



UN COUNTRY TEAM
THAILAND



BUILDING BACK BETTER IN THAILAND TSUNAMI AFFECTED AREAS

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TSUNAMI IN THAILAND

THAILAND TSUNAMI-AFFECTED AREAS - PHUKET, KRABI, PHANG NGA, RANONG, TRANG AND SATUN

The tsunami of December 2004 affected six provinces along Thailand's Andaman coast. It had an impact on 407 villages, completely destroying 47 of them, and killing more than 8,200 people. As of December 2005, 929 bodies remained unidentified, though by May 2006 this number had been reduced to around 500; these bodies are at the Bang Maruan cemetery in Phang Nga. The tsunami also orphaned 1,637 children. Adults and children alike will take years to recover from the psychosocial effects and the widespread loss of livelihoods.

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Thailand: Andaman provinces affected by tsunami

Cover images (top left to bottom right): UNFPA Thailand/2005; IOM Thailand 2006; InsightOUT/2006/Win Ma; DPI Thailand 2005; UNDP Thailand 2005

THAILAND: AN EXAMPLE OF BUILDING BACK BETTER

Thailand was among the countries worst hit by the Asian tsunami of 26 December 2004 – the most severe natural disaster in the country's recent history. Nevertheless, after nineteen months, Thailand has today largely recovered. The local population who lost most or all of their belongings in the tsunami, are now well on their way to recovery, and the majority of those who were living in temporary camps have now moved to new homes. Damaged schools have now been repaired. Tourists too are now returning to the tsunami-affected areas – with important benefits for the local economy and people's livelihoods.

The key to this recovery has been the incredible efforts of the Royal Thai Government (RTG). These were supported by UN agencies and international donors who thus far have disbursed USD 10 million for tsunami relief as well as offering technical support to complement and enhance the Government's interventions. Thailand itself was also a donor to other countries hit by the tsunami.

The RTG has also given a very high priority to tsunami prevention and warning and has established a National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC) to reduce the loss of life and property in future disasters. In addition, it has developed tsunami-awareness materials appropriate to the needs, cultures and languages of local communities.

But this success is also due to the efforts of local communities. In both the emergency and the recovery phases they have done an excellent job and strengthened their capacity. As a result they now take more and more responsibility for the implementation of projects while external actors gradually lessen their roles to those of 'development facilitators'.

These efforts have also created opportunities to strengthen the links between local governments and minority groups.



*The pilot project focusing on small engine boat repair center in Nakha TAO.
Photo: ©UNDP Thailand/2006/ Chetna Lakhoo*

SERVICES TO HELP TSUNAMI SURVIVORS RESTORE MENTAL WELL-BEING

The traumatic event of 26 December 2004 left a legacy of individual and social distress that will require long-term attention. The RTG and a number of national and international agencies have been working to restore the psychological well-being of the tsunami survivors. The World Health Organization (WHO), for example, established a mental health recovery centre in Phang Nga to provide timely and carefully phased mental health services.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT TO CHILDREN IN SIX AFFECTED PROVINCES

One and a half years after the tsunami, hundreds of children in all affected provinces continue to suffer from stress disorders. Children show fear when they hear news about earthquakes or tsunamis and when seeing large waves. Most still have nightmares and many refuse to return to their former homes.

In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, more than 5,000 children in the six affected provinces were diagnosed with stress disorders. Many of these problems persist. In the worst affected province, Phang Nga, around 8 per cent of 300 monitored children are still believed to be suffering from serious mental illnesses, while 42 per cent still show symptoms of stress. Adults too are affected, and in total 2,000 patients in Phang Nga are receiving psychiatric therapy. Therapists continue to make house visits; where medication is prescribed they are also supported by psychiatrists. Those in need of intensive care are admitted to hospitals or the new psychiatric centre in Khao Lak. In June 2006, as many as 40 patients were hospitalized suffering from aggression or insomnia.



Children from Kuraburi are getting psychological healing by participating in performing arts workshop.
Photo: ©UNESCO Thailand/2006/Patravadi Theater

As well as benefiting from professional psychiatric treatment, children are also receiving psycho-social support from international organizations. In all six provinces, UNICEF, for example, has provided training on child rights, child protection and psycho-social care and recovery activities to more than 700 people, including government officials, child protection committee members, social workers, teachers and students.

UNESCO has also been offering opportunities for psychological healing, through performing arts – which are widely recognized as a valuable tool in post-disaster recovery. For two years UNESCO has organized a series of rehabilitation workshops on traditional performing arts and musical expression in Wat Samaki-dham and Baan Nai Lai communities in Kuraburi and Phang Nga provinces. Local communities have worked with artists to develop performances based on local arts that deal with issues relevant to the communities. To enhance the musical expression, these artistic pieces also included traditional drumming.

The last series of workshops demonstrated the effectiveness of such artistic expression in countering immediate trauma and restoring community spirit. The next step is to take this knowledge to the local population as a whole so as to provide opportunities for artisans to develop the potential of these techniques and promote cross-cultural dialogue.

The rehabilitation project is being implemented in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Performing Arts Network which has a special expertise on the potential of performing arts for psychological healing. This activity can also help UNESCO promote one of its more general priorities which is to protect the cultural heritage and promote intergenerational exchange within communities in which younger people are at risk of losing traditional wisdom

Story

InsightOUT

Little 11-year-old Kuk Kak Ton is excited. Tightly clutching a digital camera, his eyes light up as he talks about his latest photo project: a story about the dogs living near his impoverished sea gypsy community.

He is making this canine photo essay as part of a UNICEF-supported project called InsightOUT. During a series of 10-day workshops held after school and at weekends, the children are given simple digital cameras and expert tuition on how to shoot and write stories to express their hopes, fears and needs to the rest of their communities. By exploring their feelings in this way, children whose lives were devastated by the tsunami are helped to come to terms with the lasting psychological scars left by the receding waves. They also gain leadership skills, greater confidence in expressing themselves, and the feeling that their voices are being heard and that their opinions really matter.

For traumatized children, projects like this are an important part of the recovery process,” says Mark Thomas, UNICEF Thailand’s Communications Officer. “The dedication of the InsightOUT team’s staff, including volunteer photographers and writers, has helped these children further along the road to overcoming their deep feelings of loss and insecurity.”

InsightOUT brings together 65 children aged 10-17 from various parts of Phang Nga province. All of them suffered terribly in the 2004 disaster, losing family, friends and homes. In other ways, they are all different. They include Buddhist and Muslim Thais, sea gypsies like Kuk Kak Ton, and the children of Burmese migrant workers, such as 11-year-old May, who is creating a photo story about her family.

May arrived in Thailand a year ago. She attends a UNICEF-supported learning centre for migrant children. She cannot read or write yet, but is as excited as Ton by the chance to express herself through photography and show the world what she thinks.



Photo of how to make tanaka - a cooling powder made from tree bark that Burmese children like to wear on their faces to block the sun. Photo: ©InsightOUT/2006/ Win Maw

“This project is great fun because it is the first time I have ever touched a camera,” she says. “I want to blow my photos up and put them on walls and in places where a lot of people pass by.”

And she got the chance to do just that when all the children’s photos were displayed in a series of exhibitions in Thailand and abroad, starting in July with a month-long show at the Siam Paragon branch of the Kinokuniya book store.

The stories and photos are also being exchanged with those created by a further 64 children in Indonesia’s Aceh region, where UNICEF is supporting the InsightOUT team in running a parallel series of workshops for tsunami-affected children.

REACHING OUT TO THE MOST VULNERABLE

Health care in the tsunami-affected communities has been strengthened with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to provincial governments and to the World Vision Foundation of Thailand.

This has involved re-equipping and re-supplying damaged clinics and health centres in Phang Nga, Phuket, Ranong and Krabi as well as training staff to provide reproductive health information and services. To complement this, underserved communities receive visits from mobile clinics. Another priority is HIV prevention: the services include voluntary HIV testing and counselling and make condoms widely available through health centres, vending machines and distribution by volunteers.

Services have also been provided to migrants from Myanmar who previously had lacked access. World Vision mobile clinics, staffed by doctors and volunteers who speak the migrants' languages, provide communities with care and counselling. On 24 March 2006, for example, a mobile team visiting Baan Tab Lamu in Phang Nga learned that a woman was bleeding badly after taking pills to induce an abortion. They rushed her to Ta Kua Pa Hospital for emergency care and saved her life.

To involve communities in meeting the special needs of women, adolescents and the elderly, UNFPA, together with government and NGO partners, is supporting local health committees, youth centres and older persons clubs. These groups can help tsunami survivors cope with their loss. For example, one bereaved woman from Ranong had lost interest in keeping healthy or associating with others. World Vision volunteers encouraged her to join the older persons' club in Baan Ao Koei, where she meets with fellow survivors and takes part in group exercises. Now she says she feels strong and fulfilled and eager to lead an active life.



Counseling for older persons and health care through home visits of community health volunteers
Photo: ©UNFPA-Thailand/2006



The mobile clinic, under UNFPA funded project, implemented by the World Vision Foundation of Thailand (WVFT) in collaboration with the Provincial Public Health Office. Photo: ©UNFPA-Thailand/2006/Viennarat

AIDS PREVENTION AND LIFE-SKILLS TRAINING

The tsunami also increased the risks of HIV transmission. This is first because it interrupted access to essential public and community services. But more generally it also undermined social stability and personal security, heightened the risk of sexual- and gender-based violence and threatened the break-up of family units. Many workers also became more vulnerable due to the reconstruction activity which employed many more mobile workers. Perhaps most important for longer-term vulnerability to HIV infection, for thousands of people the tsunami also destroyed incomes, assets and livelihoods.

In order to address fears of increasing HIV and AIDS vulnerability among young people who have lost family members or household income, UNICEF has trained 32 trainers on HIV and AIDS prevention and life-skills, has conducted youth leadership and occupational development activities for 200 Muslim youth, and is running life-skills classes in 100 schools. UNICEF has also provided nearly USD 90,000 to support a Phuket-based shelter for women and children.

Story

New life for HIV-positive women and children

When a poor woman gets HIV, her life often follows a depressing pattern. First she becomes ill and loses her job. Unable to afford good food and healthcare, rejected by her friends and family, she gets sicker until she ends up in hospital, where she dies. Her children are left as orphans.

But the Life Home Project, a UNICEF-supported NGO in Phuket, is proving that this does not have to be the case.

Located in a small compound in downtown Phuket, the project accepts women and children from local hospitals and provides them with a safe and caring environment in which they can recover. Staff make sure the women get access to medicine and, just as vitally, to the emotional support needed to restore their shattered sense of self worth.

When the women have recovered sufficiently, the project offers them vocational training and small loans to help set up their own businesses and support themselves in the future.

“We have a very high success rate,” says Project Director, Jose Gay. “We meet women in hospital and the doctors tell us they will die. Two years later, they are teaching aerobics or running a store.”

But the future is not all positive. Jose fears that many young women who have lost their jobs because of the tsunami may be forced into commercial sex work, and that rates of poverty and AIDS may rise together. His staff, who perform outreach work, are already seeing new faces in local karaoke bars.

If Jose is right, there will be even more need for the Home Life Project to offer support to mothers – which is critical for the wellbeing of their children.

“The children feel it enormously when their mothers become happy and strong,” says Jose. “If the mother is happy, they are happy.”

And the mothers are definitely happier. The doctor in the local hospital says he knows which of his patients come from the Life Home Project – he can see it in their eyes.



The Life Home Project, a UNICEF-supported NGO in Phuket, provides shelter and support for children and women affected by HIV/AIDS. Photo: ©UNICEF-Thailand/2006/Mohan

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF FISHING VILLAGE COMMUNITIES TO RESTORE THEIR LIVELIHOODS

In the coastal areas the tsunami caused serious damage to both fishing and agricultural sectors. The waves not only washed away fishing boats and gear – and with them the livelihoods of 30,000 fishing households – they also destroyed existing crops and damaged future harvests by inundating the soil with salt water.

Hardest hit were the poorer communities. Many fishing villages, mainly Muslim and Chao Lay communities, were struggling to make ends meet. In response, the RTG, supplemented by a large number of national and international agencies and aid groups, undertook a series of measures to help fishing communities strengthen their longer-term capacity. These included community-based revolving funds and cooperatives, access to credit, and projects to explore and develop alternative sources of income.

Story

Use of revolving fund in strengthening sustainable livelihoods

Hat Sai Dum is a small peaceful village on an island in the Andaman Sea in Ranong province. From Ban Tachang on the mainland it takes about 45 minutes by long tail boat to travel to Hat Sai Dum whose name in English means 'black sand beach'.



New boat engine purchased from engine revolving fund. Photo: ©FAO Thailand/2006

The tsunami hit the island hard – mainly by damaging fishing boats and gear and thus ruining the islanders' main livelihoods.

* 1 Baht= approx. 0.26 USD

Now livelihood restoration in Hat Sai Dam is well underway. Videj Prasert is an energetic and competent man, leader of the groups of fishermen and the head of the village.

“To sustain and to strengthen the local fishermen’s livelihood we have to think of other ways of development” – says Videj.

After several consultations with FAO and the local government Videj initiated a revolving loan fund. Beneficiaries can borrow from this fund and repay at a rate of 1,000 baht * per month.

FAO already had provided 430 fishing boat engines under a cost recovery scheme and rented 15 of these to those fishermen in Hat Sai Dum village, who had suffered from the tsunami. Realizing that this number of engines would not meet the demand in the village, Videj, with the agreement from the fishermen’s management committee, decided to use two revolving funds to provide new engines to those who had been left out. The committee asked all beneficiaries to make two advance repayments. In March 2006, this enabled two groups fishermen on the waiting list to obtain new engines.



Fishermen management committee decided to allocate budget from revolving fund to procure new boat engines. Photo: ©FAO Thailand/2006

Then in June, on a visit to Hat Sai Dum, FAO found out that the revolving fund had been used to purchase four more boat engines for the fishermen. In response to Videj inspiring leadership, Ranong province will also provide the fishermen’s group with new funding of 200,000 baht for a mussel-cage culture project.

Story

Building back better with hydroponics

Patira Katekong, lives alone at Tambon Lamkaen, Thai Muang district. She used to possess one small fishing boat, but because it was severely damaged by the tsunami, the Department of Fisheries gave her compensation of 4,600 baht.

She also owns 7 hectares of rubber plantation, and 2.4 hectares of fruit orchard where she grows rambutan, mangoesteen and durian. These too were damaged by the tsunami as a result of sea water intrusion which increased the salinity of the soil: four to five months after the tsunami her rambutan, mangoesteen and durian trees started dying. So although she used to earn over 10,000 baht per year from selling fruits from her orchard, after the tsunami this income dropped to around 2,000 baht.

Now, thanks to an FAO-supported initiative, she is able to grow vegetables using a hydroponics unit. She found the training conducted by two FAO consultants on preparing hydroponics nutrient solutions very useful. She learned how she could cut the cost of buying nutrient solutions from 500 to 75 baht at each cropping cycle; to her this seemed incredible. She is happy working with the hydroponics unit which earns her good money, about 1,200 baht or more per cropping cycle (every 35-45 days).

She sells some of the vegetables to her own regular customers and the rest through a nearby store. If the hydroponics unit can be constructed locally at a low cost, as she learned from a presentation given by Mr. Martin Caldeyro during the FAO training course, she will definitely buy more units and expand her vegetable production. She says "If it is fun, and not tedious work and you can make good money, why not?"



Ms. Katekong is able to sell the vegetables she produces at a nearby store and by taking orders from her regular customers. Photo: ©FAO Thailand/2006



Quality vegetables successfully grown in the hydroponics units. Photo: ©FAO Thailand/2006

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES

For local government organizations, the tsunami disaster created opportunities for changing the ways in which they carried out rehabilitation planning in collaboration with the affected communities. It also allowed them to build bridges with minority groups.

Through the UNDP 'Support for Rehabilitation of Traditional Communities' project, the minority communities of Bang Wan, Koh Kho Khao and Nakha, for example, have been carrying out a rigorous rehabilitation and long-term planning process with their respective local government organization.

Eighteen months after the tsunami, the results are very visible. The rehabilitation plans for the respective communities have been completed and incorporated into the local government's long-term plan. Joint working groups consisting of staff from the local government organizations, members of the community, business community groups, teachers associations and youth groups have worked together on the plans and on the implementation of selected pilot projects. These projects, which focus on income generation and the rehabilitation of natural resources damaged by the tsunami, will have a direct impact on approximately 3,000 families.

The overall UNDP project has been successful in strengthening partnerships between local government organizations and minority communities and on widening their knowledge of participatory planning approaches. It has also improved information sharing and public awareness for the rehabilitation and long-term development plans of the target ethnic minority communities and at the same time strengthened partnerships between various local government organizations, within and between the tsunami-affected provinces.



Local committees of Nakha Bang Wan and Koh Ko Koa consisting of Tambon Administration Organization staff and relevant stakeholders from the community working together to share draft rehabilitation plans and priorities for pilot projects. Photo: ©UNDP Thailand/2006/Chetna Lakhoo

LAND TENURE

SUPPORT FOR THE REHABILITATION OF TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES

One of the most difficult and important issues for communities affected by the tsunami is the struggle for secure land tenure. For many communities, especially the poor and the ethnic minority fishing communities living along the coast, the lack of resolution of land tenure has delayed recovery and rehabilitation.

In January 2005 the Government established a Special High Level National Tsunami Land Sub-committee to facilitate the negotiation and resolution of land tenure conflicts for communities who were experiencing problems as a result of the tsunami. This 30-member committee includes officials from all key departments and ministries that relate to land, social development, natural resources and environment. Since its primary strategies are community empowerment and the 'bottom-up' approach, the Committee has encouraged affected communities to play a central role in gathering information on their land disputes. Once this information is collated, the Committee starts the process of negotiating solutions with all the district and provincial authorities, government departments and powerful private and public land-owners who are party to the conflict.

Through the 'Support for Rehabilitation of Traditional Communities' project, UNDP, in collaboration with the Community Organizations Development Institute and the Chumchonchai Foundation, is supporting the work of the Committee, as well as providing technical and legal support to minority and vulnerable communities for negotiating their land disputes. This project helps these communities to make submissions to the special land committee and strengthens their understanding of their land-tenure status.

Last year the Committee started with a caseload of 57 land disputes and by December 2005, 54 of these had been resolved. In January this year the Committee started with a new caseload of 56 land disputes. Thus far, 14 of these have been resolved in principle and are awaiting formalization from the provincial and forestry departments.



Ground Breaking Ceremony for Residents in Koh Muk, Trang Province Photo: ©UNDP Thailand/2006

RESTORATION OF LANTA'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Koh Lanta, a district in Krabi province, was badly hit by the tsunami but is recovering fast. One indication is the success of the UNDP-funded project 'Indigenous Livelihood Restoration and Sustainable Ecology for Lanta Island'. This season, two villages at the southern tip of the island that had been hardest hit – Ban Sanga-U, a sea gypsy village, and Ban Hua Laem, a Muslim village – have resumed full-scale fishing.

In collaboration with Chumchon Thai Foundation, the project has helped the villagers rebuild their homes and replace their boats, engines and fishing gear. It has done this in a collective manner, establishing a multi-stakeholder mechanism, involving the private and government sectors, local community leaders and development organizations, to pool resources and supervise the reconstruction effort. At the end of the monsoon season on December 8, 2005, the villagers organized a spectacular 'Boat Launching Ceremony' with over 350 boats to resume the fishing season and to thank the donors for the boats and fishing gear.

In addition to rebuilding community livelihoods, the project has striven to restore the Lanta community's spirit by promoting and enhancing Lanta's unique and harmonious blend of Muslim, Chinese, Buddhist and sea gypsy heritages. These cultural interventions enabled the project to expand its scope from 2 to 14 villages with local initiatives ranging from income generation to education and environmental management. In June 2006, 28 representatives from these villages formed the initial Community Development Network whose first task was to supervise the renovation of the community museum with antiques and artefacts donated by community members.

Now with their pride and dignity intact, the community network is ready to assume greater responsibility for the management of natural resources. Since water is scarce on an island such as Lanta, four villages with the strongest community organizations have been selected for an experiment with different types of water-resource scheme and water user groups. UNDP has arranged finance of USD 200,000 from the Coca-Cola company which has helped support a number of proposals: a series of 10 check dams in Ban Sanga-U; a gravity-fed water system in Ban Hua Laem; a small-scale irrigation system in Ban Cheli; and three artesian wells in Koh Por. Lessons learnt from these schemes will be applied to Lanta island-wide.

In the case of Lanta, 'building back better' thus goes beyond relief, restoration and recovery. It has enabled local people to build community-based organizations rooted firmly in their local resource bases. On World Environment Day, June 5, 2006, the people of Lanta issued a declaration reaffirming their determination to protect and preserve their unique cultural identity and rich natural environment. With the collaboration of UNDP and its Corporate Social Responsibility partners, they have been able to embark on community-based natural resources management for sustainable development – a true reflection of the principles of 'building back better'.

NATIONAL DISASTER WARNING CENTRE

In May 2005, under the Office of the Prime Minister's Secretariat, the Government established the National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC). The Centre will be responsible for detecting earthquakes, assessing the possibility of a tsunami and if necessary issuing public notifications that can help prevent loss of life and property.

In the case of another tsunami, NDWC plans to transmit warning messages within 25 minutes. These will go to TV Channel 5, the channel authorized for disseminating nation-wide warning messages. It will also disseminate a warning through 42 communication systems of the Mass Communication Organization, a network of 280 radio stations, and through the SMS system to about 20 million mobile phones. In addition, the early warning system will be linked with loud speakers in rural villages.

The project is also installing warning towers. Of the 79 towers planned for the six coastal provinces, 65 are now in place. By October 2006, another 48 should be in place along the Gulf of Thailand and the Eastern Coast.

As part of upgrading its early warning system, NDWC is planning to extend its telecommunication networks to be able to cope with multi-hazard disasters in addition to tsunamis and earthquakes.

In addition NDWC is developing training materials for local people to explain what they should do in the event of an emergency caused by another tsunami. The local population, including schoolchildren, are preparing by practicing a tsunami evacuation drill.

Some 7,000 migrant workers in Thailand were affected by the tsunami and several hundred were killed. For over a year IOM has employed health workers and health volunteers in tsunami-affected provinces to work with migrant communities.

An IOM rapid assessment of migrants' knowledge of, and attitudes towards, disasters showed that the level of preparedness was not comparable to that of the Thai population. IOM has therefore been asked to ensure that the migrants receive adequate information and are prepared for potential disasters.

In partnership with Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and the German International Aid Agency (GTZ), it was also agreed that Myanmar migrant workers would be included in a tsunami early-warning evacuation exercise. The exercise was held in June in, one of the villages hardest hit by the tsunami, Tab-La-Mu village of Phang Nga province. Of the village's 3,500 residents, 2,000 are migrants from Myanmar employed mostly in the fishing industry.

In collaboration with local NGOs, IOM subsequently distributed cheap radio sets and disaster preparedness information materials to several migrant communities.



The students of Rachaprachuanukron School in Phuket are practicing a tsunami evacuation drill. Photo: ©UNDP Thailand/2006/Justin Shone

CHILD PROTECTION

By the end of the second quarter of 2006, UNICEF had almost completed its rapid assessment analysis in tsunami-affected provinces of social work capacity and of migrant children without parental care. UNICEF has also worked with Save the Children and ECPAT to finalize a child-safe organizations toolkit that outlines standard safe practice for working with vulnerable children, and has also organized and facilitated child protection interagency group meetings and the creation of provincial-level child protection agency networks.

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE DATABASE

The Thailand Tsunami Development Assistance Database was launched in October 2005 to track and monitor official foreign assistance to Thailand for tsunami recovery (<http://dadthailand.mfa.go.th>). DAD, which provides the only easily-accessible information source for all tsunami assistance data, will also be used as a tool to plan and prioritize recovery efforts. Its focal point is the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Today DAD has over 229 projects in the database, with USD 181 million in total commitments and USD 90 million of disbursements. The RTG recently agreed to include on the TICA web portal detailed information on all government funding for tsunami relief and this is now available on www.tica.thaigov.net. As a direct result of the capacity of TICA and the fact that foreign assistance is on a smaller scale than in other tsunami-affected countries, TICA can now continue to implement the DAD with minimal support from UNDP.

EDUCATION

UNICEF has supported the expansion of the 'child-friendly school initiative' to some 160 schools. This initiative will ensure that all children attend school, and will also improve the quality of education by ensuring that all schools are 'child friendly' – i.e. safe, healthy, inclusive, and child-centred and an integral part of the local community. As a first step to integrating child-friendly school principles into pre-service teacher training, the initiative carried out training for 35 education officials in the six affected provinces and a workshop at the teacher-training university in Phuket.

During the second quarter of 2006, several schools were rebuilt in the tsunami-affected areas. A new three-storey school equipped with modern teaching material and equipment was built in Ban Kalim, north Patong. Funding for this school, which can accommodate 500 students, came from the ITV Company and 23 private organizations. Four other schools were paid for by the Unilever group of companies. Two are in Phang Nga province: Tublamu School in Tai Muang district and Kietpracha School on Phratong Island in Khura Buri district. The two others, Ban Samnak and Ban Bangben, are in Kapoe district, Ranong.

Construction work at Rachaprajanukroh School in Kamala village, Phuket Is now half completed and is expected to be finished by the end of this year. The costs are being met by the Rachaprajanukroh Foundation under the patronage of His Majesty the King. The Foundation was created in 1962. When the tsunami struck, the King asked the Foundation to immediately release 30 million baht of his personal funds for relief efforts.

EMPLOYMENT

In June 2006, ILO completed its 'Post-Tsunami Livelihood Recovery in the Tourism Sector' project in Phuket and Phang Nga. Approximately 3,000 tsunami victims and their employers have benefited from this, having undergone training to increase their capacity for revenue generation and for employment. To meet the needs of local employees the project also strengthened some institutional capacities. Because more women than men lost their jobs as a result of the tsunami, the project ensured that women participated fully and that their needs were addressed. Though men were welcome and were quite active, sixty-five per cent of the project's participants were women.

HEALTH

In the second quarter, UNICEF continued to provide financial and technical support to local health authorities in all six affected provinces, especially to ensure critical health services to the most vulnerable families and children. This included, for example, basic healthcare, including antenatal and immunization services, to some 400 Mokken islanders on Koh Sin Hai and Koh Lao, and the training of 150 Burmese migrants as health volunteers to provide basic healthcare in their own communities.

The nutritional status of children is a good overall indicator of their well-being, and close monitoring can detect early deterioration as a result, for example, of the loss of family livelihoods. UNICEF has expanded its nutrition surveillance and in the second quarter of 2006 supported health authorities in weighing all children under five years of age, almost 150,000, in all six provinces.

To help respond to future emergencies, UNICEF provided 11 mobile drinking water treatment plants to the Bureau of Water Management Resources, and organized training for 30 Bureau staff.

UNICEF has worked hand-in-hand with local communities, including migrant and minority populations, to develop programme communication materials on avian influenza and other health issues. These materials are now ready for mass production and distribution throughout the tsunami-affected areas. UNICEF has also run capacity-building workshops for nearly 200 provincial health staff and migrant health volunteers on how to apply participatory learning techniques during their work.

LIVELIHOODS

By mid 2006, all four FAO-supported post-tsunami rehabilitation projects in the fisheries, agriculture, mangrove and forestry sectors had been phased out. The total disbursement for these projects amounted to USD 1.4 million.

Over the next five years, 2006-2011, FAO will focus on the longer-term rehabilitation and development of affected communities. The new project will aim to improve livelihoods by building the capacities of communities and enhancing their participation in integrated sustainable coastal natural resource management. Japan has donated USD 4.7 million to support similar projects in Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

LOCAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR BETTER PLANNING AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN

In 2006, UNICEF launched a local capacity-building programme in all districts of the six tsunami-affected provinces. This programme, implemented by the Department of Local Administration (DOLA) of the Ministry of Interior, will ensure essential capacities of local government officials, communities and families to be able to better plan and act for children. This will be a significant boost to the situation of children living in those provinces, especially the most vulnerable. Key activities are: baseline assessments in affected provinces and districts; formation of multi-sectoral children's committees; training on participatory planning involving local governments, NGOs and sub-district officers; and provision of critical behaviour-change information for families. As a first step, UNICEF, in cooperation with the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the provincial statistics offices in each of the affected provinces, in the second quarter of 2006 completed data collection in over 10,000 households. This was part of its Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) covering 60,000 households nationwide. Updated information on the situation of children in the tsunami-affected provinces will be available in September of this year. In support of local monitoring of the situation of children, UNICEF has helped train over 300 government staff to enable them to introduce and use the TPD Info (DevInfo or Development Information) database system.

SHELTER

In the tsunami-affected areas the building of permanent shelters continues. In May 2006, 71 shelters were constructed in Sang Kha Ou, a seaside village of Koh Lanta Island in Krabi province. The beneficiaries, who are mostly sea gypsies, wanted single-storey houses suitable for their traditional rituals and beliefs. Located around 35 kilometres from Koh Lanta town, Sang Kha Ou has a population of 116 families the majority of whom lived next to the sea and depended on fishing. The tsunami swept away most of their boats. The beneficiaries appreciated how World Vision worked effectively with other organizations and government officers. World Vision also helped to repair 30 boats.

TOURISM

Patong and Kamala beaches in Phuket were badly hit by the tsunami. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has funded the redesign and redevelopment of the beaches and the work is almost complete. TAT also continues to provide capacity building for the local population to prepare them for the tourist industry in Krabi. Together with the Krabi campus of Kasetsart University, and the Krabi Tourist Association, TAT has organized basic training for local long-tail boat operators, hotel employees and guides. The one-month training programme for around 25 participants included both theory and practical sessions; they made field trips to various tourist sites and took turns to act as tour guides to give visitors impressive information, advice and services.

WATER AND SANITATION

UNICEF has recently launched a water and sanitation and hygiene – WASH – programme in the six tsunami-affected provinces. By 2009, all primary schools will have adequate water and sanitation facilities and children will learn about good hygiene practices. Tsunami field visits and assessments showed that many schools, especially in remote villages and on islands, have inadequate water supply and sanitation. In collaboration with local authorities, full assessments of all schools are now underway.

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Stories provided by: Robert Few, UNICEF on "InsightOUT" (page 4) and on "New life for HIV-positive women and children" (page 7); Suchint Deetae, FAO on 'Use of revolving fund in strengthening sustainable livelihoods' (page 9); Hiroiyuki Konuma, FAO on 'Building back better with hydroponics' (page 11)

Sources of information: Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC), FAO, ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO.
Local Media: www.bangkokpost.com, www.nationmultimedia.com, <http://etna.mcot.net>, www.thaisnews.com.