

Building on women’s grassroots activism, BRR also sought to ensure that gender issues were considered in all development sectors through a special unit within the Office of the Director that formulated a comprehensive gender policy. UNIFEM placed a gender advisor in BRR to provide sustained input and guidance and its Executive Director, Ines Alberdi, has called Aceh “a rich model for post-tsunami gender-responsive reconstruction.” BRR also employed gender-specific data for monitoring and evaluation, developed practical checklists for use in health, housing, education, livelihoods and institutional change, and promoted active participation of tsunami-affected women in plans for their future. Pak Kuntoro himself became widely respected as someone who saw women as the transformational agents of society and sought to innovate programs that would advance gender equality.

The re-emergence of women’s political leadership in Aceh reflects the upgrading of women’s issues. A provincial women’s congress, supported by UNIFEM, culminated in major legislative reforms, including a requirement for participating parties that 30 percent of their candidates be women; UNIFEM further consulted with local women to provide space for their self-help and political mobilisation in traditional “women’s houses.” Already women represent one-third of those standing for election. In Banda Aceh, Vice Mayor Illiza Sa’ajuddin Djamal attributes her election in part to increased awareness of gender concerns and points out that Banda Aceh is moving toward instituting a “women-friendly city” initiative. “The most remarkable outcome of the tsunami,” Djamal declares, “is women’s empowerment.” An additional breakthrough occurred when women in Aceh, strongly supported by GTZ, the German technical development agency, joined with local religious and civil authorities in adopting the first Islamic women’s human rights charter, including rights to land, education, guardianship of children, and protection from violence. The signatories declared their belief “that fair treatment is in line with the principles of Islam.” “There was a time when the ulama [a community of Islamic legal scholars] ignored women’s groups, but now they were involved in the drafting of the women’s charter,” says Khairani
Arifin, General Secretary of the local NGO RPuK (Women’s Volunteers for Humanity). “This is a big change and was due to much greater pressure from women following the tsunami.”

In all, the powerful coordination mandate has paid off. Indeed, when the IFRC played a pivotal role in underwriting a massive operation in 2006 to move up to 70,000 IDPs out of tents and into quality transitional shelters, the international Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) described the operation as “partnership at its very best,” with Government, NGOs and the United Nations all working closely.

Coordination Catalysts in Other Countries

Despite some gaps, national governments also took an early lead in recovery in the other most-affected countries, with special State structures instituted in Sri Lanka and Maldives. In India, devolving authority to local administrators was crucial to the Tamil Nadu recovery effort, which emphasised community participation and a multi-sectoral approach (see Box 1.1).

India

“When the tsunami hit, within two or three days there was an all-party meeting, and what they agreed upon … was [the need] to be efficient. There was a whole reshuffle and appointment of people who had a track record of efficiency, competence and no corruption,” explains Benjamin Larroquette, former United Nations Tsunami Recovery Manager in India.

A network of state- and district-level knowledge centres provided the infrastructure for dissemination of vast amounts of information and reliable village-level data; it also became a focal point for NGOs on how they could contribute to recovery. While these centres had some weaknesses and did not always ensure maximum

The United Nations, Delivering as One

Post-tsunami coordination was boosted considerably by the United Nations operating as “one UN,” sometimes through a special structure such as UNORC in Aceh, and sometimes through a central focal point in the United Nations Resident Coordinator System, as in Maldives, Thailand and Sri Lanka. In India, a particular breakthrough was achieved for the seven Agencies participating in the UN team for Tsunami Recovery Support: FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

UNORC complemented the work of BRR by extending its coordination capacity to cover not only UN agencies with 2500 personnel implementing projects in excess of US$ 1 Billion but also international NGOs and donors through the Inter Agency Standing Committee which met regularly to consider key recovery issues. UNORC coordinated common services for the recovery community such as UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) and the WFP Shipping Services. It also played a high-value role as an interlocutor with local government, a cross-thematic program advisor to the national government and an institution builder promoting such initiatives as the Aceh Recovery Framework, the Kabupaten/Kota Recovery Forums, Solutions Exchange, AcehInfo and common communication platforms.

“Within the UN system, we made big changes to our administrative system and we implemented joint programming tools to get much more focused,” reflects Pieter Bult, the former UN Tsunami Recovery Manager in India and now Deputy Country Director for UNDP India. “As soon as these mechanisms were set up, we proposed a similar way of working with Government and other main players in the tsunami work.” He adds: “A lot of work focused on longer-term improvements. UNICEF, for instance, took the tsunami as an opportunity to expand its quality education initiative with pilots in the affected communities. Now the new methodologies and teachings have been integrated into Government schools as a result of those pilots.”

Replication also has occurred in coordination mechanisms. Bult notes, “Early on, we supported district-level coordination. We strengthened information sharing and coordination mechanisms under the district official in charge to help him/her to do well. We would help organise district coordination meetings in different sectors where issues and common approaches would be brought up. When the Bihar floods came up [in 2008], we immediately replicated the model.”
coordination, there is little doubt they were extremely useful. For example, World Vision was able to advise CARE on which vendors they were using for procuring supplies so that CARE could use alternative ones to avoid overwhelming the supplier. In addition, the United Nations’ effort in coordinating recovery among its agencies, demonstrated the on-the-ground operation of “One UN,” with a joint office established in Chennai (see Box 1.2).

Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, where post-tsunami issues were made even more complex by the longstanding conflict, the tsunami was a catalyst for creation of the Ministry of National Disaster Management and Human Rights in 2006. The name itself reflects Sri Lanka’s strong focus on rights during the recovery.

“Coordination is required across three groups,” the Asian Development Bank Institute noted. “First, activities among the various components of the government require coordination, both across sectors and between central and local government. Second, the activities of various agencies and NGOs require coordination. Third, coordination is required with the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), which controls part of the country that was heavily affected by the tsunami.” However, an attempt to create a joint mechanism between the Government and LTTE as a channel to deliver aid in LTTE-held areas of the north and east collapsed, marking the end of hopes that post-tsunami work could revive the peace process here, as in Aceh.

Still, the breakthrough of creating the Ministry elevated both disaster management and human rights issues to ministerial status, under the purview of the Prime Minister, and recognised citizen rights to access support, information, protection and recovery. The Ministry was tasked with the formulation of a National Disaster Management Plan based on a “realistic approach to responses and recovery,” as well as with coordinating activities related to people displaced by conflict.

The Ministry also addressed some of the coordination problems that arose when, for example, the private sector-dominated organisation leading infrastructure and housing efforts was constrained by its lack of linkages to line Ministries. In some areas and sectors, United Nations agencies took on the role of “lead agencies,”
becoming focal points for coordination; for example, UNHCR accepted to be the lead agency for coordinating the transitional shelter programme. Technical assistance provided by the United Nations to district governments also has built capacity and facilitated oversight at this level.

“At the beginning, there was nothing available in district offices of the divisional secretary to meet this kind of disaster. Forget about the knowledge – basic infrastructure was not there,” says Y.K.H. de Silva, a consultant to the Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit, Human Rights Commission. “Today that particular person is probably sitting at a computer. The latest technology is given to him with a database. … Before, this was only in Colombo. Now all districts are interconnected, and sharing of knowledge is very wide.” Women who organised in village after village to voice common problems and seek solutions also shared knowledge (see Chapter 3).

Maldives

In Maldives, unlike elsewhere, no disaster preparedness existed in the Government or local communities, because there were no recorded national disasters of this magnitude. Few international NGOs worked there and compared to the rush of 700 NGOs into Aceh, Maldives' two dozen represented only a handful. But although Maldives suffered a lower number of fatalities, the relative impact on both the economy and the population was immense: Fully a third of Maldives’ people were severely affected, with whole islands rendered uninhabitable and a substantial proportion of the population displaced. About 60 percent of GDP was destroyed, compared to less than 2 percent in Indonesia and Thailand.

Given these challenges, the Government of Maldives set up a National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) to coordinate activities. A Joint Tsunami Assessment by the Government, ADB, World Bank and UNDP formed the basis for much of the relief and recovery work.

Box 1.3

Somalia and Myanmar: The coordination problem

Somalia was hit by the tsunami after four years of consecutive drought and continuing civil conflict. Some 300 people lost their lives and another 50,000 were missing or displaced. Additionally, the tsunami destroyed 1,180 homes, smashing 2,400 boats and rendered freshwater wells and reservoirs unusable, making Somalia the hardest hit country along Africa’s eastern coastline. In the village of Harfun of the Puntland region of Somalia, 80 percent of the houses and all of the water sources and sanitation facilities were destroyed. Other villages in Puntland were also among the most severely damaged.

Unlike Aceh in Indonesia, Somalia did not experience an avalanche of NGOs and other organisations following the tsunami. Coordination of a huge number of entities was therefore not a challenge. However, Somalia still faced many problems with coordination, in contrast to the Maldives, which also found itself with extensive damage and a relatively small number of recovery actors. Why did Somalia struggle with coordinating a small number of recovery agents?

Civil conflict and lawlessness with the subsequent chronic poverty, social and political unrest, and insecurity have plagued the country for years. While UN OCHA relied on tried and tested coordination methods in the initial humanitarian relief phase with some success, assistance in the recovery phase was hampered by the deteriorating security situation caused by rivalry between military groups particularly in the central and southern parts of the country. This volatility was further increased by the lack of a functioning government and countrywide administration.

The leadership and management that proved pivotal in effective coordination in Indonesia and each of the other four most affected countries, was lacking in Somalia. A complex web of political and military rivalries, corruption and distrust served to undermine any efforts in achieving breakthroughs or substantial changes in the status quo. The pre-existing humanitarian crisis both overwhelmed and absorbed the crisis wrought by the tsunami.

In Myanmar, meanwhile, although official figures vary, there were at least 61 recorded tsunami deaths with another 43 seriously injured. An estimated 601 houses were destroyed rendering 2,592 people homeless and some 10,000 were in urgent need of basic food, water and emergency health assistance. Overall, the damage inflicted in this region was relatively minor compared with that sustained by other Southeast Asian countries, owing partly to the underwater mountains and offshore islands along the Myanmar coastline which provided a protective buffer against the waves.

From the outset of the recovery response, however, sharp competition between agencies providing emergency aid and donor pressures to deliver visible post tsunami outputs in Myanmar at times obscured grassroots level needs and realities. Improved access and field-level coordination could have ensured more efficient use of resources, as would more effective partnerships between civil society and the host government. On a position note, the unprecedented impact of the 2004 tsunami prompted many organisations initially concerned solely with post-disaster relief operations to reorient their work to include longer term development programs.
Within three months, the government also produced a National Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, which enabled donors and international organisations to quickly take up programmes, and it set up other coordination bodies, including the Housing and Infrastructure Redevelopment Unit.

Since then, the government has drafted a civil defense bill, which is now in its final stages of approval, with support from UNDP. Based on this, the government has established an organisational structure for disaster response, including at atoll and island levels; drafted legislation on disaster management; and formulated a disaster management plan outlining roles and procedures for all organisations and the public. Similar to the MDF in Aceh, a trust fund for donors was set up. In 2006 the government convened the first Maldives Partnership Forum, inviting international donors to discuss critical development needs.

“One lesson we learned was that the country was very vulnerable to natural disasters. But we never had a National Disaster Management Centre before, so we have developed this to ensure that it can take up this kind of coordinating work in case there is another disaster of such magnitude,” says Mohamed Imad, Assistant Executive Director of the Department of National Planning. Simply setting up the centre is not sufficient, however, as Hon. Minister Abdulla Shahid, Director of the NDMC, points out: “Currently we have only 7 staff members at the NDMC. If there were another emergency tomorrow, the country would look to us for coordinating the relief effort. We must build up our capacity if this centre is to prove effective”.

The United Nations was the only international organisation in Maldives before the tsunami and therefore took the leading role with the government. It developed a common UN Strategic Framework for Recovery, which aimed to transform the disaster’s challenges into opportunities for sustainable long-term development. After the tsunami the IFRC also played a major role, contributing nearly US$150 million.

But while coordination of a large number of NGOs was not an issue, resource mobilisation was: because affected islands were widely scattered, transportation costs were very high, which donors had not anticipated; moreover, the greater the delay in the start of repair, the greater the costs since, for example, a crack in a seawall, if left unattended, may cause a total collapse, but if attended early on, can be repaired at lesser cost. In addition, Maldives faced a shortfall of nearly US$100 million in recovery funds, the only one of the most tsunami-affected countries to do so. This called for innovative partnership strategies to secure additional funding, with opportunities identified through donor embassies, the regional Chamber of Commerce and other networks.

One result was the unique “Adopt-An-Island” initiative implemented by UNDP, a marketing tool under which donor support was matched directly to a specific project. Following worldwide media coverage and Internet
advertising, interest quickly grew, even though few major international corporations or civil society groups had existing ties with Maldives. By mid-2006, 44 percent of the US$41 million that UNDP had raised was mobilised through Adopt-An-Island, including $15 million from governments and $3 million from the private sector, foundations and civil society organisations. Supporters eventually included the Bush-Clinton Tsunami Fund, Coca-Cola Company, Brunswick Corporation, UN Foundation, Banyan Tree and Huvafen Fushi Resorts, and grassroots organisations in Australia and United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, attention has been paid to the development of the private sector in Maldives, which had primarily consisted of small to medium enterprises. The National Development Plan includes a major focus on private sector development, and efforts have been taken to strengthen the National Chamber of Commerce. Support was also given to the Women’s Entrepreneurship Council (WEC) to expand the handicrafts industry, create sustainable home- and island-based businesses and provide market access in resorts and overseas. Microsoft, Nike, Coca-Cola, DHL and other leading global companies all have become involved.

A Critical Transition

Back in Indonesia, with the conclusion of BRR’s mandate for Aceh and Nias on 16 April 2009, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities devolve to central and provincial governments; likewise, UNORC is also to close in June 2009. Ensuring local government preparedness to take over responsibilities, resources and assets has been a top priority in BRR’s final months, structured primarily through the Aceh Government Transformation Programme, funded by the MDF and implemented by UNDP. Gaps were being addressed not only in technical capacity to implement recovery work, but also in broader institutional capacity to coordinate such work beyond the transition.

From 2007 BRR began to regionalise its operations. This process of regionalisation was deepened as links with each individual local authority were strengthened through approaches such as Joint Secretariats (between local authorities and BRR and involving other reconstruction agencies active locally). Later mechanisms at local level were set up by local authorities, supported through the Kabupaten/Kota Recovery Forums (KRF) facilitated by UNORC, to ensure a successfully coordinated transition. These KRFs were led by the recently elected political leaders and focused on providing them with policy input and leverage from a wide diversity of local stakeholders including international reconstruction partners working at the local level. Says Pak Kuntoro: “The KRFs are now one of the most productive of all vehicles through which we engage with local governments. Through them, we have prepared a detailed list of assets and outstanding projects for transfer to
In addition, the Aceh Recovery Framework (ARF), a comprehensive “road map” to sustainable recovery, was drawn up under the guidance of Aceh Governor Irwandi Yusuf to ensure that the handover is successful in the long term. Six Cluster Committees, which developed the road map, were chaired by the provincial Government and intensively supported by UNORC and other international partners. In particular, the Gender Working Group, facilitated by UNIFEM and UNORC, has been active in developing policy guidelines and practical tools that sustain momentum for women’s empowerment.

Aceh Green, also a central aspect of the ARF, is an innovative initiative that places environmental issues such as conservation and use of geothermal energy as an integral part of Aceh’s economic development strategy. Both Oxfam and Flora and Fauna International have been ardent supporters of this initiative. Governor Irwandi, while acknowledging the complex issues and realities in Aceh, feels that the new opportunities presented, if properly managed, “can make this period in Aceh’s history one of its most stable and prosperous.”

At the Paris Conference on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, Sri Mulyani Indrawati, the Indonesian Minister, anticipated much of the lead-up under BRR to this critical transition. “Let’s be realistic,” she said. “Coordination does not happen by bringing donors together for weekly coordination meetings.” In the case of the BRR process, funding management approaches promoted not just integrity but also donor responsibility for managing their own funds. This liberated the Indonesian Government from fiduciary responsibility for international contributions and provided donors with the certainty over how they expended and accounted for their own funds. There were three distinct outcomes:

♦ As BRR did not assume fiduciary responsibility for donors funds, it was able to establish and maintain a proper relationship with donors, rather than becoming in essence a subordinated donor project management unit;
♦ BRR was free to concentrate on strategic programme management of the overall reconstruction programme uncluttered by fiduciary responsibility for reporting to donors;
♦ Donors’ confidence in managing their own funds contributed significantly to transforming their pledges into realised projects.
Saying Yes to Change

- Develop in advance a governance mechanism for relief and recovery, tasked with coordinating Ministries, donors, agencies and communities.

- Give coordination structures full authority to make decisions over all aspects of the programme and, where practical or necessary, base them close to the action. As the bodies overseeing and managing the recovery, they need to become intimately familiar with – and responsive to – the local context.

- Seek “breakthrough initiatives” to accelerate recovery and build back better and avoid a culture of risk aversion. Business as usual will not suffice in unusual situations.

- Appoint credible senior officials who have good knowledge of local conditions and are familiar with affected communities, with a willingness to consult widely and the communication skills to explain the rationale for major decisions.

- Maintain speedy, flexible and accountable coordination systems and procedures, including at local level, that provide incentive to act. The demands of complex recovery require multi-sectoral expertise and the ability to adapt to changing needs.

- Undertake in-depth and continuous sectoral stocktaking; collect and collate all relevant documents, studies and data for wider circulation.

- Integrate monitoring and evaluation for all sectors to determine what has been implemented and what the future should be, engaging women’s and community groups in the process.

- Build national and local capacity at every turn. Local government and communities need to be prepared to take over responsibilities, resources and assets – and maintain them. The sustainability of the recovery depends on it.

- Ensure a visible and responsive presence of government and coordination bodies in the field. Daring to devolve and decentralise coordination will help promote responsiveness and grassroots involvement.

- Foster strong global and regional support mechanisms. Stand-by agreements on funding and coordination structures that go past the immediate disaster will enable a smoother transition between the humanitarian response and longer-term recovery.
Seeing Those Who Are ‘Invisible’

Achieving Equity in Recovery
Many people cannot access assistance after disasters simply because of their gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion or occupation. In particular, it is women and the poorest whose needs tend to be overlooked. Recovery actors in tsunami affected countries initially struggled with similar difficulties. In the medium-term, however, the disaster provided an important opportunity to address underlying social inequities and strengthen human rights protection for vulnerable groups, a task quickly seized upon by India’s strong civil society and vibrant media. Combined with a state government in Tamil Nadu that displayed swiftness, responsiveness and openness, this made the difference in bringing all survivors back on the road toward recovery much faster.

When the tsunami struck, people from all walks of life wanted to help, with overwhelming generosity and goodwill – but these aspirations were not always sufficient to adequately reach all in need. In this sense, the tsunami was not different from other emergencies: social divides based on vulnerability and discrimination are often re-played – and sometimes exacerbated – in the emergency setting, a fact compounded by the surge of media attention and funds.

While international codes and principles guide relief and recovery efforts, many people were still not able to access adequate assistance after the tsunami simply because of their gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion or occupation. Often, tight deadlines imposed by the need to deliver fast had the effect of dropping gender and other equity issues – or of the wrong projects being taken up by the wrong organisations for the wrong reasons. This led to further marginalisation of already vulnerable groups such as women and the poorest. But while these earlier efforts were sometimes exclusionary, the recovery setting also provided an important opportunity to address underlying social inequities and strengthen human rights protection for vulnerable groups, including those with HIV and AIDS (see Box 2.1).

“Without a dedicated effort to change historic patterns of inequity, traditionally marginalised or disenfranchised groups will continue to lack both the political awareness and power to demand their fair share of recovery resources,” former United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Bill Clinton, has noted.
“And the problem can be compounded by a post-disaster influx of new assistance providers who have little knowledge of the context in which they are operating, including structures of inequality, chronic poverty and vulnerability.”

In India, initial impact assessments revealed that more than 3 in 4 tsunami-affected people belonged to Tamil Nadu’s coastal fishing communities. Of the houses damaged or destroyed, 80 percent belonged to fishermen.

In addition to losing housing and working space, these people also lost livelihoods and economic assets, from boats and nets to markets. Initial relief efforts consequently focused on fishing communities, and compensation was given only to those who could provide proof that they had lost assets to the water.

This resulted at first in the exclusion of many of those who did not have physical assets and were not registered owners of property, businesses, vessels or equipment, as well as those whose livelihoods were based on the use of their labour and skills in the fishing industry.

Yet more than a quarter of the affected population in India belonged to underprivileged and marginalised social groups. They included those working in fishing-related activities, such as day labourers in ice plants, who were out of jobs as the fisheries sector came to a halt; landless labourers who were also jobless, as agricultural lands were salinised and crops damaged; and salt-pan labourers, many of them women, who lost income as salt-pan lands became mud flats.

Since these groups – Dalits9 and tribal groups such as Irulas; people with disabilities; Muslim minority communities, and the elderly – tended not to stay in “frontline” settlements where physical damages were greatest, they were overlooked in the first impact assessments. Thus, they initially faced difficulties in rebuilding their lives and securing relief and rehabilitation packages. Said one 75-year-old Tamil Nadu resident, Perumal: “Some cars came by and just threw the [food] packets. The fastest get the food; the strong one wins. The elderly and the injured don’t get anything.”10

In addition, pre-existing gender-based divisions and prejudices placed a heavier burden on girls and women in comparison to boys and men, including in their lack of access to land ownership and exposure to gender-based violence, which often increases sharply when men’s traditional breadwinner roles are challenged...
Swiftly Working With Activists

Within weeks, however, strong civil society organisations, human rights activists and media groups began to expose inequities manifesting themselves despite all the good intentions. Exclusion and discrimination were worsening the vulnerability of those already vulnerable. “There was a public hearing organised where a large number of victims of discrimination came before a jury of eminent people,” says Deepthi Sukumar, Emergency Programme Officer of Christian Aid in Chennai. “The jury put up its recommendations to the Government of Tamil Nadu. That’s when the government started shifting its position.”

The distinctiveness of India’s situation is the State government’s timeliness, responsiveness and openness to working with representatives of different social groups in addressing flaws, and its provision of an enabling environment for the inclusion of equity issues in recovery. In all, the government called upon at least 10 successful strategies to ensure positive results (see Box 2.2). A joint report by the United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank, published two years after the tsunami, found: “The swiftness of the assistance brought survivors back on the road toward economic recovery much faster in comparison to many of their counterparts in other tsunami-affected countries.”

Yet while India’s Central and State administrations began working with a range of civil society organisations on behalf of the marginalised, this was not without challenges: systems were not in place to track and identify vulnerable groups, compounded by an oversupply of sometimes inappropriate aid. In addition, powerful traditional panchayats (local governance structures), comprised exclusively of men, frequently acted as barriers, initially preventing women-headed households, unmarried women, and widows and elderly women from obtaining relief. Participatory processes were also few and far between. Taken together, a lack of gender concerns meant that many programmes fell short of properly understanding the special needs of women in particular. Post-tsunami data show that up to twice as many women were killed as men, in part because of differences in strength and swimming skills, but mainly

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**India’s 10 Successful Strategies**

The Government of Tamil Nadu prioritised 10 strategies that particularly helped to ensure equity and comprehensive rehabilitation in the post-tsunami environment:

- Focused leadership at political/administrative levels, along with constant monitoring
- Complete decentralisation of powers to local district officials
- Comprehensive coverage of all sectors, touching every affected family
- Needs-based relief activities taken up swiftly, including for fishers, farmers, orphans and adolescent girls
- Effective leveraging of resources from all sources
- Risk mitigation and insurance as part of rehabilitation and reconstruction
- Strict building standards and supervisory mechanisms to ensure compliance
- Participation of the community at every level of decision making
- Extensive use of web technology to enable transparency and communication
- Focus on the conservation of coastal ecology

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reflecting the gender-based division of labour – the tsunami simply passed under the fisherman at sea but badly affected the large number of women working in markets on the shore. At the same time, the visibility of men’s economic losses – especially boats – eclipsed the reality of women’s economic losses, such as the markets through which they sold fish.\textsuperscript{14}

In addition to the need for stronger emphasis on women’s livelihoods, lack of privacy and security for women was a serious concern, with dangerous living conditions found in temporary barracks. Gender stereotypes in relief aid likewise were common; one NGO, for example, distributed cell phones to men’s self-help groups but not to women’s groups in the Irula community, apparently feeling that technology was a “man’s” concern.\textsuperscript{15}

Coordination mechanisms were established at state and district levels to better focus the expertise of civil society organisations and the public toward equity issues and make best use of resources.\textsuperscript{16} This eventually allowed for better understanding of the differing needs and priorities and as a consequence previously excluded groups were targeted to address and meet their rights. Ironically, the devastation of the tsunami ultimately became an event through which the vulnerable felt they became more visible.

\textit{A ‘Core House’ and Special Aid Packages}

Promoting equity also relies on other good practices such as participation of affected communities and transparent management of recovery. Further breakthroughs in Tamil Nadu included a key order from the state government that families involved in small business and petty trade connected with the coastal economy also be made eligible for assistance. In particular, equity was central to recovery efforts in the housing sector. “We decided to provide a core house with the same facilities for everybody,” according to C.V. Sankar, former Officer on Special Duty, Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of Tamil Nadu. In previous disasters like the Gujarat earthquake of January 2001, compensation was dependent on the type of housing that had existed earlier.

In addition, Sankar says, “we used [the tsunami as] an opportunity to bring in disaster-resistant construction.
We had specifications drawn out to withstand earthquakes, cyclones and wind surges.”

Another breakthrough under the project was the institution of inexpensive, 10-year housing insurance against all forms of disasters. Besides the coastal-zone homes taken up for disaster-resistant repair and reconstruction, nearly 6,000 were built for indirectly affected families such as the tribal Irulas (see Box 2.3). Dalits also were given housing assistance and rights to land ownership.

The United Nations implemented a project in Nagapattinam District to strengthen capacities of the district administration to be more pro-poor and equity-sensitive. One output was an “Equity Charter” for the district, developed by district officials and validated by parties involved, ensuring further work toward an equitable, participatory approach. A number of case studies illustrate other ways in which the government, international agencies and civil society groups took steps to try to ensure that the recovery counteracted patterns of vulnerability and disadvantage. These include:

- Special aid packages for numerous groups to make livelihood activities more broad-based, including students, orphans, widows and people with disabilities; in the latter case, if a child was physically challenged, parents received assistance;
- Targeting of marginal inland farmers, providing training and technical support on new methods of production, which allowed them to increase yields by up to 70 percent;
- Policy changes allowing women to become joint owners of boats or working “owners” of salt-pan sites, or to start up new businesses;
- Provision of physical structures such as schools, vocational training centres and orphanages, targeted at vulnerable communities;
- Scholarships for more than 125,000 children from tsunami-affected families for 10 years, providing a sustained thrust for education of girls and those from marginalised families;
- Establishment of self-help groups for the elderly to use donated grains to earn interest. This scheme has been replicated in 52 coastal villages and benefited nearly 6,000 elders;
- Measures to improve transparency, including appointment of district and village monitoring committees; publication of lists of beneficiaries in all villages and offices and on government websites; and frequent interaction with mass media and the public;
- Establishment of efficient complaints mechanisms; out of 188,000 complaints filed, 183,000 have been settled.

The semi-nomadic Irulas live in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in southern India. These tribes made a living by catching rats and snakes but had to give that up after the Government introduced the 1972 Wildlife Protection Act. Some moved toward the coast. When the tsunami struck, 57 Irula villages were affected, and 90 percent of their livelihoods came to a standstill.

Although they were among the poorest, most Irulas received no immediate post-tsunami support. As inland fisher folk, they were not listed as tsunami victims and also were not declared as Scheduled Tribes, which would have entitled them to specific welfare schemes. However, the district administration in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, took the lead to certify Irulas as Scheduled Tribes and also donated the land they lived on, working out a scheme to provide new permanent housing in collaboration with NGOs. A livelihood programme was introduced to diversify their income, including poultry farming, goat rearing and mud crab rearing. A literacy programme also was started, because nearly all Irulas were illiterate.

In all, this represents an example of a “habitat development” approach, which focuses on fostering a healthy, safe living environment through construction of stronger houses, along with the provision of amenities such as drinking water, sanitation, roads, drainage, waste management facilities, and community facilities such as schools, child care centres and health centres. This approach also promotes equity, active participation of all parties and linkages with livelihoods, and was widely used by Government and NGOs in post-tsunami reconstruction.

Box 2.3

Build Back Better for the Marginalised Irula Tribe

The semi-nomadic Irulas live in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in southern India. These tribes made a living by catching rats and snakes but had to give that up after the Government introduced the 1972 Wildlife Protection Act. Some moved toward the coast. When the tsunami struck, 57 Irula villages were affected, and 90 percent of their livelihoods came to a standstill.

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Critically, the Government of Tamil Nadu did not simply respond to women’s practical needs but offered real opportunities for change, through several key steps. It mandated joint housing rights for spouses and disallowed transfers of the wife’s share to the husband and ensured that reconstruction work included consultations with women. In addition, it made abandoned and destitute women eligible for pensions; distributed initial relief packages to women family members; and provided INR300,000 each (more than US$6,800 at the time) to orphaned adolescent girls and unmarried women for education and officials identified vulnerable children who had lost their parents and addressed trafficking issues. A number of major water supply schemes also were implemented to provide this vital resource for women, reducing the need to walk long distances. For women who were sterilised as part of a family planning initiative but who had lost children, the cost of surgery to allow them to conceive again was borne by the state government.

“The Government of Tamil Nadu has put the issue of gender and equity on the map,” says Pieter Bult, former United Nations Tsunami Recovery Manager and now Deputy Country Director of UNDP India. “It was a good listener and addressed the issues.”

Nearly 62,000 self-help groups of about 15 members each were formed and promoted, with NGO support, to improve the economic status of women in tsunami-affected areas. Revolving funds of INR30,000 for each group were made available from ADB, helping to cover immediate expenses. After initial training on an array of more than 200 skills, groups were linked with potential buyers. Under a government psychosocial support programme, more than 50,000 women were counselled and given better coping skills to deal with the trauma.

Yemen: Learning to Make the Invisible Visible

The Yemeni experience of tsunami recovery highlights the abiding need for accurate and reliable demographic data in dealing with natural disasters. Whilst the tsunami-related death toll in the country was comparatively low at two, the tsunami wave – and subsequent sea surges and currents – caused extensive damage to the local fishing industry as well as to marine life. The majority of the damage occurred in the coastal communities of the Al-Mahara district, and the island of Socotra, where some 2,000 families were affected. The fishing infrastructure was particularly damaged: storage sheds and jetties, 653 boats, 1,625 nets and 16,980 fishing traps were all destroyed. In addition, ground water wells were rendered unusable due to increased salinity, coastal erosion was exacerbated and an unquantifiable amount of marine life damage.

Given the impact to the fishing infrastructure, the livelihoods of countless communities relying on the sector (fishing is one of the country’s most important sectors) were affected. However, because the physical damage in Yemen was significantly less than those countries closer to the earthquake’s epicentre, and not as readily apparent, the country received little assistance from the international community.

Furthermore, since the loss of livelihood proved difficult to quantify, there was an insufficient understanding of the damage, especially in remote areas, and the initial damage was underestimated. Accordingly, Yemen made no calls for international assistance. When the reality of the amount of damage to livelihoods slowly emerged, compensation was put up for some fishermen, but it was often to be a case of ‘too little too late’ with the best case scenarios seeing compensation delivered six months after the crisis.

The Government of Yemen has drawn important lessons from this experience – and translated their learning into practice. Since the lack of accurate demographic data in coastal communities effectively underestimated the impact and, by extension, slowed down the assistance, the Government partnered with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) to carry out comprehensive field research of affected communities. With the data collected in the field as a baseline, government and international partners were not only able to implement targeted post-tsunami fishery rehabilitation projects, they also contributed to richer understanding of Yemen’s disaster preparedness. The country now has measurable indicators that allow for comprehensive policy making – the communities that had previously slipped under the radar, are invisible no longer.

“The Government of Tamil Nadu has put the issue of gender and equity on the map,” says Pieter Bult, former United Nations Tsunami Recovery Manager and now Deputy Country Director of UNDP India. “It was a good listener and addressed the issues.”
Women also benefited from gender-targeted livelihood projects initiated by international agencies. For example, CARE International had a strong focus on widows, the destitute, girls and people with disabilities; it also identified groups such as inland fishermen and seashell collectors for interventions. Such projects often faced an uphill battle, however: husbands had to be persuaded that wives could, and should, go for technical training, and not all women desired the kinds of changes envisioned in this very difficult period.

Moreover, programming targeting women and men separately at times fostered unintended jealousy within families and villages. Cash grants raised further issues: The availability of lump-sum unconditional cash had a negative impact on many men, leading to widespread alcohol abuse. In contrast, women receiving cash compensation generally tended to spend the money on livelihood needs, children’s education, healthcare for children and elderly parents, and house repairs. So marked were these trends that one Indian NGO, PRAXIS, made access to important resources such as boats, housing or micro-credit conditional upon men’s reduced use of alcohol, as confirmed by wives. “Till the tsunami struck, nobody ever realised to what extent male domination prevailed in these communities,” reported one researcher. “If one had asked the men folk in the fishing communities, they would have replied, ‘Our women will go by what we decide.’ ”

**Inclusiveness for People Affected by Conflict**

Across the waters from Tamil Nadu, in Sri Lanka, strong emphasis also has been placed on equity and the targeting of vulnerable groups after the tsunami, especially with regard to permanent housing, road building and highlighting of issues such as human rights, participation and the environment. This has been particularly necessary in light of the longstanding conflict in the north and east of the island, which bore the brunt of the tsunami there.

In Sri Lanka as well as Aceh, where tsunami-affected people lived among large populations affected by decades of armed strife, numerous conflict victims had been waiting for housing assistance for years and had been provided aid far more modest than tsunami survivors, who in some cases managed to receive a new house for each family member. Women’s needs had been particularly overlooked. Yet while in Aceh a peace agreement was achieved in August 2005 – albeit not directly because of the tsunami – in Sri Lanka the highly sensitive political and humanitarian context in which the tsunami unfolded continues to challenge policymakers and development partners. But in both situations, a wide divide among beneficiaries needed to be overcome, yet at least initially, most organisations working on post-tsunami reconstruction largely ignored the post-conflict context – or considered it only marginally.

This arose from various reasons such as lack of technical expertise, limited mandates that did not include political issues, very high pressure to deliver visible post-tsunami results, and a large
percentage of donations from the public being earmarked for tsunami recovery only. In Aceh, barely 3,000 out of more than 31,000 houses destroyed or damaged because of conflict have been rebuilt. Similarly, assistance that was provided was of poorer quality; the average house for a conflict victim cost only US$3,500, while for a tsunami victim it was about US$8,000.

“For many agencies, conflict is considered only as a background issue, or perhaps as a threat to staff security and successful project implementation,” wrote the authors of one report in Aceh. “However, most reports, even relatively in-depth articles, did not mention the ongoing conflict and possible peace process, despite the direct impact on people’s lives and the region’s future.”

Addressing the needs of both tsunami- and conflict-affected people quickly became paramount to ensuring equity. But because the post-tsunami and post-conflict recovery dynamics evolved in almost parallel universes, numerous grievances were raised by conflict-affected communities in both Sri Lanka and Aceh. Moreover, rising inequalities in aid provision started to lead to significant tensions on the ground, with many local conflicts related to disputes over who was being targeted for development aid. If conflict sensitivity had been more widespread, building back better could have been more equitable all along.

Despite the challenge of inequities, a number of successful — and flexible — interventions have been initiated, with many partners coming to see the importance of addressing conflict and post-conflict issues in the post-tsunami setting as a consequence. For example, in Sri Lanka the government resettled the conflict-affected in permanent housing under its Unified Assistance Scheme or had their houses upgraded. Hallmarks of the scheme included strict eligibility criteria, management at local and provincial levels, and significant community involvement. Some national and international non-Government organisations also stressed the importance of conflict-sensitive programming following the tsunami. One study highlighted best practices that promoted

![This conflict-affected family, sitting outside their new home, were one of the lucky ones that received aid in equal measure to tsunami victims](image)
equity between conflict- and tsunami-affected groups:

- The UK Disaster Emergencies Committee expanded its implementation timeframe from one to three years and its beneficiary focus from tsunami-affected people to tsunami-affected districts. This allowed conflict-affected IDPs and other groups more indirectly touched by the tsunami to access support.
- The European Commission’s Humanitarian Office (ECHO) similarly amended its beneficiary target group to mitigate the risk of discriminating against conflict-affected IDPs. In 2005, the Global Consortium on Tsunami Recovery (see chapter one) endorsed and further encouraged efforts in this direction.
- The National Development Trust Fund, sponsored by ADB, ensured that all communities in the north and east of the island - the areas most affected by conflict - could access microfinance support.

In Indonesia, a Presidential Instruction provided for an integrated policy to support the peace process; further, a special directive set up dedicated mechanisms to oversee peace and reintegration. In addition, about US$250 million from the central government was allocated to reintegration schemes between August 2005 and 2008, although thus far these have benefited more ex-combatants and former political prisoners than affected civilians.

Among the international organisations in Aceh, the World Bank stressed early on that tsunami recovery needed to be based on conflict-sensitive principles. Other organisations addressed post-conflict issues well, including Cordaid and KfW Entwicklungsbank, the German development bank, but these and others were unfortunately in the minority. Cordaid conducted a conflict/social capital mapping exercise on the assumption that relief and rehabilitation programmes in particular, and development programmes in general, cannot be considered “business as usual” in a conflict situation. For its part, KfW Entwicklungsbank sponsored an expert mission in early 2008 with the objective of exploring options to ensure full use of its programme’s potential for stabilising conflict-affected areas.

Overall, the post-tsunami effort may still play a helpful role for conflict-affected people and has already provided some with stronger assistance. Disparities in aid, and the realisation of what governments and development organisations can actually provide, may help stimulate new dialogue on enhanced support. An urgent need still exists to continue to shift from direct compensation toward longer-term economic empowerment and social cohesion for those affected by conflict. Whether this change in paradigm occurs effectively, however, remains to be seen.

**Joint Land Titles for Women**

In many instances, women who had lost their husbands and children faced an argument based on customary or religious practices that they had no rights to the land on which they lived, and that consequently they were not eligible for housing. In a move that will no doubt bring great benefits for long-term development in Aceh, a joint land titling policy for women and men was adopted in September 2006 – a first for Indonesia. Joint land titling, like titling of houses in both partners’ names, has significantly increased women’s economic security.

“Although there is no statement in shari’a or adat (customary) law or Indonesian law that prevents women from owning land or being a signatory to a joint title, specific interventions are required to support full implementation and understanding of these rights,” Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, the head of BRR, told the Jakarta Post. “The question of access to productive assets, including land for widows and the application of joint land titling for spouses, is a serious matter. … We hope that it [will be] a reality, not only for the immediate victims of disaster who have lost so much, but also for generations to come.”
Ensuring land rights for women in Aceh was particularly crucial in a male-dominated society to enhance their agricultural productivity and security, increase access to productive resources and promote family welfare, says Dr. Jean D’Cunha, East and Southeast Asia Regional Programme Director of UNIFEM. With strong support from UNIFEM, BRR acquired joint land titling for tsunami-affected married couples who had received land in a relocation area.

Many people said joint land titling “was impossible to do because Muslim shari’a law is very strong in Aceh,” noted Eddy Purwanto, Chief Operations Officer of BRR. “But we saw the opportunity” – as did many women at community level. Agrees Erna Heryani, BRR’s Director of Land Administration and Mapping: “People generally understand this as a good thing. Most wives or widows never expected they would get land in their name.”

Yet joint land titling has worked in only some places. Why? The quality of leadership and the legal framework, as well as partnerships with informal leaders from the women’s and religious communities, were important determinants in making or breaking the initiative, BRR officials say. But it was difficult to safeguard women’s participation when, for example, in town-hall discussions, husbands chose to represent the family while women stayed home. Nonetheless, BRR is hoping that the policy will eventually be implemented nationwide. Overall, Purwanto says, ensuring that gender issues are incorporated into all development plans “is not something you have to do because someone tells you to do it. This is something that comes from within your organisation and within yourself to convince you that this is a must.”

**Learning by Auditing for Equity**

In Tamil Nadu, a final innovation with regard to equity involved a series of independent equity audits in 2005 and 2006, at the request of local and international NGOs, by the Social Equity Audit Secretariat and trained auditors. The equity audit is an open learning process to enable organisations to progress systematically toward inclusion in their programming and institutional development. Lessons have been documented and a “how-to” guide developed.

“Social exclusion became an issue [post-tsunami],” Christian Aid’s Deepthi Sukumar says. “We therefore needed to set up a mechanism for equity, so we thought of the equity audit. We worked with INGOs and NGOs like CARE and trained auditors to help with self-reflection on [NGOs’] institutions and individuals. Afterward, we saw a lot of changes among our partners. The percentage of budget that went to directly support interventions for the excluded rose from 10 or 12 percent to 60 percent.”
Saying Yes to Change

- Ensure a human rights perspective and provide an enabling environment for participation of different players in decision-making processes, with emphasis on directly affected women and men.

- Build capacity to – and provide opportunities to – demand rights or make claims on the humanitarian system and authorities through a strong platform for community feedback.

- Seek to extend equity through practical reform such as joint land titling.

- Ensure that policies and programmes are based on solid and detailed assessments. Making assumptions about impact risks leaving less visible victims out of the picture. Developing sex-disaggregated databases, along with a rapid, detailed assessment of disaster-related damages ensures 100 percent coverage.

- Include serious and specific inputs, outputs and outcomes related to women and disadvantaged people into recovery programmes.

- Develop organisational anti-discrimination capacity by reviewing organisational culture and offering training to staff on rights-based approaches to relief, recovery and development, including awareness and understanding of gender-sensitive international codes, guidelines and principles.

- Provide “untied” funds that offer the flexibility to modify assistance packages along the way. If new groups emerge as being in need of assistance (ex-combatants, ethnic minorities, women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities etc.) rigid eligibility criteria may risk further excluding them.

- Include equity issues in the early planning stages. A deep understanding of political and cultural contexts will help recovery actors to know where to look.

- Embrace the opportunities offered by the recovery. In many instances, tsunami recovery actors were able to push the envelope on matters of equity and equality by refusing to accept status quo.

- Partner closely with civil society actors to benefit from their expertise and experience.
3

Creating a ‘Virtuous Loop’

Embracing People’s Participation
Without citizen involvement, democracy doesn’t work, so change has to be both bottom-up and top-down. Following the tsunami, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand widely employed participation by both women and men, including massive people’s consultations, beneficiary surveys, Help Desks and community monitoring of projects. Housing reconstruction provided particularly fertile ground for eliciting people’s opinions of what they wanted. For many communities it was the first time they had ever been asked.

Communities are the first responders after disasters, a fact which was evident after the tsunami. As a report by Global Alliance noted: “The unsung heroes were thousands of small merchants, hoteliers and enterprises situated away from the coast, with the assets, equipment and initiative to commit all to the humanitarian crisis long before outside help was at hand.”

Perhaps the most valuable benefit of this involvement is something that isn’t easily quantifiable: a feeling of individual empowerment, of “ownership” of community resources, and the unleashing of people’s own capacities to cope and to share meagre resources at times of major threats.

More broadly, citizen participation is a cornerstone of democratic governance. Without citizen involvement, democracy doesn’t work, so change has to be both bottom-up and top-down. In the aftermath of the tsunami, people around the world made extraordinarily generous individual contributions, and global people’s participation likewise came to the fore; thus creating a kind of virtuous loop. Yet too often, those most in need after a disaster – especially women and vulnerable groups – are not seriously consulted about planning or implementation of relief and recovery. In particular, women’s steps toward effective participation and decision making in their communities elicited post-tsunami criticism from within their communities.

Still, it wasn’t long before women’s groups organised to document gender concerns and identify opportunities for change (see Box 3.1). “In the weeks following the tsunami, these women could barely speak in front of their husbands,” said Rebecca Reena of the Gandhian Unit for Integrated Development and Education (GUIDE), an NGO in Tamil Nadu. “But look at them now – they are sharing the same platform with their menfolk. And when they speak, the men listen.”

In Indonesia, Eddie Daradjat, Chief Information Officer of BRR, also saw the practical effect of such interventions: “The key word is participation. Women should have a voice in all interventions. When women participated in the process, we found that all our outputs, whatever we designed, were better considered.”

**Listening to People’s Voices**

Particularly in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand, “virtuous loops” were created through extensive people’s consultations to ensure that the voices of affected people were taken into account; elsewhere, the Aceh Reconstruction Fund was created through significant civil society consultations and community participation. At least in the Maldivian context, such community consultations had rarely occurred before. Beneficiary surveys deepened knowledge of important qualitative dimensions of recovery, increasing accountability to affected communities, and were hailed as “one of the most significant innovations of the tsunami response.”
With United Nations support, the Government of Sri Lanka empowered the national Human Rights Commission to conduct people’s consultations in more than 1,100 tsunami-affected communities in 13 districts. The consultations provided a critical channel for identifying concerns and grievances of the tsunami-affected, highlighting their priorities. Nearly 850 focus group discussions were convened, with 15-20 representatives from each village participating. Consultations were also carried out with host communities to ascertain their needs and interests, and with local authorities, NGOs and community organisations in affected districts.

Findings were channelled into district recovery plans and were supplemented by two reports, including a substantive analysis of the consultations and mapping of the most vulnerable communities within the tsunami-affected population. Despite the reports’ wide distribution, however, it was agreed that even more could have been done to ensure that information was used by policymakers.

As a result of the thousands of complaints received during the people’s consultations, United Nations support also was provided to the Human Rights Commission to establish Help Desks in each district to raise awareness among communities on their rights and entitlements and to follow up on grievances, along with an AidWatch project to allow beneficiaries to monitor aid and hold organisations accountable (see Chapter 4). Furthermore, the establishment of Citizens’ Committees in selected divisions and districts ensured continued community engagement.

How Women Regrouped

Without quick action by women’s organisations in Sri Lanka, the situation for women victims of violence following the tsunami would have remained hidden. Just one week after the disaster, five women’s groups – Mothers and Daughters of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Women’s NGO Forum, Women’s Alliance for Peace, Women’s Alliance for Peace and Democracy, and Action Network for Migrant Workers – completed fact-finding visits to a number of devastated areas. They reported incidents of rape, molestation and physical abuse of women and girls in temporary shelters and unsupervised rescue operations. Hospital and relief workers identified many more abusive acts, though no police reports had been filed.

But women are much more than victims – they are key to recovery and reconstruction. Women are often better able to work across ethnic, religious and political lines, especially important in conflict areas such as northern and eastern Sri Lanka and Aceh. The NGO GROOTS International facilitated a weeklong learning exchange between women leaders from poor communities in Sri Lanka and India. This highlighted learning from practice in tsunami-hit villages, providing a platform to share initiatives and make plans for the future.

Pavithra, secretary of Rana Arunalu Women’s Development Society in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, said, “We hope to develop livelihood activities, strengthen women’s societies with markets and financial institutions, and run community centres and projects with local government support.” Noting this, Kasturi, a GROOTS trainer, remarked, “Moratuwa women groups were not confident to start activities when we met them a year ago. Now, they have accomplished six years of progress – and have plans to achieve in six years what they had initially planned for 10 years.”
“Getting the people’s consultations off the ground dictated a considerable amount of time, and a lot of decisions with regard to recovery had already been taken or had already been implemented,” recalls Dilrukshi Fonseka of UNDP Sri Lanka. “Still, it was important that the people were consulted and that this was recorded and documented. A lot of the people in the focus group discussions said, ‘This is the first time we are sitting down and telling you what we need instead of filling out a questionnaire or just feeding numbers to various people who are coming by to collect data.’” Women’s participation was essential, bringing to light issues such as gender-based violence during the tsunami recovery, through a collaborative fact-finding mission, and facilitating the exchange of firsthand knowledge of “building back better” (see Box 3.1).

At the same time, recognising that a large proportion of livelihoods, housing and environmental projects were being conducted through community organisations, the Centre for the Non-Governmental Sector of the Ministry of Finance, in partnership with UNDP and the Government of Germany, implemented a project called Strong Places to increase institutional capacities of more than 700 community groups to participate in reconstruction, monitor implementation progress and address longer-term needs. Incorporating localised decision-making, the project provided training, including for women, in project management, accounting, monitoring and reporting, and human resources (see Chapter 2). It also had a small grants facility.

In an effort to “get it right,” a number of independent studies – by groups ranging from the University of Colombo and the National Committee on Women to the UN/IFRC-designed Tsunami Recovery Impact Assessment and Monitoring System (TRIAMS – see box 3.2) – were also conducted to analyse the perceptions and preferences of those affected on aid distribution, reconstruction, relocation, livelihood recovery, and other issues such as education and health.

Particularly in the area of housing reconstruction, a number of organisations were committed to people’s participation. “Where survivors participate from start to finish in the construction process, we end up with homes that people want, a design that suits their lifestyle and a location that allows them to continue earning a living,” according to ActionAid’s Ravi Pratap Singh.36 The government’s permanent housing policy has followed a two-pronged approach:

♦ An owner-driven housing programme, where homeowners reconstruct/repair damaged houses on-site, with cash grants and technical assistance provided by government and development organisations
♦ A relocation housing programme, where government, donors and development organisations implement permanent housing projects on relocation sites for families who had lived in the coastal buffer zone

The owner-driven housing has proven quicker and simpler, and ensures a higher level of community input as people have been able to express their cultural preferences and traditions in the design of their home. For example, a partnership between IFRC, UN-Habitat and the World Bank supported 24,000 households in
rebuilding homes on their own land. Married couples were required to open a joint bank account and payments deposited there to promote women’s economic security and increase their control over household assets. Owners could build the houses themselves or engage local contractors, which often was the choice of women-headed households. Funds were released based on owners reaching agreed milestones. 37

“We found that implementing the owner-driven housing programme has been easier, because you are basically giving people cash to rebuild their own houses on their own foundations, in a thriving community,” says Paul Emes, Chief of Delegation, IFRC Sri Lanka. “For the relocation housing programme, you have issues with moving, particularly coastal fishing communities into the middle of inland farming communities.” But, notes IFRC’s Patrick Fuller, “As soon as the local authorities provide a list of beneficiaries for a relocation housing site, a series of consultative meetings begins. … Families are involved in the planning of each site and are brought together with members of the host community to … [reduce] possible tensions between old and new residents.” 38

Still, it was not always easy to ensure community participation, Emes says: “I think an unfortunate thing about [IFRC] not doing a transitional shelter programme here was that we sometimes missed engagement with beneficiaries of the relocation housing programme because they were in somebody else’s transitional camp. In some cases, beneficiary lists weren’t confirmed until the last minute. We must plan community engagement better, right from the start.” Other NGOs too acknowledge mistakes that could have been avoided if a more participatory approach had been used. A joint report by Oxfam, CARE International and World Vision highlights the decision by Oxfam, taken in Colombo, to supply water filters to each family in various communities in Matara, without any consultation with the community or the local office. Water filters are uncommon and generally not used in the area, and most of those supplied remain unused. A key requirement for effective community participation was decentralising authority to the local levels. Both CARE and World Vision effectively decentralised authority and their field offices were able to best deal with the needs and demands of the tsunami affected people. Oxfam, on the other hand, found it more difficult to implement effective participation since many key decisions were being made back in Oxford, UK, rather than in the field.
Meanwhile, beneficiaries of the owner-driven housing programmes organised themselves, often with the assistance of the implementing agency, to form Community Development Councils (CDCs) that supported community members throughout reconstruction. The councils shared information, provided guidance, raised concerns and resolved conflicts, even as they supported housing construction, oversaw infrastructure projects and managed funds. Many humanitarian and development agencies incorporated capacity development projects for CDCs in their operations. A total of 135 communities were registered as CDCs by the government. 39

**A First for Maldives**

Given the very limited experience that Maldives had with disasters, people’s participation in recovery and overall disaster risk management was a new concept. Yet a community’s knowledge base and skills are often crucial to managing projects or, in case of disaster, making the right decisions. Government, United Nations Agencies, IFRC and other NGOs alike therefore initiated a huge number of community-led projects and undertook the nation’s first extensive community consultations, particularly in house reconstruction, livelihoods and disaster risk management.

Island-level consultations in the project planning stage allowed communities to identify and authenticate beneficiaries, ensuring transparency and preventing community tensions. They also allowed the setting of realistic goals and timings, based on local capacities and priorities; this was crucial to facilitate community ownership. Land use plans were developed in consultation with communities, and in the process, community awareness was increased on better environmental protection, management of resources, and mitigation and
Measuring Recovery: TRIAMS

The concept for a Tsunami Recovery Impact Assessment and Monitoring System (TRIAMS) was discussed and endorsed by the Global Consortium for Tsunami-Affected Countries at meetings in June and September 2005. The process was taken forward by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, with the support of the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery (OSE) led by former US President Bill Clinton.

The purpose of the TRIAMS initiative has been to assist governments, aid agencies and affected populations in assessing and monitoring the rate and direction of recovery over the recovery phase. TRIAMS represented an important breakthrough by proposing one framework of core indicators through which to monitor progress and assess impacts across different countries and locales. The framework looks not just at infrastructure, but also social services, livelihoods and vital needs remaining from the relief phase.

The core components of the TRIAMS process have included: output and impact indicators across the primary sectors of recovery; both quantitative and qualitative data on beneficiary perspectives; and additional qualitative data to help explain findings of key output and outcome indicators. The overall aim of the TRIAMS process was to ensure that governments, donors, NGOs, civil society and other stakeholders were adequately informed on the progress of the recovery efforts in the tsunami-affected areas, so that adjustments could be made to the assistance programs in order to address the un-met needs and the existing inequalities.

All four countries have made great strides in collecting and analyzing data using the TRIAMS framework. In Aceh, for example, BRR and UNORC have jointly produced three comprehensive Tsunami Recovery Indicator Package (TRIP) reports, using TRIAMS as the roadmap. The reports, which can be downloaded at [www.unorc.or.id](http://www.unorc.or.id), specifically make use of available government census, survey, sectoral data and data from other development partners, rather than undertaking entirely new and time-consuming assessments. The methodology aids expediency, and enhances local ownership of the data and the assessment process. A database has also been created that contains over 700 indicators. Entitled Acehinfo 3.0, the database now provides local government with a fundamental set of baseline information for planners and policymakers, and enables GIS maps to be produced using appropriate software.

An additional step forward has been to draw attention to whether recovery interventions are addressing pre-existing inequalities (or exacerbating them) by looking at more disaggregated, sub-district data. In practice, this has proven challenging, as administrative data compilation mechanisms may be weaker than required, even in education and health sectors.

In retrospect, it is clear that TRIAMS and other information tools and methods should have been available from the outset of the recovery process. With this in mind, partners are working to document TRIAMS lessons to contribute to guidelines for future post crisis recovery managers, including:

- Recovery monitoring should be nationally owned, drawing on routine administrative data and surveys adapted to over-sample the affected region
- Such data can be complemented by qualitative, beneficiary perspectives
- Data preparedness is an essential part of emergency preparedness
- It is helpful for there to be a single national/local authority responsible for overall recovery monitoring
- A consolidated database can be extremely helpful, not only in analysis, but in managing the many issues relating to data availability
- There needs to be a context in which data and analysis are shared, e.g. through reports, websites, database tools and reviews,
- Re-planning needs to be responsive to the analysis

adaptation measures. Under one United Nations project, nearly 3,000 house owners were given the opportunity to decide how to fully repair or rebuild their houses; owners were directly provided with funding following damage surveys on 45 islands and were trained in construction themselves. Many people had specific ideas about the structure of their houses: an outdoor rather than an indoor kitchen, a veranda, or front and rear
doors in line, etc. Further, women and youth often had different ideas than men about what was needed. UNDP and UN-Habitat jointly ensured that people were consulted at all stages of the project and that Island Development Committees managed reconstruction funds. Some homeowners topped up recovery grants with their own funds to build larger houses for their extended families.

International agencies also provided supervisory support and monitoring to ensure that reconstructed houses met industry standards and regulations. Such an approach laid the foundation for the long-term sustainable recovery of the housing sector as a whole: The project reported a 98 percent overall success rate, with 90 percent of islanders feeling better empowered.

However, this success did not come easily. It was more difficult at first to engage communities in disaster risk management awareness, given that many Maldivians saw the tsunami as a “one-off” event that would not recur. “One thing is that the people lose their focus really easily,” cautions Fathima Nizam of the Maldivian NGO Care Society. “Just two years after the tsunami, when I visited the islands to do community consultations, I asked a lot of people, ‘How do you keep your food supply?’ Most people buy packs of rice, flour and sugar that are not waterproof. During the tsunami, almost all the food supply in houses was damaged because these packs are usually stored on the floor. That is why I ask them, ‘Do you still keep it that way?’ And then they say, ‘Yeah, we still keep it that way, but then, we have always been doing it like this.’ ”

But the Government and United Nations were persistent, even translating basic disaster risk management terminology into the local Dhivehi language. They also assisted island communities in developing community preparedness plans and, significantly, were able to conduct the first disaster simulation exercises in Maldives.

Similarly, local organisations were included in numerous livelihoods projects. “Involving the local organisations
was a successful approach,” says Raniya Sobir of UNDP Maldives. “For every single activity, we made sure that we had a local partner to work with, so in that way it was easier for us to communicate with the communities and mobilize them. At the same time, by engaging them in the tsunami recovery process, we are now seeing these organisations become stronger, and they are able to contribute to development activities. Now local bodies are approaching the donors on their own and mobilising funds.”

‘Recovery-Plus-Plus’: A Harmonious, Eco-Friendly Model

Thailand also made it a priority to give communities a strong voice, by promoting their empowerment and strengthen people’s capacities as a means to longer-term development of tsunami-affected communities. Local authorities were mandated to take the lead in many reconstruction efforts, ranging from repair of infrastructure to livelihood restoration and promotion of the local economy, and were supported to improve community consultation, including training to strengthen women’s leadership and decision making.

Flexibility by government and international organisations alike allowed grassroots initiatives to take place of their own accord and at their own pace. Experience and facilitation skills of project staff and communities involved in grassroots development were key factors in building trust and a willingness to work alongside one another in a spirit of cooperation.

One of the most successful such initiatives has been the UNDP-supported project to restore indigenous livelihoods in Koh Lanta, a unique and culturally diverse island district of 30,000 in the tsunami-affected Krabi province. Krabi blends the heritages of four ethnic groups: The Moken and Urak Lavoy, or “sea gypsies,” and Muslims are seafaring peoples, earning their living from fishing, while the Thai Buddhist population tends to
work on or own rubber plantations. The Thai Chinese, meanwhile, often are business owners. All the ethnic groups shared a strong sense of self-reliance that was helpful in recovery.

Working with the Community Organization Development Institute (CODI) and the Chumchon Thai Foundation, among others, UNDP helped to establish the island as a model of economic and social harmony paired with forward-thinking natural resource management. Not only have villagers been able to rebuild their homes and replace their boats and other assets through collective planning and pooling of resources, but they have also been mobilised to develop the island in an eco-friendly, culturally sensitive way, well beyond immediate recovery needs.

As a result, for Koh Lanta “this was really ‘tsunami recovery-plus-plus,’ because the island was developed by community mobilisation, savings schemes, and cooperatives like mushroom farming, fishing and handicrafts,” says Håkan Björkman, now UNDP Country Director in Indonesia, who as Deputy Resident Representative in Thailand oversaw much of the tsunami recovery there. “Koh Lanta was led by visionary district officials who had the long-term sustainability of the island in mind.”

Starting with two of the hardest-hit villages at the southern tip of the island – Ban Sanga-U, a sea gypsy village, and Ban Hua Laem, a Muslim village – the project helped establish community organisations to ensure that tsunami-affected people would be the prime movers of their own future. Both villages were able to resume full-scale fishing after they built some 350 boats themselves. “Just to show you the synergy among the people, the sea gypsies had an agreement that they would rather that everybody got their boat before they launched to fish,” recalls Brett Tan, UNDP Project Management Advisor for Koh Lanta. “So everybody waited until the last boat was done.”

Houses also were rebuilt with the help of local knowledge and consultation, although not by all organisations. Professor Opart Panya, evaluator
for the Koh Lanta project, states that one NGO was “pretty much building houses with the ‘urban vision,’ on the land and also very modern. But afterward, people said they couldn’t live there. They have to live close to the sea.”

The sea gypsies, many of whom have been living for decades on public land without secure tenure and access to basic services, also faced complex problems of land rights and resettlement that made recovery more difficult. The government set up a high-level national committee on resolution of tsunami-related land issues, with UNDP supporting investigation of historical and cultural land rights for about 80 villages. Again showing people’s participation, local residents and authorities were vigorous in negotiations with the committee, ultimately leading to success.

In addition to restoring land and livelihoods, the project has striven to rebuild the Lanta community’s spirit by promoting its distinctive heritages. This enabled the project to expand its scope, with local initiatives ranging from education to environmental management (see Box 3.3 for a culturally friendly approach in Sri Lanka). Villagers donated antiques and artefacts to renovate the community museum, and numerous cultural and spiritual innovations, such as employing indigenous religious ceremonies, helped revive community pride.

For example, “before the tsunami, the sea gypsies were prepared to cease to exist,” according to Tan. “Their younger generation all got employment in the resorts and forgot about their traditional ways of fishing. And the elders had stopped singing [traditional music]. But then the tsunami came, and the tourists did not come for two years. The young people came back and started to appreciate their traditional ways, even though it gives them only a little money. They think this is more secure than the tourist money, which comes and goes. The older generation started singing again, and the younger generation joined in, and then the spirit came back.”

Communities are taking greater responsibility for management of natural resources as well. Water is scarce on Koh Lanta, so with support from UNDP and the Coca-Cola Company, four villages with the strongest community organisations were selected for a pilot with different types of water resources and water user groups. These included a series of check dams, a gravity-fed water system, a small-scale irrigation system, and artesian wells. Successes are being applied island-wide.

Pushpa, 35, is engaged in a housing project in Nagai, India, and is being trained in Masonry by the NGO HOPE.
Saying Yes to Change

- Regard civil society as a partner in relief and recovery, with international agencies sharing information with affected people so they can participate.

- Foster participation at all stages of the recovery – in planning, implementation, and monitoring.

- Conduct people’s consultations as early as possible to engage marginalised groups in discussions of damages and community expectations, capacities and needs.

- To manage expectations, explain progress, and outline plans, recovery partners need to draft credible and accessible communications strategies. The medium is the message: communicating to communities on their terms, in their local languages, using concepts and ideas that appeal to them, will elicit responses and promote dialogue.

- Take a holistic approach, in the true sense of the term. Recovering and rebuilding affected communities should only translate into infrastructure. It also means the recapturing or strengthening of social capital and contributing to a sense of security. People who played a key constructive part in the community’s structure before the disaster should be encouraged to resume their roles.

- Complement housing reconstruction with overall community development projects to strengthen relationships, networks and trust.

- Build capacity of existing community structures/mechanisms rather than establish new ones.

- Connect participatory mechanisms to tangible results. Participation is a two-way street and for communities to truly feel like they have a stake in the process, traditional surveys and interviews will not be enough. Soliciting input and ideas from the community should not be treated as a must, but as a critical component of recovery programmes.

- Provide programme implementers with the tools necessary to conduct participatory planning, implementation and monitoring. Participation done wrong, risks a backlash. Recovery partners need to have skills and experience in working with communities and employing a human rights framework in post-disaster contexts.

- In order to truly build back better, donors, organisations and governments need to embrace participation as key to the success. Stringent deadlines and supply-driven policy making, while satisfying reporting requirements and a home public eager for results, do not always make for measured and efficient programming. Taking the cue from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, recovery partners need to internalise the need for a pragmatic approach to consultations and participation.
4 Countering Corruption and Ensuring Accountability
Corruption is common in humanitarian crises. With the influx of international agencies – the United Nations, international financial institutions, donors, NGOs – all under pressure to spend fast, hire fast and outdo the “competition,” you have an environment where the dangers of corruption are always present. Even without corruption, lack of accountability, especially to those affected by the disaster, can result in development programmes that in no way reflect actual needs. But following the tsunami, corruption levels have been kept remarkably low despite unprecedented funding. Viewing corruption as a core threat to reconstruction, governments established several levels of transparency and accountability mechanisms.

The response to an extraordinary event like the tsunami brings out the best in the vast majority of people. Unfortunately, however, some also take advantage of opportunities to enrich themselves during a crisis, when large amounts of cash and goods are being transferred as aid and can be easily diverted.

With the influx of international agencies – the United Nations, international financial institutions, donors, NGOs – all under pressure to spend fast, hire fast and outdo the “competition,” and you have an environment where the dangers of corruption are always present. Even without corruption, lack of accountability, especially to those affected by the disaster, can result in development programmes that in no way reflect actual needs.

Evidence from other countries and other disasters shows that neglecting corruption is dangerous; quick and dirty deals made early on will only serve to entrench and enhance unpredictability and corrupt practices that are then difficult to roll back. But following the tsunami, what was apparent in recovery efforts in Indonesia – a country often rated as facing extensive corruption – is that corruption levels were kept remarkably low despite the influx of an unprecedented US$6.4 billion in funding. How was this done?

Early on, leaders at BRR, the overarching recovery agency for Aceh and Nias, were aware that corruption could not simply be treated as a “crosscutting issue.” In theory, such a designation is meant to raise an issue’s prominence and urgency, but in practice it often means just another box to tick from a long list.

Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, who has directed BRR throughout its mandate, explains: “We see the fight against corruption in Aceh and Nias as advancing Indonesia’s wider struggle against corruption. … We believe firmly that corruption both robs disaster victims of the support they need and also undermines ongoing and future support from generous external supporters. In this regard, corruption is both morally wrong and undermines programme success. Corruption does not grease the wheels: It is a spanner in the works.”

Kevin Evans agrees. A Special Advisor to the BRR Director, Evans says, “The issue of corruption wasn’t seen as a target, but as a core threat. Rather than thinking that people would behave themselves since it was a disaster, or pretending corruption didn’t exist, we asked ourselves what were the key threats to reconstruction.” Evans continues, “First would be another tsunami. Second would be a recommencement of the conflict. Third was corruption. There was not much we could do about the first issue – it is beyond anybody’s control. The second was beyond the authority and mandate of BRR. But on corruption, we could set the parameters and have an impact.”
With the media spotlight on Aceh, the fourth-poorest province in Indonesia, the pressure to succeed in recovery was huge. The main pressure for the government, however, was the fact that the world had displayed enormous generosity and goodwill, and this was a rare opportunity to build back better and allow some good to come from the tragedy. What a waste it would be, then, if the success of these efforts was dogged by corruption.

In all, a more transparent, accountable process is less easy to corrupt, making sure agencies are kept on their toes, and several levels of mechanisms were put in place. First, BRR was set up, with Pak Kuntoro insisting on designing the organisation himself. Because part of BRR’s mandate was to ensure coordination and strong leadership, this, along with its authority and autonomy bestowed through legislation, allowed it to tackle corruption well. From the beginning, it set out to pay BRR employees competitive salaries to make sure the agency could recruit the best and brightest and to break the long established pattern of civil service remuneration based upon top-ups, stipends and annuities. BRR employees are paid a single solid income with no availability of discretionary top-ups and also with unambiguous prohibitions on accepting “gifts”. One further impact was that unlike many other reconstruction locations where civil servants may be “poached” by the incoming international agencies, BRR did not suffer a “brain drain” to these agencies.

Tracking of funds, where they are coming from and where they are going, also is essential. To track all “off-budget” funds, or those not channelled through the Government – which accounted for over half of funds received – BRR developed a prize-winning comprehensive information management system. The system was comprised of the online Recovery Aceh-Nias Database (RAND, http://rand.brr.go.id/RAND/) and, later, the Housing Geospatial Database.
All agencies involved in tsunami recovery were required to register with BRR, set up an account on RAND and regularly update data on funds committed and disbursed. “On-budget” funds channelled through the government, meanwhile, were tracked by a special BRR department and the Ministry of Finance through SmartPro, a software similar to RAND but not yet available online.

The decision to create RAND, an innovation available to anyone with Internet access, was made early on and it has served as the major source for information and reports on donor funded reconstruction activities: “We needed something that was very transparent so anyone in the world, including mums and dads in London, could use it,” says SZM Shariful Islam, Aid Coordination Advisor of UNORC. “It is also a useful tool to pinpoint gaps and overlaps to policymakers. This was a very potent tool the government created to let the international and local communities know what it was doing.”

RAND was built on the UNDP Donor Assistance Database (DAD) and, with UNDP and ADB support, turned into a system that reflected local challenges and needs. Its success hinged on RAND operating as part of a broader approach to improve accountability and effectiveness. Yet both Indonesia’s RAND and DADs used in Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand faced the challenge of all countries trying to improve accountability – getting quick, comprehensive and sufficiently detailed inputs from NGOs and development agencies (see Box 4.1).

“We ended up with ‘DAD-plus’, as significant customisation was done for meeting the objectives and requirements of BRR, including the project concept note approval and key performance indicators monitoring mechanisms” Islam recalls. “But it was too much for the capacity of many agencies to comply with the requirements. There was a slow pick-up for some time.” The database faced numerous challenges and fierce criticism. Indeed, one of the main criticisms, from World Bank and NGOs, among others, was that because each agency was responsible for updating its own entries, inaccurate data or misrepresentations of activities might be included. In the beginning, only about 33 percent of organizations on RAND were updating their accounts. Data entry errors and other factors cost RAND credibility for providing a timely, accurate picture; in 2006, for example, it did not capture even half of recovery efforts in Aceh and Nias.

### Box 4.1

**The Challenges of Capturing Reliable Data**

With large-scale reconstruction activities after the tsunami, all tsunami-affected countries were in need of information systems through which everyone (Government, international organisations, donors, NGOs, media and beneficiaries) could track tsunami funds and ascertain the results of projects. UNDP, in partnership with ADB, worked to support governments across the region in customising the existing Development Assistance Database (DAD), which is a general aid information management system to track aid given for a multitude of purposes, both for the long-term and for short term emergencies. However, being a “commercial off-the-shelf” tool, customization was required so it met each country’s needs after the tsunami. In Indonesia, the changes were deepest and factored in how BRR worked and its accountability agenda.

While almost US$8 billion of assistance was tracked, the customized systems were, as one observer from Maldives put it, “high-tech, but also high-maintenance.” A major challenge facing all countries trying to improve accountability was achieving the cooperation of all parties to provide accurate, updated tracking of tsunami assistance online. Moreover, sometimes self-reporting by development agencies fell short. As a result, in Sri Lanka, for example, despite strong Government efforts to encourage development organizations to report expenditures, the system apparently had not captured between US$500 million and $1 billion as of March 2006, including funds already disbursed. Agencies struggled to break their contributions down by district.

To go beyond a database and ensure systems really help lock in improved accountability, according to the Maldives observer, “you need a senior, seasoned person,” with a clear vision of how the various pieces of the puzzle fit together.
At the same time, others such as Alex Schein, Chief of Party of Save the Children’s Aceh office, noted that RAND was a web-based system at a time when many organisations were not yet on the web. “It was not user-friendly,” Schein recalls. “It was difficult to make sense of it, and some indicators were valid for some NGOs but not all, like trying to compare apples to oranges.”

In early 2007, then, it was a make-or-break point for the system. Together, BRR and UNORC analysed various weaknesses and decided it was crucial to ensure that the database had sustainable support, so that it could serve its purpose of being a project-based[^1], real-time tool tied directly into the workflow, without waiting for reports to be produced. Now, by being flexible and persistent, BRR has managed to get nearly all agencies updating their RAND data, which gives the database meaning. How did the impressive turnaround from 35 to 98 percent compliance happen?

To ensure that updating continued, there needed to be a shift toward client orientation – and this really paid off. Major donors and other organisations, key RAND users in BRR, and provincial and district governments all were contacted to identify what types of analytical products, as well as what information and in which format, would be useful. Then, RAND changed accordingly – absorbing a major lesson that persistence and communication with stakeholders pays off.

In one of its first initiatives, BRR encouraged many NGOs that were not yet online to send staff to local Internet cafés with a CD-ROM and transmit their information. BRR then uploaded it for them and *voila*: these organisations were on RAND.

Later, under the leadership of Eddie Daradjat, Chief Information Officer at BRR, the management capacity of agencies was boosted to help reporting rates increase further. BRR established an Outreach Team, located at a drop-in centre in Banda Aceh, which is available for troubleshooting and to teach usage of RAND. The Outreach Team provided customised reports as requested by donors, other partners and BRR; this could also easily be done by users online. Thus, outreach not only enabled organisations to get on RAND, but also kept them on it, providing regular updates. Simple improvements such as a crackdown on data entry errors likewise went a long way toward helping RAND regain credibility.
Eventually, all this helped RAND win the Innovative Government Technology Award in the Information Management category at the 2008 FutureGov Summit, the top annual forum involving all well-known international technology providers, who display their public-service best practices to the international community. RAND was chosen out of 450 nominations from 15 countries, including developed nations across the region. It was recognised as an innovative model of information management that has successfully promoted improvement in public services, modernisation of government administration and efficiency of public sector management.

_A Snapshot of Reconstruction, Available to All_

The other information system in Aceh and Nias – and one also with great potential – is the Housing Geospatial Database (HGD). As of October 2008, the number of houses built for the tsunami recovery in Indonesia had reached nearly 119,000. With such a high number of physical structures, answering even simple questions – Who built what? Where? Who owns the new house? – is not as easy as it may seem. A comprehensive information system was needed, capable of capturing and recording all information systematically.

Enter the HGD, a unique tool that enables anyone interested in Indonesia’s reconstruction to obtain unprecedented access to the way it has unfolded. A high school student in Kentucky who may have donated US$10 in 2005 to the American Red Cross, for example, will now be able to search online for all houses built by the IFRC in Aceh and Nias and view for herself the finished product – and its specifications.

So how does it work? For a tour of the database, Eddie Daradjat begins with a normal map of Aceh, colour-coded by the area, the implementing agency, and the location of the houses. All this information is first gathered from RAND, verified by field teams working even in remote areas, then digitally mapped for GPS coordinates, followed by the building of a text database.

Unlike the RAND, linked to real-time information, the “survey-based” HGD provides a snapshot of housing
sector reconstruction, since verifying and digitally mapping the vast amount of information takes a long time. Yet for ensuring transparency and accountability, both processes are necessary and complement each other. That makes this combined information system one of the most comprehensive and “leak-proof” in reconstruction and development work.

If you want to take a closer look at a particular community or town on HGD, simply zoom in closer to get a better view. Keep zooming, and you’ll find yourself at the neighbourhood level and, eventually, right down to an individual house, complete with a picture of the building, its GPS coordinates, the name of the house’s present owner and the building contractor, as well as the organisation that helped build it.

After initially being housed on BRR’s intranet, the HGD is now being migrated to the web. Eventually, the system was merged with BRR’s new database for all other assets – bridges, hospitals, schools and roads – which was also created in much the same way as the HGD. A complete online catalogue ensures an efficient handover of assets as part of BRR’s exit strategy – and serves as another critical step toward achieving accountability and transparency in post-tsunami Aceh and Nias. Many believe that the HGD can be used as a model for other governments to create their own asset management systems.

**Performance Indicators and ‘Integrity Pacts’**

The information management system incorporates a number of mechanisms to ensure accountability and transparency to BRR from development partners, with reduced corruption. The swift and comprehensive project approval mechanism, for example, incorporated an innovative Project Concept Note to enhance accountability, and reduce duplication in recovery projects (see Chapter 1).

In addition, more than 200 key performance indicators were identified – numbers of schools, houses and bridges rebuilt, number of loans and livestock provided, women’s participation, areas of mangroves restored – that could be used by donors to show BRR and beneficiaries how well the funds were being used, similar to IFRC’s TRIAMS (see box 3.2) system. Apart from having accounts on RAND, donors voluntarily produced accountability reports. The United
Nations through UNORC, for example, provides an Accountability Report at periodic intervals detailing activities of all United Nations Agencies working on recovery, along with providing data showing funding received and disbursed in all sectors and projects.

Furthermore, accountability from BRR to beneficiaries, the Government and donors also was a priority – and something new. For the first time, accountability to beneficiaries was treated on a par with that to donors. Save the Children’s Alex Schein acknowledges this as a welcome change, declaring, “It has made immense improvements to aid effectiveness.” BRR’s accountability was first evident in the “integrity pact” applied to each of its staff, an innovation later adopted by at least two leading State-owned companies, Telkom and Pertamina.

BRR also became the first Government agency to have an autonomous Anti-Corruption Unit, known as SAK, set up to work with other Government institutions, international institutions like the World Bank, and civil society organisations such as Transparency International Indonesia in carrying out its primary objectives of prevention, investigation and education. Since its inception in September 2005, SAK has received 1,530 confidential complaints. Of these, more than half related to violations of procurement processes for goods and services, while another 12 percent directly charged corruption or violations of the integrity pact. Critically, while SAK is an internal body of BRR, it also is autonomous, with authority to move freely throughout all divisions and monitor operations. This bold move has proven most useful in moving the anti-corruption agenda forward.

In addition, the Corruption Eradication Commission, normally part of the central Government, for the first time set up a field office in Banda Aceh at the request of BRR. SAK worked with the Commission on oversight as well as public education. If SAK was not convinced that a case did not involve corruption, it would send it to the Commission for further investigation. SAK also developed links with other Government institutions such as the Fair Business Practices Supervisory Commission, local governments and police. It likewise worked with the central Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP), with more than 50 BPKP staff seconded to BRR as part of a dedicated national Treasury representative office.
But the role of SAK was not only to “find corruptors,” since this approach could not be sustained, ignoring as it does the structural problems that often emerge within an organisation. Instead, it continued to work to emphasize a broader code of ethics and to improve BRR’s procedures and work practices. In so doing it prevented a number of fraudulent tender processes from continuing, avoiding significant financial losses to the State. Strong support has also been demonstrated by the Governor of Aceh since April 2007, to improve the quality of administrative ethics as a necessary investment to ensure a better future for the province. Other government agencies are also beginning to adopt SAK type approaches to raise their own internal standards of integrity and to prevent corruption. Key to the potential success of these initiatives will be the ongoing effectiveness of the national Corruption Eradication Commission as the key threat against corrupt practices.

Now, communities themselves have begun to overtly protest about corrupt practices exposed in public life – a very positive development – and consider acts of corruption a social disgrace. Through the continued support of the public, religious leaders, civil society and mass media, SAK officials feel their efforts has helped to build and mobilise an effective anti-corruption movement.

Importantly, to ensure needs-based responsiveness, grievance and complaints handling mechanisms also were put in place with regard to recovery projects, as well as in RAND and HGD. These covered not only corruption and fraud or other violations, but also poor quality of goods and work. When projects address several sectors and multiple groups in a complex environment – such as Aceh’s post-conflict recovery, combined with a post-tsunami setting – such mechanisms swiftly give clear notice of problems and provide information on the quality of a project’s design and implementation. Realising this, many NGOs, including Muslim Aid and Oxfam, set up their own grievance reporting and redressal mechanisms. Following complaints by beneficiaries regarding house design, Oxfam began the retro-fitting of many of the houses they had built. All this, ultimately, underpins accountability to beneficiaries.

In addition to SAK, an independent Supervisory Board of BRR known as Dewan Pengawas, comprising leaders of various NGOs, universities and other leading institutions, addressed community grievances and provided oversight of recovery activities. In 2005, the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, the largest number of
complaints was from the education and health sectors, with a significant proportion also from agriculture and natural resources management. Complaints for all “on-budget” projects were discussed in biweekly meetings of BRR, followed by a field visit, a meeting with the deputy in the relevant agency, and a response.

Although BRR had its own complaints mechanism for on-budget projects, it developed sector-specific grievance mechanisms in conjunction with ADB for its Earthquake and Tsunami Emergency Support Project, initiated in April 2005. These grievance mechanisms, operating at different levels, incorporated community consultations and field visits.

**Help Desks and Community Monitoring**

In Sri Lanka, according to the Report on People’s Consultations on Post-Tsunami Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation, “the affected communities are keen on seeing more transparent delivery mechanisms. They propose establishing mechanisms that won’t make them vulnerable to discrimination at the hands of individuals, and where beneficiary rights, entitlements and benefits are accessible and made public.”

The establishment of an effective complaint mechanism through Help Desks as a response to the people’s consultations on recovery (see Chapter 3) was a particular breakthrough. Help Desks were set up in tsunami-affected areas to address human rights-related complaints, many of them from women. Working with the Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit (DRMU) of the Human Rights Commission, the Help Desks investigated complaints and recommended how to address them. The public could question eligibility for assistance, report potential cases of corruption, or file a complaint. The Help Desks raised communities’ awareness on human rights entitlements, as well as liaised with community groups, NGOs and Government officials to promote human right principles. By October 2006, the DRMU had received 17,000 complaints and successfully resolved most. “When people complained about a certain international non-Government organization, we quite often ended up mediating between the INGO and the community,” a DRMU official recalled. “The preferred solution, of
course, is for the INGO to resolve the problem itself. But if not, the DRMU does not hesitate to make the charges public in the media.”

For its part, UNDP Sri Lanka set up an AidWatch initiative to enable communities to monitor projects. Collectives of housing beneficiaries were trained on rights with regard to development activities, along with being provided with advocacy and negotiations skills. These groups also were brought into contact with project field staff, local authorities and Human Rights Commission representatives. Such vital linkages contributed to increasing responsibility and accountability toward the community and laid groundwork for continued networking. With new skills and networks, AidWatch collectives could then effectively air any grievances.48

As women’s groups have done in disasters elsewhere, Sri Lanka women organised to monitor the reconstruction process (see Box 4.2). In Aceh, village women’s councils, supported by AusAID, helped ensure accountability to women. The councils’ effectiveness was demonstrated, for example, when women in one village became aware that the village head had received the substantial tsunami funds he claimed had never been delivered. The women’s council then challenged the village head’s legitimacy, ensuring a more accountable and transparent recovery.

‘We Can Definitely Apply This Elsewhere’

Overall, a key lesson arising from the tsunami has been that deploying disaster management resources is much more effective when flexible funding modalities can be put in place but where the key national agency is able to remain aloof from the fiduciary responsibilities for donor funds. This promotes trust between donors and the national government. The high level of donor trust which BRR enjoyed was earned as much by the arms-length funding arrangements it endorsed a by its many breakthroughs in terms of concept (accountability to beneficiaries as well as donors), standards (RAND, HGD), and scale (inclusion of all parties in a project already unprecedented in scale) and institutional arrangements such as its Anti Corruption Unit. By setting high standards from the start, BRR and the Indonesian Government demonstrated to the world its capacity in tackling corruption.

The local government, which continues Aceh and Nias reconstruction after the end of BRR’s mission in April 2009, deems the RAND a particularly important tool. Already, RAND has benefited more than 2,600 villages with its blend of easy data mining, multiple analytical perspectives and a sound basis for planning and evaluation. The system is extremely replicable, says Pak Kuntoro: “BRR has proven the critics wrong. Public cynicism about bureaucratic integrity and defeatism about bureaucratic reform are self-defeating. We went beyond enforcement to get to the root of the problems by reforming our systems. Even in a disaster situation, we should fight not accept corruption.” Moreover, says Pak Kuntoro, “What can be achieved in a disaster can surely be done in normal circumstances. We can definitely apply these breakthroughs elsewhere. The President wanted us to prove that reform was possible. With his backing we did so. I hope this experience gives others the heart to think, ‘We can too!’.”
Saying Yes to Change

- Build mechanisms of accountability from the start
- Look for opportunities to reform that go beyond business as usual
- When a good idea does not work the first time, persevere until the right solution that works for all stakeholders is found
- Promote systems that create genuine transparency and access
- Create accountability systems that remove integrity traps or conflicts of interest
- Strengthen and work through community networks, particularly those that promote equity and open the door for a stronger voice for women and marginalised citizens
- Ensure that culturally sensitive information about activities is available to affected populations – i.e., what the funds are being spent on, where, through and for whom, and when – in order to better manage expectations and prevent wider disparities.
- Empower affected people to articulate community claims, actively monitor and evaluate reconstruction and make their own choices. Develop strategies to ensure that women and marginalised groups have full access to information
- Create a strong complaints mechanism. Early designation of grievance focal points and an adequate budget for grievance facilitation are critical for reporting of abuses and corruption, as is empowering affected communities, including the most vulnerable, in understanding and using these mechanisms
- Properly orient project implementers so that they treat complaints as opportunities for improving project design and outcomes, not as “burdens”
What if it Happens Again?
Innovations in Disaster Risk Management
For people living along the affected coasts, the terrible after-effects of the tsunami – and especially the fear of another catastrophe – remain a daily reality. In all, the tsunami drew attention to the urgency to reduce disaster risks, particularly among vulnerable communities, and to give importance to healthy ecosystems. Thailand has been a leader in community-based disaster risk management, while Sri Lanka has developed a 10-year “road map” and Maldives has completed the country’s first disaster risk profile and established “safer islands” with stronger physical and environmental resilience.

Before December 2004, most people in high-risk coastal areas were largely unaware of the danger from tsunamis and of what to do following early signs such as receding sea levels. Yet in areas where some risk awareness existed, it had a dramatic impact on the number of lives saved. Even so, the weakest structures were wiped out. Stronger ones withstood the pressures, as did coastal areas with natural protection. For people in high-risk coastal communities, the terrible impact of the tsunami – and especially the fear of another catastrophe – remains a daily reality. Many still wonder, what if it happens again? How will we survive?

“In the old days, people felt like disasters were far from them,” states Atiwan Kunaphinun, IFRC Disaster Management Programme Officer in Thailand. “After the tsunami, they realised the impact of what happened, and they feel like it is much closer to real life.”

Not long ago, disasters were viewed as isolated events and were responded to without taking into account the social and economic factors that aggravate the situation. The sheer scale of the tsunami, however, inevitably made such a narrow understanding of disasters difficult to sustain. Instead, the tsunami drew attention to the importance and urgency of reducing the enabling causes of disaster. By looking at the range of those factors and processes that ultimately transform containable emergencies into outright disasters, the priorities of disaster policy have increasingly come to encompass innovative ways of reducing the vulnerability of people and communities in disaster prone areas. By increasing their ability to manage risks and by recognising that complex social relationships and structures determine why certain groups are more vulnerable, Disaster Risk Reduction has taken critical strides in preparing communities and countries for the worst possible scenario.

For example, ensuring sound infrastructure by focusing on long-term economic development is as important as remediying the shortcomings of preparedness systems. Better planning and investment decisions, not to mention better construction, can save both lives and property. Even smaller disasters – such as post-tsunami earthquakes or flooding – can keep poor, marginalised communities trapped in poverty and underdevelopment, making them much more vulnerable to disasters than other communities.

“Humanitarian aid needs to invest more in prevention and go beyond food, medicine and immediate needs,” observes the United Nations’ International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). “Donors need to think about the longer term and include prevention in aid packages. We are trapped in a reactive, rather than proactive, development trajectory. We can no longer afford to rebuild buildings which will collapse again in the face of a similar disaster.”

Governments around the region are taking the advice to “be proactive” to heart – especially since the reminders of the high levels of risk in Southeast and South Asia are stark. In all, the region is now much better prepared than before, with new disaster preparedness structures established in four out of the five tsunami-affected countries. It is also using lessons from the tsunami response to prepare for a wide range of other, far more frequent natural disasters because, as United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared to the UN General Assembly in 2007: “The intensity of floods, droughts and extreme weather, perhaps made worse by climate change, have brought pain and suffering to many millions.”
Stronger Early Warning Systems

Important progress has been made in developing early tsunami warning capacities. Following intensive efforts by 29 governments around the Indian Ocean, a regional tsunami early warning system has been operational since 2006 as part of a coordination plan by UNESCO-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. All this represents an important complement to the stronger global commitment pledged by 168 governments to reduce multi-hazard risks and vulnerabilities under the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

Through the Deep-Ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART) system, 24 buoys have been placed in the Indian Ocean to warn countries in the region. The DART system monitors seismic activity on the sea floor, signalling buoys on the surface. The buoys then use satellite communications to pass on information to tsunami warning centres. In an earthquake, DART is designed to detect whether a tsunami will occur and pinpoint its height, location and time of landfall.

Linked to this regional system will be a new warning system in Indonesia. Launched in November 2008 with technical support from Germany, the United States, Japan and France, among others, the system was hailed by the United Nations Secretary-General as “a major step forward for countless people in the region.” Technical advice by the UN and its partners, including the International Tsunami Information Centre, is enabling the Indonesian national warning centre to develop procedures which will allow it to issue warnings within 5 minutes of detecting an earthquake. In India, meanwhile, “last-mile” connectivity implemented in Tamil Nadu is being replicated in other vulnerable coastal locations including Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry.

Thailand in particular has been a leader in numerous disaster risk management initiatives, and its early warning system is well-positioned to become a regional role model. After the tsunami, many factors influencing relief and recovery in other countries did not play a significant role in Thailand, where up to half of deaths were of foreign nationals, both tourists and migrant workers. This allowed as well as necessitated investment in disaster risk management. The country, like India, did not appeal for international financial assistance — although it welcomed technical assistance from organizations such as the United Nations and IFRC – and in fact itself became a donor to other affected nations.

Through ASEAN, the Thai Government swiftly proposed a regional tsunami early warning centre that would coordinate with various nations’ early warning systems to ensure complementarity. It established a Voluntary Trust Fund and donated US$10 million in seed money to it; additional funding came from donors such as Sweden. Thailand’s own disaster management system was deeply rooted in a civil defence tradition, incorporating traditionally response-oriented structures. After the tsunami, the government established the National Disaster Warning Centre, responsible for detecting earthquakes, assessing the possibility of a tsunami.
and issuing public warnings through 42 communications systems, 280 radio stations and SMS messages to 20 million mobile phones. In addition, the early warning system is taken to the local level, linked with loudspeakers in rural villages and with more than 100 warning towers along the coast. The Royal Thai Navy also operates sea-level gauges as part of the overall DART system, allowing in-country analysis of sea level changes immediately after an earthquake and empowering the government to make critical tsunami warning decisions independent of external inputs.

Likewise, the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), under the Ministry of Interior, initiated the development of a comprehensive disaster database as a national clearinghouse of information. Combining previous databases that could not be used together because each employed different software, the new system is based on a “one-stop map server” – including high-resolution satellite images, aerial photographs and base infrastructure maps – and is supported by the Thailand International Cooperation Agency, UNDP and IFRC.

At the same time, capacity to reach remote areas inside the country remains less developed. A significant number of people in Thailand – up to 10 percent — still live outside of communications loops or may lack resources to prepare adequately. Further strengthening is also required to coordinate nationwide multi-hazard monitoring and warning, offsetting a residual undercurrent of ambiguity over roles. Support from numerous international organisations is helping to clarify these roles, and the Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Act, enacted in November 2007, sets up a high-level system of command for disasters.

In India, the tsunami galvanized and re-energized the national dialogue on disaster management, ultimately resulting in a Disaster Management Act (DMA). DMA now provides an institutional mechanism for drawing up and monitoring the implementation of disaster management plans, ensuring measures by various wings of government for prevention and mitigating effects of disasters and for undertaking a coordinated and prompt response to any disaster situation. Critically, a National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) was created alongside the DMA, and was given the mandate to lay down policies, plans and guidelines for disaster management all across the country.

As elsewhere, this reform process in India was guided by the realisation that previous disaster management routines would not be sufficient, reactive and relief centric as they were. The creation of a broader, more holistic, disaster management system therefore represented a significant paradigm, heralding a move towards integrated approaches and an emphasis on pre-disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. In addition to implementing key disaster policies and plans, NDMA is also responsible for guiding the functioning of the National Institute for Disaster Management, the entity created specifically to build national capacity in the area of disaster mitigation and response. A recent high profile initiative is a programme to educate engineers and architects in earthquake risk management including seismic-safe construction. The aim is to train 20,000 professionals by 2010.
Fully Involving Communities

However, preparedness is not just about high-tech early warning systems. For such systems to work, community consultation and dialogue are essential for giving everyone – villagers, community leaders and local officials, with particular emphasis on women – the opportunity to express views. This will ensure that community-by-community and household-by-household disaster preparedness plans are grounded in reality and have the necessary “buy-in.”

The establishment of effective, holistic, response plans will require the inclusion of women. However, the potential for active participation of women and the addressing of gender issues through the early warning system is not yet fully realised in many countries despite numerous attempts, with further efforts needed to collect gender-disaggregated data and analyze women’s vulnerabilities and early warning needs. Still, expanding women’s traditional roles in emergency preparedness is an ongoing project under way in several countries because of post-tsunami organising by women’s groups.

Thai women, among others, are well-placed to participate in risk assessments and the promotion of disaster risk reduction, ensuring consideration of specific concerns such as physical strength, security and protection. “The tsunami destroyed so much, but we have been able to get up, pick up the pieces and learn new skills,” says Wilairat Hadden, a woman from Ban Koh Muk. “As mothers, we always think about our children’s futures. We can now prepare them for these challenges in life. If another wave comes, they should be ready.”

Even before the tsunami, large community-based disaster risk management programmes existed in vulnerable areas in countries such as India – where they have been credited for capacity strengthening in search and rescue, first aid and evacuation methods that resulted in saving countless lives during the disaster as well as minimising damage to assets and livelihoods. Post-tsunami, excellent opportunities have been presented for deepening community disaster risk management across the region, setting up local and national partnerships.

In Thailand, community-based disaster risk management projects also started before the tsunami, but were
focused primarily on floods and landslides. These early attempts reached the tambon (sub-district) level, and it was recognised that additional training was needed to incorporate a multi-hazard approach.\textsuperscript{51} After the tsunami, these efforts were intensified and included training of provincial officials in crisis management and needs analysis. Custom-made training was also provided to DDPM, local authorities and the Thai Red Cross so that they could better support community-based efforts.\textsuperscript{52} Involvement of NGOs and the private sector, including the Coca-Cola Company as well as hotels and businesses connected to the tourism industry, has been critical.

The National Disaster Warning Centre promoted the use of locally designed work plans for disaster preparedness and response, with UNDP support. The most effective work plans were selected from 24 villages and schools to demonstrate practical community techniques, for possible scaling up. Communities were extremely vocal in discussing their own disaster preparedness, says Håkan Börjman, currently UNDP Country Director in Indonesia and former Deputy Resident Representative in Thailand during the tsunami. In Ban Nam Khem, a small town destroyed by the tsunami, “people were looking at proposed evacuation routes and advising, ‘We can’t run across this field, we can’t jump over this fence.’ Focus groups were formed and culminated in public meetings – it was very important for people to trust these plans.”

Training of a number of community leaders, teachers, local disaster managers and media personnel has demonstrated the use of response techniques. In particular, some 600 teachers at 415 schools in tsunami-prone areas participated in an interactive workshop on multi-hazard disaster preparedness. This is being expanded into other high-risk areas, with the aim of reaching 30,000 schools and involving provincial, district and local officials. In at-risk provinces, schools also were invited to propose activities to be undertaken at the initiative of students. In addition, opportunities for including disaster risk reduction in the school curricula have been explored, and annual evacuation exercises in model schools and tsunami-affected coastal communities have particularly been featured.

Community vulnerability mapping is also expanding in Thailand. Ideally, this includes social, economic and environmental factors as well as the perception of risks, community concerns and coping strategies, which often

\textbf{Box 5.1}

\textbf{Taking DRM Seriously: Lessons from Madagascar and Tanzania}

Although the epicentre of the earthquake that caused the tsunami in 2004 was in the Indian ocean close to Indonesia, the tsunami reached the eastern coast of Africa. The island nation of Madagascar was spared human fatalities, though some 1,000 people were rendered homeless as waves flooded low-level coastal districts. The towns of Manakara, Sambava and Vohemar were among the worst affected with many fishing boats reported destroyed or missing. Despite the relatively low levels of damage in Madagascar, the post-tsunami recovery operation here was seized upon as a window of opportunity to improve community resilience to future disasters. In close cooperation with UN executing agencies, NGOs and civil society, a National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management was implemented in 2005, with a view to strengthen emergency preparedness and response mechanisms:

♦ Disaster risk management committees were established in high-risk zones
♦ A cyclone and tsunami early warning system was made operational
♦ Aid distribution monitoring mechanisms were established
♦ Early warning workshops were held in district capitals and disaster-related issues integrated into school curricula

Similarly in Tanzania, on the eastern coast of Africa, the impact of the tsunami on Tanzania was relatively moderate in the overall scale of the disaster, with a death toll of ten. Nonetheless the damage sustained served as a stark awakening for the Tanzanian government to the real threat that natural disasters pose to the country’s hard won development gains. Tanzania was among eight ‘non-epicentre’ countries included in a study by the United Nations/International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) which underscored both a lack of political commitment to and poor public awareness of disaster risk mitigation. Responding to these findings and in line with recommendations set out in the Hyogo framework, the Tanzanian government proactively worked to formulate institutional policies and legislative frameworks for disaster risk reduction. These included new initiatives to train primary school teachers and mainstream disaster risk reduction knowledge into school curricula, with a view to develop a culture of safety and resilience at the community level.
vary between women and men. Often, the only way to collect vulnerability data is to go from village to village and conduct gender-inclusive participatory research. Under a grant from USAID, the Disaster Tracking and Recording Assessment Centre is researching tsunami-affected areas to identify gaps in the “last mile,” highlighting vulnerable people who live outside the early warning system.

Healthy coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, estuaries, wetlands and sandy beaches, protect against the force of tsunamis and storm surges and contribute to disaster risk reduction while providing diverse livelihoods, sufficient nutritious food, shelter and access to goods for communities. In parts of Thailand and elsewhere, for example, the impact of the tsunami varied with the profile of the beaches and the angle of the waves, a result of the natural defences’ value. The affected area is home to some of the world’s most diverse coral reef ecosystems, some of which experienced damage of up to 80 percent. Sea grass beds, an important food source for many threatened animals, also were affected. In good news, however, scientists are reporting a rapid recovery for some coral reefs damaged by the tsunami; it had previously been feared that reefs off Indonesia, for example, could take a decade to recover.

Several organisations and programmes, such as Mangroves for the Future, now focus on the humanitarian implications of failure to protect coastal ecosystems (see Box 5.2). But while most people are aware of the importance of resource-based industries such as ecotourism and fisheries to coastal economies, there is less comprehension of just how important these goods and raw materials are in terms of their multiplier effects nationally and locally. In southern Thailand, for example, traditional use of mangrove products is thought to generate products worth almost a quarter of per-capita GDP among coastal villages.

“A key concept for Mangroves for the Future is community resilience,” says Don Macintosh, MFF Programme Coordinator. “This is not just the ability to survive a disaster, but the ability to provide for the community’s daily existence – fishing, firewood and everything else. Human populations in coastal areas need to be able to adapt to changes that are coming, and this will require building both the resilience of communities themselves,
and of the ecosystems and natural resources upon which they depend."

A ‘Road Map’ to Reduce Disaster Risk

Since the tsunami, Sri Lanka likewise has come a long way in establishing disaster management-related systems. The Government developed a "road map" identifying more than 100 investments to reduce disaster risk, totalling US$600 million over 10 years. The road map is organised around seven themes: (1) policy, institutional mandates and institutional development; (2) hazard vulnerability and risk assessment; (3) tsunami and multi-hazard early warning system; (4) preparedness and response plans; (5) mitigation and integration of disaster risk reduction into development planning; (6) community-based disaster risk management; and (7) public awareness, education and training. Thus, it aims to provide an overall framework for disaster risk management and attempts to unify efforts at national, provincial, district and local levels, classifying projects as short-, medium- and long-term priorities.

Already the road map has yielded practical results: under it, numerous innovative initiatives have begun toward a multi-hazard approach for disaster management. National, district and village disaster management committees have been formed and capacity development started in both planning and skills such as first aid, search and rescue, and swimming. At district level, leadership skill development and networking have been emphasised, while community disaster management has promoted the incorporation of traditional knowledge. Engineering designs to build hazard-resistant buildings have been identified, and efforts to reach even the most remote communities are under way.

In addition, the Disaster Management Act that had been under discussion for about a decade was passed in May 2005. Although the Act is largely focused on risk assessment and emergency response planning, it is complemented by the comprehensive nature of the 10-year road map. Six months after passage of the Act, disaster management was elevated to the ministerial

Mangroves for the Future

When former UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery Bill Clinton planted a mangrove tree in Phuket, Thailand, for the second anniversary of the tsunami, it began a unique partnership to promote investment in coastal ecosystems and ensure sustainable use of resources. Envisioning a healthier, more prosperous and secure future for Indian Ocean communities, Mangroves for the Future (MFF) is the product of the tsunami’s dramatic illustration of the vulnerability of coastal zones deprived of natural buffers such as mangroves or coral reefs.

MFF offers an opportunity to merge the world of development with the world of conservation – and to show that investment in ecosystems can generate tangible benefits to people and their livelihoods, in a context of more than 400 regional disasters annually. Yet not only natural hazards such as the tsunami threaten – over-fishing, marine pollution and coastal erosion also call for an urgent response.

MFF works in the six tsunami-affected countries of India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Thailand and looks to promote an ocean-wide approach to coastal zone management with Bangladesh, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Tanzania and Viet Nam. The organisation focuses on building knowledge, empowerment, and enhancing governance. In Thailand’s Ranong and Phang Nga provinces, as well as in Sri Lanka, MFF is applying a “reef to ridge” approach to rehabilitate and conserve critically degraded ecosystems. Under a project funded by the German Federal Government (BMZ), it is demonstrating a number of simple but powerful tools fundamental to the future of ecosystems conservation. These include gathering information on communities’ physical and socioeconomic assets; analyzing land-based activities that affect coastal ecosystems, such as the encroachment of rubber and palm oil plantations; combining scientific and local knowledge; and enhancing community management and monitoring capabilities. Direct support is provided to environmentally sustainable livelihoods that promote low-impact, high-benefit microenterprise growth.

MFF brings together six international agencies, including the co-chairs International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization, CARE, and Wetlands International, along with donors such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Governments of Germany and Norway. In each focal country, the partnership approach also is reflected at project level, with activities implemented through a decentralized structure comprising government, NGOs and community-based organizations and/or the private sector. Further details are available at http://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org.
level with the establishment of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights (see Chapter 1). In accordance with the Act, the National Council for Disaster Management (NCDM), chaired by the President, and the lead Disaster Management Centre (DMC) were established, sending out a message that disaster management was being taken seriously.

The DMC is decentralising disaster risk management to intermediate and local levels, while enhancing capacities to confront calamities more systematically. In so doing, it has recognised that the exchange of information and easily accessible communication play key roles, and that information is vital to ensuring that affected populations have a voice in recovery (see Box 5.3). The last 30 years of disasters were documented at district and divisional levels (www.dmc.gov.lk) so vulnerable areas could be identified and contingency plans developed.

People are preparing themselves for disaster so that the risk is minimized,” says U.W.L. Chandradasa, Director of Mitigation and Information Technology in the DMC.

Moreover, a real test for tsunami early warning came on 12 September 2007. “Following an earthquake which occurred off the coast of Indonesia, I had the information on my table within 15 minutes, enabling us to evaluate and take a decision to evacuate the coastal area,” says Mahinda Samarasinghe, Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights, who championed the establishment of the disaster management process in Sri Lanka. “Within 45 minutes, the authorities were able to get the people out of coastal areas using the systems put in place after the tsunami.”
Profiling Hazards of Vulnerable Islands

In 2000, the World Meteorological Organisation concluded that the natural event of most concern to the Maldives would be a tsunami caused by an earthquake off Sumatra, the Indonesian island where Aceh is located. Four years later this turned out to be spot-on. Says Hon. Minister Abdulla Shahid, the Maldives’ State Minister for Housing, Transportation and Environment: “If we had known about this risk and prepared for it, many lives could have been saved and the damage to our economy minimised.”

With this in mind, the Government of Maldives, supported by UNDP and IFRC, established a disaster risk management programme after the 2004 tsunami to minimize the impact of future disasters. Disaster risk management is being incorporated into development, governance and day-to-day life, encouraging preparedness and management at all levels.

For effective risk management, it is important to assess specific hazards historically faced by people in a certain area; to understand the capacities and vulnerabilities of different groups; and to recognise national and local institutional capacities and gaps. Maldives’ first disaster risk profile, created after the tsunami and based on Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping, answers these questions and is an innovative approach to disaster management. In partnership with RMSI, an Indian company that specialises in geospatial solutions and risk modelling, and with SEEDS, an Indian non-profit organisation working to make vulnerable communities more resilient to disasters, UNDP supported a countrywide study of 1,037 islands, including 200 inhabited islands.

The probability of hazards was based on geological evidence, historical data and projections derived from theoretical analysis. Hazards considered included tsunamis, earthquakes, flood, climate change and storm (wind, extreme rainfall and storm surges). Individual islands then were assigned rankings for physical as well as social vulnerability, to facilitate better planning and judicious use of resources for development. The final product was a matrix with each island’s name and a risk score of 1 to 5 for each hazard, as well as all hazards together. Community preparedness plans also were supported in nearly 40 islands, as well as in tourist resort islands.
“In retrospect, it is apparent that there was an acute need for a comprehensive examination of where the risks from multiple hazards are concentrated in Maldives, and also who are most affected by them,” says Patrice Coeur-Bizot, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Maldives.

The disaster risk profile describes the risk scenario for Maldives as moderate overall, because of the low probability of hazards occurring – it was estimated that the huge tsunami that struck in 2004 would not occur again for more than two centuries – but a high vulnerability arising from geographical, topographical and socioeconomic factors in the islands. Significantly, the government has used the report as a key input for development strategies to mitigate climate change and future disasters, particularly in developing a “Safer Islands” programme. It has conducted detailed risk assessments of nine sites – potential safer islands, based on the risk profile – to provide incentives for voluntary migration, since some islands evacuated after the tsunami will not be resettled. Both UNDP and IFRC are supporting the Safer Islands initiative, which is strengthening the environmental resilience of islands and communities while physical features are being redesigned. This includes creating wider environmental protection zones, making schools and public buildings at least two storeys high to allow for “vertical evacuation,” and making house construction conform to higher standards.

Ensure Sustainability

While mainstreaming disaster risk management into development instruments is critical to achieving development aims without generating new risks, mainstreaming sensitivity to gender concerns also is essential, given that women and girls are especially at risk in disasters and equally powerful agents of change for disaster resilience. In particular, the Gender Exit Strategy developed by BRR in Indonesia identifies specific strategies for maintaining a focus on gender equality in future risk reduction efforts. Sustainability of all these efforts remains a major issue, however, given that natural disasters put development gains at risk, even as development choices can pave the way for unequal distributions of risk.

As noted in the 2008 joint follow-up evaluation of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition’s Study on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development, one way that risk reduction is being sustained in all tsunami-affected countries is through institutions created for this purpose, such as the long-awaited Disaster Management Act in Sri Lanka and the country’s 10-year “road map.” Still, much remains to be done, and the significance of contemporary decision-making for disaster risks that may be experienced by future generations cannot be underestimated.

“There have been a lot of unsustainable efforts,” concedes UNDP’s Håkan Björkman. “Sometimes there have been fancy tsunami drills just for show. But once disaster risk reduction is properly done, it lasts. It does so because people affected will not forget – and it’s going to take several generations before the people start forgetting about the tsunami.”
Saying Yes to Change

- Mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR) in development policies and programmes, including gender and development initiatives. DRR can not be treated as a purely technical undertaking; in vulnerable communities it should be a core feature of all programming.

- Empower community groups to build resilience and protect themselves from disasters by building on local knowledge and strengthening capacity.

- Value indigenous knowledge and technologies for early warning and mainstream gender in all risk communication strategies.

- Commit more firmly to women’s and men’s right to know, raising awareness, enabling people to make informed decisions and strengthening capacities to advocate.

- Build accessible and easy-to-use disaster information management system from cost-effective, sustainable open-source software so that all parties can work together and easily access data. Having a common baseline by which to judge both challenges and gains – and having common tools to access these – is critical for efficient policy making.

- Improve “last-mile connectivity”. No matter how impressive the technology, early warning systems will not deliver as promised unless they reach out to the totality of the population, even those living without phones and in isolated areas.

- Encourage and ensure community participation in the implementation of disaster risk management policy through extensive consultations

- Enact robust disaster response legislation, incorporating learnings from the tsunami experience. Future DRR regimes – from the national down to the local level – need to be informed by multi-hazard understanding of disasters, and be equipped to respond accordingly.

- Build on the momentum created by the tsunami to create early warning systems across the Indian Ocean rim. In as much as possible, foster inter-regional and cross-border information sharing between national and regional systems.
Will We Do Better Next Time?
The tsunami tragedy, generated by the profoundly indifferent forces of the Earth’s surface, was burned into the world’s collective memory. But if another tsunami happened tomorrow, would the response from governments and the international community be stronger and better? Can we multiply our successes, learn from our shortfalls and apply this in the future for both emergency relief and longer-term recovery?

“Even nearly five years after the tsunami, public scrutiny is still high in terms of people wanting to know that their individual financial support or investments made by their government have been worthwhile,” says Bob McKerrow, head of the IFRC delegation in Indonesia.

You only know lessons have really been learned when you stop thinking about them and simply do them. As time moves on, the authors of this report hope the latter rather than the former will be the case.

Particularly in light of the current global financial crisis, however, many of those interviewed for this report noted that the tsunami was a unique event that received unprecedented funds and global attention. “No other recovery ever had the resources that this one had, and I can guarantee that no other recovery ever will,” declares Mihir Bhatt of the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute. “Whatever innovations we think are replicable have to be at a low-cost level.”

Luckily, the most important lessons we have learned are not necessarily those that depend on the availability of large amounts of funding. Effective leadership and coordination, beginning at the grassroots and involving Governments and development organisations alike, can go a long way in ensuring an efficient and sustainable recovery. And while coordination and leadership may be more easily talked about than put into practice, they remain particularly important in a disaster context where chaos goes hand in hand with calamity. We have learned that Governments need to listen and respond to the voices of those most affected – including those normally not consulted, especially women.

However, Governments cannot be alone in solving the leadership equation. The many delivery partners who make up the reconstruction community must also develop the quality and effectiveness of their leadership. NGOs must invest in top flight managers who can deliver the breakthrough initiatives required for programme success. For the sake of a measured and strategic approach to recovery, arguments dismissing management as a cost overhead can no longer be accepted.

We have learned that accountability and preparedness are critical, as is a willingness to take risks and embed institutional as well as cultural reform amid disaster response. This must include serious reflection and be a continuous process through which weaknesses are overturned and strengths capitalised upon.

We have also learned that despite the horrifying nature of that day of devastation in 2004, it is broader, longer-term development issues that impose the biggest constraints on the affected countries. Of the many challenges and priorities identified, gender-sensitive recovery programmes stand out as particularly important – recovery actors need to address underlying problems, not just the issues that come to the fore following a disaster.

Our most important lesson, however, is that disasters themselves should be seen as opportunities for reform and improvement. What stands out in this report is that governments in all five of the most tsunami-affected countries embraced change as a core ethic to confront this catastrophe. The importance and rewards of implementing participatory approaches and addressing social inequities even in emergency situations has become clear. Most of the reforms and new operational arrangements adopted have since been institutionalized in one form or another. The challenge now is to constantly build on and improve these new institutional arrangements. Change must be embraced, not for its own sake, but rather because in a disaster, organisational weaknesses will be severely tested and exposed. Continuous improvement is the only way to ensure all new institutional arrangements remain robust and relevant.
Finally, while we have divided the story of the tsunami recovery efforts into five themes in this report, we have learned that these themes do not stand alone. For example, while leadership and coordination play a vital role in effective recovery, without effective accountability, people’s participation, a careful consideration of equity and investment in disaster risk mitigation, the recovery remains incomplete and does not succeed in building back better. Thus we have learned that it is not enough to focus on one aspect of recovery at the cost of others. The recovery community needs to consider and address disaster response in its entirety, rather than take sectoral approaches, hoping that all individual efforts will somehow fit together in the end.

As former United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Bill Clinton, has declared, “In every recovery process, there will be flawed assumptions and decisions that we regret. Hopefully, there will also be innovations worth replicating and stories of progress to highlight.” We have tried to highlight such innovations in this report.

Perhaps the lesson we have struggled most to learn, however, is that when everyone shares the same ethical values, development goals and strategic objectives, it contributes to the effectiveness of the desired outcome – that is, to help those affected by unthinkable disaster rebuild their lives.

We have learned all this, and we have changed. In the future, we are going to have to do it together and do it better. That is our persistent challenge.
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN-HABITAT</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlement Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIC</td>
<td>United Nations Information Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNICEF</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNIDO</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNIFEM</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNOCHA</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNOPS</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Office for Project Services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNORC</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNV</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USAID</strong></td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WB</strong></td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEC</strong></td>
<td>Women’s Entrepreneurship Council, Maldives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WFP</strong></td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHO</strong></td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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</table>
Annex 1: Bibliography


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Photos in this publication have been sourced from IFRC, UN agencies, NGOs and governments of tsunami-affected countries.
Annex 2: List of Interviewees

INDIA

Benjamin Larroquette, Tsunami Recovery Manager, United Nations Team for Tsunami Recovery Support, Chennai

C. M. Muralidharan, Fisheries Co-ordinator, Food and Agriculture Organization

C. V. Sankar, Former Officer on Special Duty, Relief and Rehabilitation, Tamil Nadu

Chaman Pincha, Independent Consultant, Chennai

Deepthi Sukumar, Emergency Programme Officer, Christian Aid, Chennai

K. Baskaran, Joint Commissioner (Relief and Rehabilitation), Government of Tamil Nadu

Karthick Rose, Beneficiary, Chennai

Mihir Bhatt, Director, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute

Pieter Bult, Deputy Country Director, United Nations Development Programme India

T. R. Shyam Sundar, Emergency Programme Coordinator, Christian Aid, Chennai

Vanessa Peter, Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Representative, ActionAid India

Eddie Daradjat, Chief Information Officer, BRR, Banda Aceh

Eddy Purwanto, Deputy Chief of Operations, BRR, Banda Aceh

Eka Sri Mulyani, Gender Advisor, AusAid/ Local Governance and Infrastructure for Communities in Aceh (LOGICA)

Erna Heryani, Director, Land Administration and Mapping - Joint Land Titling Initiative, BRR

Fabrice Boussalem, Recovery Affairs Advisor (Post-Conflict), UNORC, Banda Aceh

Håkan Björkman, Country Director, UNDP

Heru Prasetyo, Director, Donor and International Relations, BRR

Illiza Sa’aduddin Djamal, Vice Mayor, Banda Aceh

Imelda Leiwakabessy, Organization Development Advisor, Mayor’s Office, Banda Aceh

Ita F. Nadia, Gender Technical Advisor, UNIFEM

John Paterson, Chief of Archives, BRR, Banda Aceh

Kayonisah, Deputy Head, Balai Inong Consortium

Khairani Arifin, General Secretary, Relawan Perempuan Untuk Kemanusiaan (RPuK - Women’s Volunteers for Humanity)

Kunarto Mangkusubroto, Director, BRR, Banda Aceh

Marcus Holknekt, Strategic Policy and Communications Officer, UNORC, Banda Aceh

Maysarah, Deputy Head, Balai Inong Consortium

Nicola Demme, CIM Advisor to the Vice-Mayor for Gender and Organizational Development, Banda Aceh

Nur Aisyah Usman, Manager, Gender Unit, BRR

INDONESIA

Alex Schein, Chief of Party, Save the Children, Aceh office

Amara Bains, Deputy Head of Delegation, IFRC, Jakarta

Amin Subekti, Chief Finance Officer, BRR, Banda Aceh

Bill Nicol, Senior Advisor to Director of BRR, Jakarta

Bob McKerrow, Head of Delegation, IFRC, Jakarta

Chris Clark, Head, Logistics Support Unit NAD-Nias, World Food Programme, Banda Aceh

Deepty Tiwari, Kabupaten/Kota Recovery Forum Coordination Officer, UNORC, Banda Aceh

Khairani Arifin, General Secretary, Relawan Perempuan Untuk Kemanusiaan (RPuK - Women’s Volunteers for Humanity)
Paul Greening, Project Manager, Post Conflict and Reintegration Programme, International Organization for Migration, Banda Aceh

Pieter Schmidt, Head, Extended Mission in Sumatera, Asian Development Bank

Raihan Putry Ali Muhammad, Head, Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection Agency

Rasyidah, Head, Balai Inong Consortium

Ram Shankar, Assistant Resident Representative (Programme) and Recovery Manager, UNDP

Raniya Sobir, Assistant Resident Representative, Poverty Reduction Programme, UNDP

Hon. Minister Abdulla Shahid, State Minister for Housing, Transportation and Environment, Government of Maldives

SRI LANKA

Rasyidah, Lecturer, Islamic State University of Ar-Raniry and Women’s Policy Network, Banda Aceh

Ananda Lecamwasam, Senior Project Consultant, Community Recovery and Reconstruction Partnership, Sri Lanka Red Cross

Ricky Sugiaro, Office of the Director of BRR, Banda Aceh

Dilrukshi Fonseka, Team Leader, UNDP

Rosnawardhani, Syariah Court Judge and Women’s Policy Network, Banda Aceh

Gamini Hettiarachchi, Director General, Disaster Management Centre

S. Z. M. Shariful Islam, Deputy Head and Aid Coordination Advisor, UNORC, Banda Aceh

Gaya Hapuarachchi, Senior Programme Manager, IFRC

Samsidar, Aceh Program Coordinator, International Center for Transitional Justice

Hari Krishna, India Humanitarian Representative and Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist, South Asia, Oxfam America

Satya Tripathi, UN Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias, UNORC

Jayantha Kudahetty, Chief Executive Officer, Damrivi Foundation

Safirza Sofjan, Deputy MDF, World Bank

Jeevan Thiagarajah, Executive Director, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies

Samsidar, Acch Program Coordinator, International Center for Transitional Justice

John Holder, Specialist on Community-Based Disaster Risk Management, IFRC

Beneficiaries (3 women and 2 men), Joint Land Titling, Banda Aceh

Kala Peiris De Costa, Executive Director, Siyath Foundation

MALDIVES

Alastair Burnett, Head of Mission in the Maldives, British Red Cross Society

Ananda Lecamwasam, Senior Project Consultant, Community Recovery and Reconstruction Partnership, Sri Lanka Red Cross

Dan Curtiss, Chief of Delegation, American Red Cross Society

Paul Emes, Chief of Delegation, IFRC

Fathimath Nizam, Assistant Director, Care Society

R. Tharmakulasingam Additional Secretary, Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development

Ibrahim Fawaz, Disaster Management Programme Officer, IFRC

Rachel Perez, Former Focal Point on the Donor Assistance Database for the Reconstruction and Development Agency

Maria Gemma Perez, Disaster Management Officer, UNDP

Rajendrakumar Ganesarajah, Programme Specialist, UNDP

Mohamed Imad, Director General, Department of National Planning

Ravi Samithadass, Programme Assistant, International Labour Organization Area Office, Colombo

Murthala Mohamed Didi, Director, National Disaster Management Centre

Mana Gunatilaka, Executive Director, National Committee on Women

Pamela Davis, Manager, Coordination, Quality and Accountability, Canadian Red Cross
Sepali Kottegoda, Director, Women and Media Collective
Shyamala Gomez, Women’s Housing Rights Officer, Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Sushila Gunawardena, President, Dharamcharini Foundation
Thiloma Munasinghe, National Coordinator, Gender Based Violence Programme, UNDP
Tine Staermose, Director, International Labour Organization Area Office, Colombo
U.W.L. Chandradasa, Director, Technology and Mitigation, Disaster Management Centre, Colombo
Y.K.H. De Silva, Consultant, Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit, Human Rights Commission, Colombo

Brett Tan, Project Management Advisor, Koh Lanta Project of the United Nations Development Programme Thailand
Opart Panya, Evaluator, Koh Lanta Project of the United Nations Development Programme Thailand
Robert Ondrusek, Advisor, Tsunami Recovery Impact Assessment and Monitoring System, IFRC Regional Delegation, Bangkok
Sirilucksana Duangkeo, Chief, Research and Development Sub-Bureau, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior, Bangkok
Sirisupa Kulthanan, Assistant Resident Representative (Programme), UNDP, Bangkok
Yuxue Xue, Deputy Resident Representative (Programme), UNDP, Bangkok

THAILAND

Atiwan Kunaphinun, Disaster Management Programme Officer, Thailand Tsunami Recovery Programme, IFRC
Annex 3: Endnotes


2. Confirmed by reports from OCHA/UNDP/Government of Indonesia, IFRC, Oxfam and Government of France, among others.

3. Under the leadership of the Manager, UNTRS, one team comprising more than 60 staff from Agencies including FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO was formed. Joint programming and team building exercises were used to reinforce this oneness. See also United Nations in India, *Three Years After*, http://www.un.org.in/untrs/reports/3_Year_Tsunami_Report_UNTRS.pdf


6. Equity is key in the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, the SPHERE Project’s Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, endorsed by 17 donor governments and inter-governmental organizations, and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. UNDP’s Eight-Point Agenda for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery also recognizes women’s rights to protection from violence, alternative livelihoods and gender-fair assistance and emphasizes the need to engage women as decision makers.


8. This sectoral over-concentration of aid resulted in an oversupply of new houses, as well as in a fishing overcapacity estimated at 70 percent higher than pre-tsunami level. http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/publication/working_paper_regnier.pdf

9. Dalits are labelled as “untouchables” or low-caste in the Hindu caste system, widely practiced in India.


15. Likewise, one NGO reported that in Indonesia, “Coordinators in charge of relief work are not gender-sensitive. They think giving cooking utensils and washing detergent equals meeting women’s
needs.” (Flower Aceh, in Post-Tsunami Aceh: It Takes a Woman to Rebuild a Village, Christian Science Monitor, 21 July 2005)

16. For example, the Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Centre provided policy support, communicated district-level needs to state actors and coordinated state actors. It counted among its advisory board representatives of the Government of Tamil Nadu, UNDP, Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision, Plan International, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas India, civil society and the private sector.


18. Some examples are from Turning the Tide, a publication conceptualized by the United Nations Team for Tsunami Recovery Support and executed by CARE India and Save the Children. http://www.tn.gov.in/tsunami/TurningTheTide.pdf


20. Pincha, Chaman. Indian Ocean Tsunami Through the Gender Lens: Insights from Tamil Nadu, 2008b, p. 98.


22. Ibid.


27. Approaches to Equity in Post-Tsunami Assistance, Sri Lanka: A Case Study, Office of the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery/Department for International Development, Government of the United Kingdom; Joint Follow-Up Evaluation of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition -- Second Study on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (TEC LRRD 2)


31. In Aceh, initiatives that aim to achieve this include ARF, KRFs and a comprehensive action plan for post-conflict recovery. However, the Government also faces the paradox of having substantial provincial/district resources for the next 25 years – estimated at US$1.7 billion annually – with limited capacity to transform these into economic development, job opportunities and social welfare for most.


34. Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, ibid.


41. According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index, widely used as a guide to corruption levels by NGOs, governments and international organizations, in 2006 Indonesia ranked 143rd out of 180 countries; this was in the midst of tsunami recovery. Despite this, disbursement of committed recovery funds has remained very high, at more than 70 percent, with a further 23 percent still being implemented. The rate of transfer from pledge to implementation likewise is remarkable.

42. These include all funds channeled through the Government from sources including the Indonesian Government itself (“on budget, on Treasury”), as well as governments of other countries, United Nations Agencies and international NGOs (“on budget, off Treasury”).

43. The link between RAND and the overall Reconstruction Programme was the Project Concept Note, which represented the start of link between the two components.

44. The survey-based HGD allows monitoring of assets to verify claims made on RAND; because HGD will be expanded to include all assets, much of the RAND data will be verified in this manner.


49. It is not known what percentage of people does not receive warnings; at the same time, it is thought that 51 provinces and 2,000 villages have a high potential for disaster (DDPM interviews).


52. UNDP Thailand, “Lessons Learned on Tsunami Responses,” PowerPoint presentation


Annex 4: 
TGLL Project Steering Committee

Chair:
Dr Kuntoro Mangkusubroto
Director, The Executing Agency for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitations of Aceh and Nias - BRR, Indonesia
Jl. Ir. Muhammad Thaher No. 20
Lueng Bata
Banda Aceh 23247, Indonesia

Member:
Jerry Talbot,
Special Representative of the IFRC Secretary General for Tsunami Recovery,
International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies
Chemin des Crêts, 17
Petit-Saconnex
Geneva, Switzerland

Member:
Satya S Tripathi,
UN Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias,
United Nations Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias (UNORC)
Jalan Jenderal Sudirman #15, Geuceu Kayee Jato
Banda Aceh 23239, Indonesia
Tsunami Global Lessons Learned Project