



FIRST PERSON Boosting Skills in Post-Tsunami Aceh

Acehnese earn income by helping tsunami-affected region rebuild



Photo: USAID/Virginia L. Foley

Junaidi and his colleague, Syahrizal, have expanded their skills in construction and increased their employability thanks to Chevron training.

“The training has improved my skills and made me more employable,” said Junaidi, who participated in a training program supported by USAID and Chevron.

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Not long ago, Junaidi’s construction skills were limited to pouring concrete, brick-laying, and other basic building tasks. Now, thanks to a training program run through a partnership between USAID and Chevron, this young man from Indonesia’s Aceh region has learned the fundamentals of welding, masonry, electrical installation, and carpentry. Junaidi can not only get a job more easily, but he can also make more money.

Following the devastating 2004 tsunami that destroyed so many Indonesian lives, homes, and livelihoods, Chevron and USAID joined forces to help Indonesia’s government rebuild the hard-hit regions of Aceh and Nias. It was clear that there were two complementary needs: reconstruction and job creation. The solution? To train an able workforce in the skills needed to reconstruct and rehabilitate the region.

With USAID’s support, Chevron developed and held three-month vocational courses at its polytechnic institute in welding, masonry and home construction, electrical installation, carpentry, computer applications, bookkeeping, and automobile repair. In the nine months ending April 2006, 346 youth from Aceh and Nias, including 86 women, graduated from these courses.

To ensure that these newly trained workers would be able to put their skills to use in new jobs, USAID encouraged Indonesia’s Chambers of Commerce, road construction contractors, international organizations, and others involved in the country’s reconstruction to hire program graduates.

Junaidi is now making door frames for new houses being built in Aceh. He is paid a daily rate and once his contract is up, he’ll have the skills and experience to find another job. In fact, Junaidi is confident that he is an attractive job candidate and that he can earn a higher wage. With more and more houses going up, his hope is to eventually start a workshop of his own with other graduates of the training program.