



PHOTO & CAPTION

Coastal Village Leads Farm Recovery



Photo: USAID/Caroline Greider

Jantang is a small coastal village nestled in the foothills of Lhoong, Indonesia. Located in Aceh Besar, one of three districts hit hardest by the December 2004 tsunami, Jantang lost over 50 percent of its population to surging tidal waters. Villagers were in great need of humanitarian aid after the disaster. Their past was destroyed, and their future was in peril — with farms damaged by ocean water, residents wondered how they would be able to grow the crops they depended on to survive.

A year and a half later, things are looking brighter in Jantang and other villages in Aceh Besar that faced a similar situation. With assistance from USAID, small remote communities that had not received assistance

during the first wave of humanitarian aid are getting onto the road to recovery. In Jantang, USAID sponsored a cash-for-work program that helped rebuild the town while providing much-needed and immediate income for villagers. In addition, USAID began working with the villagers to develop a reconstruction plan that would focus on their unique needs.

The villagers determined that the agricultural sector was the area most critical to Jantang's overall recovery, and they got to work. At first, they feared that the seawater from the tsunami had made their land too salty. But USAID helped them effectively sow cash crops in 12 hectares of land. When harvest time came in September, they found that their hard work had paid off: the crops brought in \$9,650 in profit. They reinvested the money into their own village, financing small local businesses and investing in more seed and chicken coops.

The harvest has marked the beginning of a recovery for Jantang and serves as an example for many neighboring villages — they now know that they, too, can recover from the tsunami.

Many believed that after the 2004 tsunami, crops would never again grow in this region. But the efforts of villagers in Jantang proved them wrong.