



ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

TSUNAMI RECONSTRUCTION

Update – March 21, 2006

INDONESIA

The Banda Aceh to Meulaboh road -

The December 26, 2004 tsunami changed the West Coast of North Sumatra forever, creating intense challenges to the reconstruction of the coastal road. Even maintenance of target areas has proven difficult, affected by excessive sea erosion, high tide and flooding from seasonal rains. Changes in the coastline require the new road to be routed through the inland hills, greatly adding to the challenge ahead.



Banda Aceh to Meulaboh Road Re-alignment Corridor. Dotted line shows new road route.



USAID/Indonesia

The tsunami changed the landscape forever.

Approximately 240 km in length, with more than 110 water crossings, the Banda Aceh to Meulaboh road is the economic backbone of the region, connecting Aceh Province with the rest of North Sumatra and Indonesia. New sections of road must be completed to realign or replace the existing road, no longer useable due to extensive tsunami damage and land mass alterations.

Recognizing the importance of this critical road, the U.S. government is supporting reconstruction of the two-lane road from Banda Aceh to Meulaboh. The project will: 1) rehabilitate the existing road and bridges along the 80 km corridor between Banda Aceh and Lamno, including 8 km of new road sections; and 2) design and construct the remaining 232 km of new road to Meulaboh.

First phase - In August 2005, USAID awarded a contract to a local construction company, which has re-opened 80 kilometers of road and reduced travel time to Lamno by half. This company continues



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to maintain this stretch of road, employing local Acehnese from the surviving communities, including former Free Aceh Movement (GAM) combatants.



Thomas R. Morris

Current conditions of a critical section of the new inland road route pose significant challenges to reconstruction.

Second phase - In October 2005, USAID awarded a contract to a U.S. firm for design and supervision of the road. Progress to date includes completion of environmental assessments following both U.S. and Indonesian laws, community consultations, aerial and ground surveys, preliminary design for the roadway and bridges, and working with the Government of Indonesia to secure land titles for right-of-way. These complex activities are challenged by changing land conditions, historical information lost during the tsunami, cost escalations beyond normal range, and gradual transition of provincial governance from military to civilian.

Firms will be invited to bid on construction activities on the 232 km of new road to

Meulaboh in the summer of 2006. The entire Banda Aceh to Meulaboh Road Project is expected to be completed by the summer of 2009.

Other Indonesia Updates:

Youth learn valuable job skills -

The fourth and final group of youth started their vocational training on February 19, under the USAID-Chevron public-private alliance. The program trains youth in construction, wiring and other skills in high demand as communities rebuild. This group of 110 students includes 27 participants from Nias Island, a remote island that is still in need of post-tsunami reconstruction.

They will graduate in May 2006, bringing the total trained to 330. With skills critical to the reconstruction efforts, graduates have found employment when they return to their communities. One has opened his own business and recently won a contract for electrical wiring for 15 new houses in Aceh Besar. USAID Mission Director William M. Frej commented, "This partnership between USAID and Chevron reflects a long-term investment in Aceh's economic future."



USAID/Indonesia

Students practice wiring skills during training.



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SRI LANKA



Dick Edwards

Tsunami-damaged Hikkaduwa Harbor, one of three harbors USAID is rehabilitating.

Fishing harbor rehabilitation – Harbors are a critical economic hub for many Sri Lankans whose livelihoods depend on fishing. Three damaged fishing harbors in Hikkaduwa, Mirissa and Dondra will be rehabilitated and upgraded with assistance from USAID. Before beginning any construction, environmental assessments must be conducted to evaluate the impact on the ecosystem and local communities of proposed infrastructure improvements like the reconstruction of jetties. Drafts of these assessments have recently been completed.

Public forums were held in the three harbor communities to provide information on the projects and identify any community concerns with the proposals. Despite the large task ahead, the harbor project is on schedule.

Communities participate in bridge construction discussions – USAID’s team of bridge engineers completed site investigations at Arugam Bay, including topographic surveys, geotechnical drilling to evaluate the strength of bedrock beneath the bay, and a bathymetric survey to detail the seabed and range of high and low tides. The results feed into the next step – a detailed design for the bridge, which is expected to be ready in the next three months. With a complete design, bidding will open to international construction firms. Companies will have 45 days to submit proposals, and construction is scheduled to begin in July.



USAID/Sri Lanka

Geotechnical drilling in Arugam Bay in preparation for a detailed design of the new bridge

USAID conducted a series of consultations around Arugam Bay to discuss bridge construction plans with the community.



USAID/Sri Lanka

Three women from Arugam Bay examine the plan for USAID upgrades of infrastructure in their community.



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Sri Lanka Continued –

Participants included local government representatives, school teachers, business people, and NGOs. The groups queried USAID on its intentions regarding the construction schedule and the nature and extent of sanitation improvements. One group comprised mostly of women was particularly interested in how better access to clean water might improve the self-employment opportunities in the region. Speaking with community members, USAID/Sri Lanka Mission Director Dr. Carol Becker, emphasized that the goal of the community consultations is to ensure community ownership of the project and model transparency in both process and product.

Young, multi-ethnic filmmakers complete training - Seventy-five young filmmakers from different ethnic groups came together to produce three films on tsunami recovery and ethnic conflict. The workshops brought the youth together to work towards a common goal, foster self-expression and encourage a dialogue on key issues facing



USAID/Sri Lanka Mission Director Dr. Carol Becker presents an award to Ranjith Malwana, who directed and acted in one of the three films.

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USAID/Rachel Wax

the country.

The youth also studied the history of cinema, script development and other facets of cinematography. The three films, which target community leaders, will be screened publicly across the three southern districts of Galle, Hambantota and Matara. Each of the three films examines issues related to conflict or violence within the tsunami-affected South and in one case underscores the role of poverty in this vicious cycle. The films examine the linkages between underdevelopment and violence, and the heavy psychological and social toll of the tsunami and the prolonged conflict in Sri Lanka.

THAILAND



USAID/Suzanne Ross

Fishers transform their way of fishing with USAID funded cage cultures and fish conservation practices.

Coastal management is good for business – Aware that over-development can destroy and weaken ecosystems along coastal waterways, governments and NGOs are trying to balance post-tsunami reconstruction goals with environmental protection measures. In doing so, they hope to preserve lives, property and livelihoods. A new community learning center in Kamphuan District, Ranong, is a



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Thailand Continued –

key part of the effort. The center will offer vocational classes, small business development training and information on a broad range of social, economic and environment issues.

The center itself will be a “green building,” designed and constructed with features and materials suitable to the local climate and culture. These include solar power, rain water collection and waste management through wetlands practices. The center is part of a public-private partnership with USAID, Coca Cola Ltd., Thailand and Khampuan Tambon Administration Office to build sustainable livelihoods along the coast. Coca-Cola is contributing \$200,000 to support construction of the center, as well as a revolving micro-finance loan program and several other water and sanitation projects.

While the building of the learning center is underway, local villagers and organizations receive training on sound ecological and economic practices as they collaborate to set and pursue development priorities.

A joint code of conduct was developed as fishers work more closely with government authorities to improve the management of fisheries. Fishers adhering to the code pledge to stop using destructive fishing methods, comply with all fisheries regulations and support conservation measures to protect the sustainability of the fishery resources.

These efforts, known as “smart fishing,” are geared to help maintain Thailand’s export markets, provide better prices and promote healthy fisheries.

INDIA



Project Concern International

Samuthram returns to fishing using his repaired boat and motor.

Fisherman returns to the sea -

When the tsunami struck, Samuthram Kutyani lost his home, his possessions and his livelihood. As a husband and father of two sons, Samuthram had relied entirely on the daily income generated from deep sea fishing to support his family. After the tsunami, he was unable to do so. His fishing boat and outboard engine were both severely damaged, and his nets were never recovered. Samuthram had no resources to rebuild his life.

USAID funded the repair of his boat and engine, and Samuthram returned to sea to fish. He now fishes for about six to eight hours a day, earning between 5,000 – 10,000 rupees (\$113-226) daily. He is back on his feet and able to support his family.