



PHOTO & CAPTION

Tsunami Victims Learn about Trafficking



Photo: USAID/Virginia L. Foley

About 500,000 people were displaced from their homes following the December 2004 tsunami. Many Acehese women and girls themselves have had to take shelter in overcrowded makeshift living conditions and look for new job opportunities. Recognizing that this group could become an easy target for human traffickers, the international community has developed programs both to help women develop livelihoods and to help communities understand the dangers of trafficking.

In Indonesia, religious leaders play a critical role in keeping communities informed. Tengku Tarmizi, Director of Dayah Terpadu Inshafuddin, a

These boarding school students at Dayah Terpadu Inshafuddin receive a broad-based education meant to give them moral strength, good skills, and enough knowledge to steer clear of traps like trafficking.

religious boarding school in northern Aceh, has been helping USAID communicate the importance of preventing trafficking. There are two known cases of local women who were trafficked to Malaysia, where they were forced into prostitution. He talks about trafficking during sermons and in speeches to local clubs, and he brings up trafficking when people ask for blessings in preparation for trips. He believes that religious leaders have an obligation to protect their faithful — for Tengku Tarmizi, trafficking is *dzalim*, an Indonesian word meaning “utter injustice.”

The tsunami hit the boarding school on a Sunday, when many students were out. Luckily almost all the students survived, although nine teachers perished. When it reopened 40 days later, half of its 400 students returned. USAID and its partners are working to rebuild the school’s sleeping quarters, replace books that were destroyed, and equip a new computer room. “We must work together to fix problems or prevent them from happening,” Tengku Tarmizi asserted. “Combating trafficking is a moral obligation.” His goal is to imbue students with strong morals while building good technical skills, and to make sure that they are all too well informed to fall into the trap of traffickers.